



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday 22 March 2022

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Bills	7251
Environment Legislation Amendment Bill 2021	7251
Returned.....	7251
Public Interest Disclosures Bill 2021	7251
First Reading.....	7251
Members	7251
Acting Premier.....	7251
Business of the House.....	7251
Inaugural Speeches	7251
Announcements	7251
Chamber Covid-Safe Arrangements.....	7251
Bills.....	7251
Health Legislation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2022	7251
Second Reading Debate.....	7251
Third Reading	7258
Members	7259
Member for Barwon	7259
Visitors.....	7259
Visitors.....	7259
Announcements	7259
Legislative Assembly Photographs.....	7259
New South Wales Floods.....	7259
Members	7259
Representation of Ministers Absent During Questions	7259
Bills.....	7259
Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment Bill 2021	7259
Licensing and Registration (Uniform Procedures) Amendment Bill 2021	7259
Environment Legislation Amendment Bill 2021	7259
Companion Animals Amendment (Rehoming Animals) Bill 2021	7259
Assent	7259
Members	7260
Electoral District of Bega	7260
Return of Writ.....	7260
Pledge of Loyalty.....	7260
Electoral District of Monaro.....	7260
Return of Writ.....	7260
Pledge of Loyalty.....	7260
Electoral District of Strathfield.....	7260
Return of Writ.....	7260
Pledge of Loyalty.....	7260

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Electoral District of Willoughby	7260
Return of Writ.....	7260
Oath of Allegiance.....	7260
Ministry.....	7260
Question Time	7261
New South Wales Floods.....	7261
Northern Rivers Floods.....	7261
Member for Kiama	7262
New South Wales Floods.....	7263
Member for Kiama	7264
New South Wales Floods.....	7264
Member for Kiama	7265
Western Sydney Floods	7265
Climate Change	7266
New South Wales Floods.....	7267
Documents	7268
Independent Commission Against Corruption	7268
Reports.....	7268
Law Enforcement Conduct Commission.....	7268
Reports.....	7268
Committees	7269
Legislation Review Committee	7269
Reports.....	7269
Petitions	7269
Petitions Received	7269
Responses to Petitions	7269
Business of the House.....	7269
Business Lapsed.....	7269
Members	7270
Inaugural Speeches	7270
Bills.....	7277
Mining and Petroleum Legislation Amendment Bill 2022.....	7277
First Reading.....	7277
Second Reading Speech.....	7277
Greater Cities Commission Bill 2022.....	7279
First Reading.....	7279
Second Reading Speech.....	7279
Public Interest Debate.....	7284
New South Wales Floods.....	7284
Announcements	7290
Independent Complaints Officer.....	7290
Community Recognition Statements	7293

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Community Action Services Australia	7293
Vaucluse Electorate Student Leaders	7294
Tribute to Jonny Bell	7294
Midwife Jemima Erskine	7294
St Patrick's Day Festival	7294
Wollondilly Electorate Floods	7294
Mascot Public School	7295
Dr Maree Puxty.....	7295
Among the Trees.....	7295
Canterbury-Bankstown Local Business Awards	7295
Kempo Ryu International Karate Organisation	7295
Grey Fergie Tractor Muster	7296
Blue Mountains Local Woman of the Year Elly Chatfield	7296
Junee RSL Sub-Branch President Peter Hogarth.....	7296
Wollongong Local Woman of the Year Moemoana Schwenke	7296
Tom and Jack O'Dea.....	7297
Riverina Cancer Care Centre Dr Renuka Chittajallu	7297
Celeste Grace Perrottet	7297
Central Coast Floods.....	7297
Creative and Performing Arts Nominee Jacob Selwood	7297
Winter Paralympic Games Skier Patrick Jensen	7298
South Coast State Emergency Service.....	7298
Greater Blacktown Business Chamber Business After Five Event	7298
Worm Farm Initiative	7298
Ashfield Public School	7298
Senator Marise Payne	7299
Northern Tablelands Farmer Marlene Brewer.....	7299
Mangrove Mountain Children's Centre	7299
Sir Joseph Banks High School.....	7299
Mario's Quality Meats.....	7299
Yass Valley Citizen of the Year Barry O'Mara	7300
Private Members' Statements.....	7300
Tribute to Dr Joan Croll, AO	7300
Dinosaur Festival Australia	7301
Meadowbank Public School and Marsden High School	7301
Jubilee Community Services	7302
Tribute to Paul Wayne Hawker	7303
Ability Agriculture Founder Josie Clarke.....	7303
Oxley Electorate Floods	7303
Sylvanvale Foundation	7304
Nowruz Celebration	7305
Lake Macquarie Electorate Energy Industry	7306

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Fairfield Local Woman of the Year Award Winner Marta Faggiano.....	7307
Draft Water Sharing Plans	7308
Swansea Electorate Affordable Housing	7308
Northern Tablelands Childcare Services	7309
Deputy Commissioner Gary Worboys Retirement.....	7310
Eastern Suburbs Developments	7311
Solar Farms and Agricultural Land Use	7312
Mascot Towers Strata Plan	7313
Marrickville Industrial Land.....	7313
J. J. C. Bradfield	7314
Disaster Response and Recovery.....	7315
Blacktown Electorate Events	7316
Northern Districts Little Athletics Centre Fortieth Anniversary	7317
Community Recognition Notices	7317
Lucy Collingridge – 2022 Rm Williams Ras Rural Achiever Award	7317
Wyatt Spiteri-Roberts	7317
Armidale & New England Show Society	7318
Mourners Farewell Bruce Neal.....	7318
NSW Woman of the Year 2022 - Albury	7318
Icaria Health Albury	7318
HSC Achievers in St. George	7319
Fix-It Sisters Shed.....	7319
Rockdale City Suns.....	7319
Arab Australian Federation Inc.....	7319
Sandra Greaves	7319
NSW SES Fairfield Unit.....	7319
Mermec "innovations in Rail Assets"	7320
Fairfield Emergency Evacuation Centre at Cabra-Vale Diggers.....	7320
Kerrin Rumore	7320
Avondale School Challenge Students.....	7320
2022 Heathcote Woman of the Year.....	7321
Congratulations Malcolm Weir OAM.....	7321
Helen McDermott Local Woman of the Year Award	7321
Moama Anglican Grammar School	7321
Marian Catholic College.....	7321
Ariba Omar	7322
Leonie White	7322
Karin Rezkalla	7322
2022 Davidson Local Woman of the Year	7322
Mental Health for Sportspeople.....	7322
Extreme Weather in Sydney	7323
Monte Industry Partnership Program.....	7323

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Clean Up Australia Day 2022.....	7323
Middle Harbour Yacht Club Hosts the Sydney Harbour Regatta.....	7323
Black Dog Ride.....	7324
Lake Cathie Little Learners – Master Builders Association Awards	7324
The Replacement by Jakk Baker	7324
Australian Reptile Park: NSW Business of the Year.....	7324
Cftc Outstanding Leader.....	7324
Disabled Surf Association	7325
Sutherland Shire Football Association	7325
Kurnell Stingrays Junior Rugby League Football Club	7325
Atherfield Medical Service.....	7325
Blooms Marketplace Goulburn.....	7325
Ballina Shire Australia Day Award Recipients	7326
Ella Abdul Massih	7326
Melita Stirling.....	7326
Luke Priddis Foundation.....	7326
Grind Espresso Cronulla.....	7326
Riley Ayre – NSW Blues Sheffield Shield Debutant	7326
Tracey Lowrey - 2022 Upper Hunter Woman of the Year.....	7327
Mittagong Men's Shed.....	7327
Bowral Autumn Music Festival.....	7327
World Day of Prayer.....	7327
2022 Max Player Suzanne Stanton	7328
Ben Tudhope.....	7328
Wesley Edward Eager.....	7328
Blade Mate Lawn Care	7328
Judith Duma - Lymphoedema Awareness Month	7328
Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce	7329
Eleni Mavridis-Kontakos.....	7329
The Smith Family	7329
School Leaders Austinmer Public School	7329
School Leaders Bellambi Public School.....	7329
School Leaders Bulli High School.....	7330
Cabramatta High School.....	7330
Farmer's Bakehouse	7330
Wiradjuri Workbook.....	7330
Sierra Escape Belle Bois Bandalong Cottages Tourism Awards	7331
Professor Julie Byles AO.....	7331
Emeritus Professor Timothy Roberts AM	7331
Dr Anousha Victoire.....	7331
Rise & Shine Kindergarten Sylvania.....	7331
Taren Point Public School	7332

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Kirrawee Public School	7332
Blacktown Local Business Awards	7332
Armenian National Committee Annual Gala	7332
Kids on Wheels Alliance Pakistan.....	7333
Paul Smith.....	7333
Abigail Kelly	7333
Eddie Hall	7333
Rosalynd O'shannassy	7333
Newroz.....	7334
Full Stop Australia	7334
Fair Day 2022	7334
'easy Tiger' Exhibition	7334
Above All Metal Roofing Fascia and Gutter	7334
Mary Allen's 100th Birthday	7335
Blake Wales and Moe Hassan	7335
Ellie Cole	7335
Pennant Hills Public School Community Contributions	7335
St Jude's Roof Top Dedication	7335
The Spot Festival	7335
Bulldogs 2022 Season Launch.....	7336
Human Appeal Australia's 30th Anniversary Gala Dinner.....	7336
Australian Chinese Buddhist Society Blessing Ceremony	7336
Urunga Lions Club	7336
Kristy Williams.....	7337
Samuel Rodwell.....	7337
Orange Tongan Community Group	7337
Our Lady of Victories Primary School Shortland Student Leaders.....	7337
Callaghan College Jesmond Senior Campus School Student Leaders	7338
2022 Wallsend Local Woman of the Year - Professor Frances Kay-Lambkin	7338
Gundagai Light Horse Troop 10th Anniversary	7338
Young Crisis Accommodation Centre.....	7338
Grenfell Country Education Foundation Scholarship Recipients.....	7338
Thread Together Lismore Showground.....	7339
Lifeline Lismore Showground Flood Recovery	7339
Koori Mail – Flood Recovery.....	7339

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 22 March 2022

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Bills

ENVIRONMENT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES BILL 2021

First Reading

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

The SPEAKER: I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a later hour.

Members

ACTING PREMIER

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: On behalf of Mr Paul Toole: I advise the House that, in accordance with section 36 of the Constitution Act 1902, Her Excellency the Governor with the advice of the Executive Council has authorised the Hon. Paul Toole, MP, to act for and on behalf of the Premier for the period on and from 17 March 2022 to 3 April 2022 inclusive.

Business of the House

INAUGURAL SPEECHES

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I move:

That the business before the House be interrupted:

- (1) On Tuesday 22 March 2022 at the conclusion of the routine of business following question time to permit the presentation of inaugural speeches by the members for Monaro and for Willoughby.
- (2) On Wednesday 23 March 2022 at the conclusion of the routine of business following question time to permit the presentation of an inaugural speech by the member for Strathfield.
- (3) On Tuesday 29 March 2022 at the conclusion of the routine of business following question time to permit the presentation of an inaugural speech by the member for Bega.

Motion agreed to.

Announcements

CHAMBER COVID-SAFE ARRANGEMENTS

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that all 93 members will be accommodated in the Chamber at question time. Seating will be extended into the Speaker's gallery. All members are required to wear a mask during question time. When there are fewer than 40 members in the Chamber, masks are not required. However, members who wish to wear a mask in the Chamber should feel free to do so. There is certainly a fair degree of COVID still around, so let us make sure that we keep democracy moving with sensible COVID-safe measures in place.

[*Notices of motions given.*]

Bills

HEALTH LEGISLATION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 23 February 2022.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (12:20): I lead for the New South Wales Opposition on the Health Legislation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2022. I do so on behalf of my colleague the shadow Minister for Health and the member for Keira, who is unable to be here today. The bill before the House amends various pieces of legislation and, as its name suggests, there are miscellaneous amendments to a number of Acts. I intend to go through those proposed amendments as they are ordered in the bill.

I will start with schedule 1.1 to the bill, which amends the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009. That law relates to the accreditation and registration of health practitioners in New South Wales through the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme by adopting the Queensland Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. In New South Wales our doctors, nurses, midwives and dentists are registered and accredited under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

Currently in New South Wales any changes to the Queensland law are automatically adopted by the New South Wales laws. That process does not allow for parliamentary scrutiny of any changes. It also requires legislation to be introduced into this Parliament to modify any changes in the event of inconsistencies in New South Wales laws. The bill changes the status quo by instead requiring any changes to the Queensland law to be introduced to New South Wales by way of regulation. Under this bill, if the Queensland law changes, the New South Wales Government must make regulation that gives effect to those changes. Any challenges to those changes may then be raised in Parliament in either House by way of a disallowance motion. That process reflects the current scheme that applies in South Australia. Labor does not oppose that approach.

Schedule 1.2 to the bill makes a minor change to the Health Services Act 1997 by updating the definitions of "COAG" and the "Standing Council on Health". Schedule 1.3 to the bill amends section 203 of the Mental Health Act 2007. Section 203 of the Mental Health Act allows certain mental health examinations to be undertaken via audiovisual link, providing certain conditions can be met. Those conditions are that the assessment by audiovisual link must be able to be carried out with sufficient skill or care and that that audiovisual assessment is necessary because of the COVID-19 pandemic. That provision was introduced to reduce the risk posed by face-to-face assessments and to support assessments of people in isolation or quarantine. The provision is due to expire on March 2022, and the bill before us today extends the operation of section 203 to 30 June 2022. That will allow time to give effect to another bill currently before the Parliament for consideration that also seeks to amend the Mental Health Act. It will allow certain mental health assessments to be undertaken by audiovisual link, but it unties it from the requirement of being due to COVID-19.

That bill is still before the Parliament, so today's bill will extend the capacity to undertake audiovisual assessment for certain mental health assessments until the Government hopefully puts in place more provision for audiovisual assessments of mental health to be undertaken in circumstances that are unrelated to COVID-19. That will be of particular benefit to people living in rural and regional New South Wales, given that we have very little access to any mental health practitioners in those areas. Should those changes come about, they would be welcome. Until then, the bill allows a continuity of assessment for those mental health assessments by audiovisual link in certain circumstances. That is not opposed by the Opposition.

Schedule 1.4 to the bill amends the Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act 2020. It changes the requirements for the information that a medical practitioner must include in a specific type of medical certificate that relates to detained individuals and their transfer to a mental health facility. The Opposition supports that provision of the bill. Schedule 1.5 to the bill is a COVID-19 related amendment to the Private Health Facilities Act. That change will extend the repeal date of certain provisions until 30 June 2022. Those provisions include section 12A, which allows the Secretary of NSW Health to impose conditions on a private health facility licence in relation to the coordination, comprehensiveness, safety or adequacy of resources for health services across New South Wales. It also extends the application of section 70 to 30 June 2022, again allowing the Secretary of NSW Health to exempt a private health facility from compliance with a condition on their licence where it is reasonable and necessary to do so because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, Labor supports those changes.

Schedule 1.6 to the bill amends the Public Health Act 2010 in a few ways, some COVID-19 related and others not. I will initially address those that are not. The non-COVID-19 element relates to sections 62 and 79 of the Public Health Act. In their current form, those sections came about following a statutory review of the Public Health Act that took place in 2016. As a result of that review, changes were made in 2017 and among those changes was a requirement for another review to ensure that the provisions in their new form would be effective. That review has now been undertaken. A discussion paper was released, submissions were received and recommendations were made. The bill is giving effect to those recommendations.

The review essentially found that the sections are operating effectively. However, small changes were recommended to clarify that reasonable precautions against spreading a sexually transmitted infection include complying with a medical practitioner's advice given under the Act to clarify that any testing under a section 62

public health order must relate to the condition being managed under the public health order and to require information about a section 62 public health order to be provided to a person to whom the order has been issued, including in relation to their review rights.

The COVID-19 related amendment to the Public Health Act 2010 relates to the application of sections 112 and 118, both of which are due to be repealed on 26 March 2022. Sections 112 and 118 give power to the NSW Police Force to police the Public Health Act, authorising its officers to issue on-the-spot fines and requiring people to provide names and addresses. As all members know, these powers and their application have not been without controversy, especially when it comes to the different treatment of people in western Sydney. But this different treatment only came about from police enforcing laws and orders created by this Government. From what we have seen and experienced already throughout this pandemic, it is clear that we must tread very carefully when balancing civil liberties with the protection of public health.

Police officers have expressed concern about their role generally in enforcing public health orders. Their ongoing role enforcing these orders remains a concern for them. Like everybody, I suspect they hope that there will be little need for them to continue to police public health orders—that we are all heading in a direction where there are fewer such orders relating to the global pandemic of COVID-19 and restricting people's civil liberties for the purposes of public health. But given the significant uncertainties of what lies ahead, Labor does not oppose extending these powers until 30 September 2022. Finally, schedule 1.7 to the bill amends the Subordinate Legislation Act 1989 by extending the repeal date of the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008 to 1 September 2024, allowing time for the Ministry of Health to conduct its review of the regulation.

I put on record my thanks to the Health Services Union, the Nurses and Midwives' Association and the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation, also known as ASMOF NSW, for their input on this miscellaneous bill. They always provide their insight and the real-life experience of their membership to Labor's assessment of health bills that come to this place. Particularly I note that the shadow health Minister would want me to extend his thanks to them for that input. I thank the shadow Minister, and member for Keira, for continuing to hold this Government to account when it comes to ensuring access to adequate health services in this State. But I also thank him for his willingness to support the Government, adopting a bipartisan approach to reasonable measures when it comes to managing the global pandemic and all its challenges, including those we will no doubt continue to face in the future. On that basis, the New South Wales Labor Opposition will continue its bipartisan approach by supporting the reasonable measures that the Government is adopting to protect public health in the extraordinary environment we now operate in. Labor does oppose this legislation.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:33): On behalf of the Government, I support the Health Legislation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2022. I note that the Opposition does not oppose this bill, and quite rightly so. It is an excellent piece of legislation. Having been a member and Chair of the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission for a number of years, I know that the Government is always held to account for its actions with regard to health, and that is clearly evident from the excellent work done by the Health Care Complaints Commission in New South Wales. I commend the commissioner and her small team of diligent, dedicated staff at the commission for the great work that they do.

The bill implements the recommendations arising from a statutory review of sections 62 and 79 of the Public Health Act 2010, which regulates a number of areas in order to protect and promote public health and control risk. The Public Health Amendment (Review) Act 2017 made amendments to section 62 to introduce contact order public health orders and to section 79 to replace a requirement on a person with a sexually transmitted infection to notify their sexual partners of their STI status with the requirement to take reasonable precautions against spreading that STI.

A further amendment to section 62 was made in 2020 to allow public health orders to require a person subject to a public health order to undergo testing or examination. The 2020 amendments were made in part as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic but have a more general application. During this pandemic we have seen the Government and NSW Health working in a flexible way to try to make sure that we do the best we possibly can—in totally uncharted waters—to ensure that the people of New South Wales are provided with the best possible protection, whether they be on the Central Coast, in western Sydney, on the South Coast or in Port Macquarie. We have seen an amazing response from our health professionals, and the Government has had to be flexible, at times going into completely uncharted waters with the global pandemic. I acknowledge the tireless work of the Minister for Health, the Hon. Brad Hazzard; the outstanding Chief Health Officer, Dr Kerry Chant; and her team and the Minister's staff, such as the incredible Gemma Broderick, who created this particular amendment. I thank them for the hard work that they do every day to ensure that we stay at the forefront of this situation.

The 2017 amendments included a requirement to undertake a review of those two provisions, which has been done. The Ministry of Health conducted a review on behalf of the Minister in which 35 submissions were

received over a six-week period of public consultation in response to the discussion paper. Again, I acknowledge the fact that that important public consultation has taken place. When we introduce these sorts of regulations, it is important they are reviewed in a timely manner and amended accordingly, based on the feedback we get from the public, from health professionals and from practitioners, my wife being one of them. As I have said in this Chamber many times, she is a registered nurse, as I know you were, Madam Deputy Speaker. To get information from those delivering the services is essential, so I commend the Minister and the team at NSW Health for having those reviews of those regulations. The submissions came from a range of stakeholders, including community members, community-based organisations, and healthcare providers and professionals.

The review found that the public objectives of the amendments remained valid and the terms of the amendments remained appropriate for securing those objectives. Despite this, the review considered that there would be some benefit in amending section 79 to provide greater clarity about what the reasonable precautions in relation to spreading a disease or condition are expected to be, which may vary depending on the sexually transmitted infection. Further, after considering the submissions, the review recommended that every person subject to a section 62 public health order should be provided with written information about their rights of review under the Act. The review also recommended that any test a person is required to undertake under a person-specific section 62 public health order must relate to the relevant condition referred to in the order.

The bill seeks to implement those recommendations by amending the Public Health Act to clarify that reasonable precautions against spreading an STI include complying with a medical practitioner's advice given under the Act, clarify that any testing requirements under the public health order must relate to the condition being managed under the public health order, and require that information about a section 62 public health order be given to a person to whom a public health order has been issued.

Those amendments have been considered and supported by members of this place previously during the debate on the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2021. However, that bill has not progressed for unrelated reasons and therefore the amendments have now been incorporated into this bill. The important amendments to sections 62 and 79 ensure that the Act continues to operate in a way that best balances the protection of public health with the rights and liberties of individuals. The acting shadow Minister for Health contributed to debate on the bill on behalf of the member for Keira and the Opposition. She outlined many areas in the bill, a few of which I will go through, including the extension of the repeal date to September 2022 for the COVID-19 provisions in sections 112 and 118. Those sections allow a police officer to be an authorised officer for the purpose of issuing an on-the-spot fine and for requiring a person to provide their name and address. Those laws were flouted at the height of the Delta virus in this State. People were protesting en masse, recklessly putting people at risk, including the people enforcing the health orders.

The Central Coast is a good example. Hundreds of people who travelled to an illegal protest then returned from that protest and, sure enough, within 14 days we saw a spike in COVID cases on the Central Coast. That was incredibly frustrating for the hundreds of thousands of people on the Central Coast who were doing the right thing by following the health advice and health orders that were distributed by the Government, as well as the advice of the Central Coast Local Health District. By flouting those particular laws, protesters put other people at unnecessary risk for selfish reasons. I have no problem with people protesting their rights but only at a time that it is safe to do so. That illegal protest was a really good example and the people of the Central Coast were absolutely furious. Case numbers on the Central Coast had been dropping dramatically, to the point where the Central Coast was going to come out of lockdown, but 14 days later we saw the spike and that continued because of the transmission and transmissibility of the Delta virus.

Even though those provisions under the Public Health Act were not popular, they had a reason to be there. Again, the majority of the 360,000 people on the Central Coast abided by those rules and regulations. As hard as those rules were for people at certain times, we knew they were there to keep the broader community safe. Implementing the recommendations of the statutory review of section 62 and section 79, as I outlined earlier, were also important. The Private Health Facilities Act 2007 will be amended under the bill by extending the repeal date until 30 June 2022 for certain provisions related to COVID-19. Those provisions include amending section 12A, which allows the Secretary of NSW Health, having regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, to impose conditions on a private health facility licence relating to the coordination, comprehensiveness, safety and adequacy of resources of health services right across New South Wales.

The second amendment affects section 70, which allows the secretary to exempt compliance with a condition on a private health facility licence where it is reasonably necessary to do so because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As has been outlined before, the sands have always been shifting. The Government and NSW Health has had to respond to issues we have never seen before. They have done so every day in the best interests of the people of New South Wales to ensure that they are safe, including the people who are looking after people who are sick. [*Extension of time*]

I have had the privilege of speaking with many healthcare workers on the Central Coast about the work they are doing to keep people safe. Members know the stories. I was talking to a first-year nurse who was holding the hand of a person who was dying from COVID and who also had comorbidities. Her family was unable to be present because of the health orders restricting visitors in hospitals. The nurse had the family on the mobile phone, and she was holding the hand of the patient who was dying from COVID. These are the types of sacrifices and the incredible service that people have provided right across New South Wales. That is just one example on the Central Coast, and there were many of them. As I said, my wife is a frontline worker and she and her colleagues had to deal with the ever-changing potential risks through the different variants of COVID.

I congratulate and acknowledge the incredible work done by the Central Coast Local Health District, its former CEO Dr Andrew Montague and current CEO Scott McLachlan, who is based at Dubbo. These two people have done an exceptional job, with an amazing team under them to coordinate a response for our region during what were difficult and scary times for the people of the Central Coast. I acknowledge the great work they have done and the constant briefings we were provided, with the relevant and correct information, every single day. We were able to relay to our communities the information about what was happening on a daily basis. That gave some comfort to the thousands of people who were scared and worried about what was going to happen and how they would conduct their lives in a COVID-safe way. While in some cases they were unpopular, the health orders were implemented for a reason. Having the flexibility to be able to bring them into this place and change them accordingly is important.

I personally thank the almost 8,000 staff of the Central Coast Local Health District, who do an incredible job every single day. Obviously, we have seen an easing of restrictions with regard to hospital visitations, both public and private, and that is welcomed by so many people who find a loved one in hospital. The bill will extend the repeal date of section 203 of the Mental Health Act 2007 until 30 June 2022. This section allows certain mental health examinations to be conducted by way of audiovisual link, and we understand exactly why that would be the case. Unfortunately, some people with mental health issues have a higher transmission rate and greater risk of being exposed because of their mental conditions. This provides additional protection to those mental health care workers who provide the support and clinical advice that is needed by people with a mental health condition.

If COVID did nothing else, it highlighted the vulnerabilities of people with mental health issues right across the State. The Central Coast is no different to anywhere else. I acknowledge the incredible work done by the mental health care team on the Central Coast. The doctors and nurses there, in both the acute and non-acute areas, do an incredible job. We have been lucky enough to have the Police Ambulance and Clinical Early Response program, known as PACER, introduced on the Central Coast. The team conducts early intervention with people with mental health issues and works collaboratively with the police to deal with this in a clinical way rather than a law enforcement way. We have seen incredible outcomes from that. I acknowledge the Minister for Mental Health, the Minister for Health and the Minister for Police for working collaboratively on that outcome for the Central Coast.

I acknowledge that New South Wales currently automatically adopts the Queensland schedule of health orders, which the member for Port Stephens outlined. Having that changed is absolutely appropriate. The bill will provide that any changes to the Queensland law will only apply in New South Wales if New South Wales adopts those changes by way of regulation. That is appropriate because what affects New South Wales can be completely different to what affects Queensland. It is timely and prudent that this piece of legislation is being put through, especially the last section involving the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009. Over the past two years we have seen the difference in needs for each State, depending on the situation they find themselves in. New South Wales is in a very different situation to Queensland, and having the flexibility to provide for that through this amendment is welcomed. I acknowledge the great work done by the Minister for Health, his team, Dr Kerry Chant and the rest of the team at NSW Health over the past two years. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:49): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the Health Legislation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2022. The Greens support this legislation, but I state for the record a number of specific concerns that we have about elements of this miscellaneous bill. The Greens Health spokesperson in the other place, Ms Cate Faehrmann, will deal in more detail with some of those concerns. We would hope the Minister will respond to those concerns in his reply. The bill updates a number from pieces of health legislation as well as extends the COVID provisions to 30 June 2022 that would otherwise have been repealed on 26 March and 31 March. There are three main sections to the bill as well as a number of other additional smaller amendments. The first is around amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009. The second is around extending the COVID-19 provisions through a number of different Acts, including the Private Health Facilities Act, Public Health Act and Mental Health Act. The third is in relation to amendments following the statutory review of the Public Health Act, particularly sections 62 and 79.

Before I go into the detail of this bill, I acknowledge a number of amazing social work students from the University of Western Sydney. Sadly, they are unable to join us in the gallery directly in the line of sight of Madam Deputy Speaker. I would have liked to have brought them in but the logistics of getting 35 people to do rapid antigen tests today might have sent everyone in the Department of Parliamentary Services off the edge. I acknowledge that those students are standing in the foyer and watching the proceedings. It is really powerful to know that they are currently studying at the University of Western Sydney; that they are social work students; and that they are connected with the program through the Sydney Alliance, which is working towards creating community organisers and activating people who are working and studying in a whole range of different areas. I know from speaking to them that they, as social work students, feel as passionately about this health legislation and other health legislation as they feel about affordable housing, mental health care support and climate action. I acknowledge that it would be lovely if they could be in the Chamber. I thank local Newtown constituent Genevieve Kelly for bringing them in—sadly, just to watch on the television screen outside the Chamber.

I turn now to address the details of the bill. The Greens support the amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009 and recognise the reasoning for this, as outlined by the Minister and other members who have spoken during debate on the bill. In relation to the COVID protection provisions and extension of those under the Private Health Facilities Act, the Public Health Act and the Mental Health Act, The Greens support extending the provisions of those Acts to 30 June. That said, The Greens wish to raise a couple of concerns in relation to this legislation. The first is in relation to the fact that this legislation will allow and expand the ability of the police to hand out on-the-spot fines. We recognise that there were very difficult and pressing times when the police stepped in to engage in ensuring that public health orders were followed, but we also know that the impact of who was issued a fine in communities were often people who were at most risk or who were most vulnerable, or who were finding themselves in situations where, through their lack of financial security or support, they were unable to comply with health orders.

The Greens want to flag that we do not think that police should be used as an ongoing measure by issuing fines to people concerning public health orders. We recognise that that applies to a specific period, but we also recognise that there is a need to look at the unintended consequences of the economic inequality that exists in this State and other matters of inequality when fines would disproportionately impact certain people in highly stressful and intense ways. A fine for someone who receives the wage of a parliamentarian will be very different to a fine that has to be paid by someone who is living on disability support benefits. We need to recognise the inequality that is inherent in a system that sees fines used in that way. That said, I recognise there has been a reason for the fines and The Greens will not be opposing the expansion of those provisions until June 2022.

The other area that I wish to flag and that my Greens colleague in the other place Ms Cate Faehrmann will address in more detail is the issue of mental health. There is a need to recognise that while it was absolutely an essential requirement for mental health support to be provided to people through telehealth during the COVID period and during lockdown, The Greens would hate to see a scenario—and we will consult more with some of the key organisations and groups that are advocates within the mental health space—where a slippage occurs, resulting in telehealth for mental health patients rather than face-to-face consultation being seen as a more efficient or cost-effective measure to continue to roll out. The Greens recognise there was a reason for that. For some people, engaging in telehealth may be a good and useful way to continue, but we would hate to see pressures put on community health and other providers to move to a system where telehealth is seen as more efficient or a cost-saving measure. As we come out of COVID we need to be aware what we are keeping and what we are transitioning to. We need to ensure that we take the good bits and the flexibility but that we do not cause harm or unintended consequences in that process.

Finally, I turn to the statutory review of the Public Health Act 2010. I particularly acknowledge the work of ACON, which made a submission to the review process in December 2020. ACON recommended that no changes should be made to section 79 of the Public Health Act but that a review should be carried out of the penalties outlined in that section. ACON also recommended that no changes be made to section 62 of the Public Health Act. We are seeing changes in both those cases, and I flag the fact that ACON has expressed concern, as it has consistently for decades and decades, that infectious disease control, including sexually transmitted infections and HIV transmission, is a health issue, not a criminal issue. I specifically put on the record ACON's concerns around section 79, where it says, "Overall, ACON does not support amendments that legislate 'reasonable precautions', as such legislation will be unlikely to reflect changing standards on what 'reasonable precautions' are in a timely way."

When it comes to changing laws, this Parliament takes a long time to catch up with where things are at in the world. Everything moves much more quickly out in the world than it does in this Parliament. In the areas of medical science and medical and health research, where things are moving so quickly—such as preventative technologies using pre-exposure prophylaxis [PrEP], confirmation of the impact of undetectable viral loads, gonorrhoea vaccinations on the horizon, and other advances in science and medical research—the idea that we

would be legislating now for what are reasonable precautions is cause for concern for ACON, and it has recommended that no changes be made to sections 62 and 79 of the Public Health Act. ACON believes that section 62 and other provisions of the Act strike the right balance between the rights of individuals and the need to protect public health. I appreciate that the Minister has a long and ongoing dialogue with ACON, and I welcome the fact that there have been constructive conversations in this space in the past. However, I put on the record ACON's views in its submission and contributions in relation to the public health statutory review and in relation to sections 62 and 79.

In conclusion, I believe, as do many members who have contributed to this debate, that it is very important we recognise the people on the front line providing both health care and mental health care during the COVID pandemic. All the above-and-beyond work they do to keep our community safe has been incredible, and I acknowledge and thank them for their work. I also recognise that thanking the teachers, nurses, doctors and all the people working on the front line of our healthcare system is not enough. We need to show them our gratitude by giving them the pay, conditions and remuneration they need so that they can keep doing the vital work they do to keep our communities healthy and safe.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (12:58): I support the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, which implements a suite of measures to ensure health legislation remains fit for purpose. The bill will improve New South Wales parliamentary oversight of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law by providing that any changes to the Queensland Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, which New South Wales currently adopts automatically, will only apply in New South Wales if the New South Wales Parliament adopts the changes, with or without modification, by way of regulation.

The change in the bill will give Parliament oversight of changes made to the Queensland law, as a regulation will be required before any changes to the Queensland law apply in New South Wales. Either House will have to give the power to disallow the regulation. This creates a mechanism to continue the valuable cohesive national approach to the regulation of health practitioners where appropriate whilst ensuring that New South Wales has the mechanism for interjurisdictional amendments to not adversely impact on New South Wales' provisions for dealing with complaints. The bill will also amend the Public Health Act 2010, the Private Health Facilities Act 2007 and the Mental Health Act 2007 to create time-limited extensions of provisions implemented to assist the COVID-19 response. The measures in the Private Health Facilities Act will be extended to 30 June 2022. These provisions will allow the secretary to impose conditions considered necessary, having regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, on a private health facility licence relating to the coordination, comprehensiveness, safety or adequacy of resources of health services across New South Wales. They will also allow the secretary to exempt compliance with a condition on a private health facility licence where it is reasonably necessary to do so because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Certain COVID-19 measures in the Public Health Act will be extended until 30 December 2022. The provisions in the Act that will be extended include amendments to section 112 and 118 to allow a police officer to be an authorised officer for the purpose of issuing an on-the-spot fine and to allow police officers to require a person to give their name and address. The bill will also create a time-limited extension to section 203 of the Mental Health Act 2007 until 30 June 2022. This section allows certain health examinations to be carried out by audiovisual link [AVL], provided they can be carried out with sufficient skill or care. Conducting the examination or observation via audiovisual link is necessary because of the COVID-19 pandemic. A short-term extension of this provision will ensure that there is no gap in the availability of a broader range of AVL for mental health examinations, pending commencement of a more permanent amendment to section 27A of the Mental Health Act. Extension of each of these time-limited legislative measures will ensure that the health framework can continue to remain responsive to risks posed by the spread of COVID-19.

The bill will implement recommendations arising from a statutory review of sections 62 and 79 of the Public Health Act 2010. The Act regulates a number of areas to protect and promote public health and controls risks to public health. The Public Health Amendment (Review) Act 2017 amended section 62 to introduce contact order public health orders and section 79 to replace the requirement on a person with a sexually transmitted infection, or STI, to notify their sexual partners of their STI status, with a requirement to take reasonable precautions against the spreading of an STI. A further amendment to section 62 was made in 2020 to allow a public health order to require a person subject to a public health order to undergo testing or examination.

The 2020 amendments were made, in part, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but have a more general application. The 2017 amendments included a requirement to undertake a review of these two provisions. The Ministry of Health conducted a review on behalf of the Minister in which 35 submissions were received in response to the discussion paper over a six-week period of public consultation. These submissions came from a range of stakeholders, including community members, community-based organisations and healthcare providers.

The review found that the policy objectives of the amendments remain valid and that the terms of the amendments remain appropriate for securing those objectives.

Despite this, the review considered that there would be some benefit in amending section 79 to provide greater clarity about what "reasonable precautions" in relation to spreading a disease or condition are expected to be, which may vary depending on the sexually transmitted infection. Further, after considering the submissions, the review recommended that every person subject to a section 62 health order should be provided with written information about their rights of review under the Act. The review also recommended that any test a person is required to undertake under a person-specific section 62 public health order must relate to the relevant condition referred to in the order. The bill seeks to implement these recommendations by amending the Act. There are several more things I could go into, but I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (13:05): I make a very brief contribution to the Health Legislation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2022. As my colleague the member for Port Stephens said, the Opposition does not oppose the bill. I reiterate and endorse everything that the member for Port Stephens stated. I also acknowledge my colleague and shadow health Minister, Mr Ryan Park, and his commentary. Whilst endorsing all statements that have been made in relation to this bill by my colleagues, I take this opportunity to acknowledge those who have worked tirelessly to help and support us through the pandemic: the frontline workers, allied health workers, nurses, doctors, clinicians and everyone within the health profession, who have sacrificed so much for us. I could not let this bill go through without making a contribution and using that opportunity. Quite frankly, we would be simply lost without them. These changes are requirements based on many different issues and points that need to be changed, as my colleagues have outlined. I thank all of those professionals within the entire health profession, including our allied health workers, and state again that the Opposition does not oppose the bill.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (13:07): On behalf of Mr Brad Hazzard: In reply: I thank the health Minister and his team for bringing the Health Legislation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2022 before the House. I note that the bill has broad support by both sides of the House. I thank members for their contributions to debate, including the member for Port Stephens, the member for Terrigal, the member for Newtown, the member for Wollondilly and the member for Campbelltown.

There have been a number of components to this bill with regard to health practitioner registration, COVID extensions, sexually transmitted infections, and poisons and therapeutics. This bill forms part of the Government's regular review of legislation in the Health portfolio. It proposes amendments to ensure that legislation continues to respond to the needs of the community. The bill will extend certain time-limited COVID-19 provisions in the Public Health Act 2010, the Mental Health Act 2007 and the Private Health Facilities Act 2007 to ensure that there are appropriate tools available when needed during the pandemic. The amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009 will ensure that, going forward, any changes to the Queensland schedule to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law will only take effect in New South Wales if a regulation is made in New South Wales adopting the changes.

I take this moment to acknowledge the work of the Health Care Complaints Commission and acknowledge the commissioner, Ms Sue Dawson, and her team. The bill will also implement recommendations arising from a statutory review of the Public Health Act 2010 and make a number of minor amendments to health legislation to ensure that it remains current. As members can see, this bill has a number of components to it. I thank all the speakers who have been before the House. I note the good work of the health Minister and his team in bringing this bill before the House. I also acknowledge all the stakeholders that have been involved in bringing this bill before the House. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mrs Leslie Williams): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY: On behalf of Mr Brad Hazzard: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mrs Leslie Williams): I will now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

*Members***MEMBER FOR BARWON**

The SPEAKER: Today is the birthday of the member for Barwon. I wish him a happy birthday.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I welcome guests of the incoming new members in the Cooper Gallery today. I warmly welcome family and friends of the member for Monaro and the member for Willoughby; in particular, Tim Overall, Alex Overall, Nick Overall, Lana Overall, Nikki James, Chloe James, Madeleine James and Xavier James. They are obviously here today to join us in witnessing the swearing in of the new members.

*Announcements***LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS**

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that during the swearing in of the new members and for the inaugural speeches today, a number of officers from member's offices have been authorised to take still photographs of the new members from the side doors of the Chamber. I also note that a member of staff from the Department of Legislative Assembly will be taking photographs during the swearing in of all the new members.

NEW SOUTH WALES FLOODS

The SPEAKER (14:17): Obviously the recent floods have devastated many families in New South Wales, including some related to members in this place. I am sure the House will hear more about that a little later in proceedings. I acknowledge and thank those electorate offices that welcomed me last week, in particular the Upper Hunter, Northern Tablelands, Lismore and Tweed electorates. The Lismore and Tweed electorates, which I visited on 17 and 18 March, have had a particularly difficult time. What I witnessed there was not just devastation but also resilience and community support for one another.

During that visit I was able to foreshadow monetary donations to local charities and also deliver some books to the Lismore library, which has had a particularly difficult time. However, much more assistance is needed to provide temporary and long-term relief to the people affected by the floods. To that end I reinforce an invitation that all members received to a morning tea that I am hosting with the President this Thursday morning, which will help bring together this parliamentary community and raise funds for those in need. Morning tea is from 9.30 a.m. until 9.45 a.m. The Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience and others will partake in official proceedings at 9.45 a.m. Put the date in your diary to join the morning tea fundraiser this Thursday and register with my office, either through the registration link or by contacting my office.

*Members***REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS**

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: On behalf of Mr Paul Toole: I advise the House that the Acting Premier will answer questions today in the absence of the Attorney General. I further inform the House that the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government will answer questions today in the absence of the Minister for Health.

*Bills***CRIMES (ADMINISTRATION OF SENTENCES) AMENDMENT BILL 2021****LICENSING AND REGISTRATION (UNIFORM PROCEDURES) AMENDMENT BILL 2021****ENVIRONMENT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2021****COMPANION ANIMALS AMENDMENT (REHOMING ANIMALS) BILL 2021****Assent**

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

*Members***ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BEGA****Return of Writ**

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that my writ issued on 21 January 2022 in accordance with section 76 of the Electoral Act 2017 for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Bega in place of Andrew James Constance, resigned, has been returned with a certificate endorsed by the Electoral Commissioner advising of the election of Michael Joseph Holland to serve as member for the electoral district of Bega.

PLEDGE OF LOYALTY

Mr Michael Joseph Holland took and subscribed the pledge of loyalty and signed the Roll of the House.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF MONARO**Return of Writ**

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that my writ issued on 21 January 2022 in accordance with section 76 of the Electoral Act 2017 for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Monaro in place of Giovanni "John" Domenic Barilaro, resigned, has been returned with a certificate endorsed by the Electoral Commissioner advising of the election of Nicole Lorraine Overall to serve as member for the electoral district of Monaro.

PLEDGE OF LOYALTY

Ms Nicole Lorraine Overall took and subscribed the pledge of loyalty and signed the Roll of the House.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF STRATHFIELD**Return of Writ**

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that my writ issued on 21 January 2022 in accordance with section 76 of the Electoral Act 2017 for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Strathfield in place of Jodi Leyanne McKay, resigned, has been returned with a certificate endorsed by the Electoral Commissioner advising of the election of Jason Yat-Sen Li to serve as member for the electoral district of Strathfield.

PLEDGE OF LOYALTY

Mr Jason Yat-Sen Li took and subscribed the pledge of loyalty and signed the Roll of the House.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF WILLOUGHBY**Return of Writ**

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that the writ, issued on 21 January 2022, in accordance with section 76 of the Electoral Act 2017, for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Willoughby in place of Gladys Berejiklian, resigned, has been returned with a certificate endorsed by the Electoral Commissioner advising of the election of Timothy Charles James to serve as member for the electoral district of Willoughby.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr Timothy Charles James took and subscribed the oath of allegiance and signed the Roll of the House.

The SPEAKER: I congratulate all four new members.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

MINISTRY

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: On behalf of Mr Paul Toole: I inform the House that on 9 March 2022 her Excellency the Governor appointed the Hon. Stephanie Anne Cooke, MP, as Minister for Flood Recovery. I further inform the House that as of 22 February 2022 the Attorney General represents in the Legislative Assembly the Minister for Metropolitan Roads, and Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence.

*Question Time***NEW SOUTH WALES FLOODS**

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (14:29): My question is directed to the Acting Premier. The recent flooding disaster has been devastating for the people of the North Coast, in western Sydney and all across New South Wales. The community response has been inspirational, but more needs to be done. How will government support continue over the coming weeks and months as the recovery and rebuild gets underway?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:29): I thank the member for Lakemba for his question. There is no doubt that over the past few weeks we have seen catastrophic floods across New South Wales. They have been in the Northern Rivers and in the Hawkesbury-Nepean area but also in other local government areas. We have about 58 local government areas that have been declared natural disasters due to floods across New South Wales. We always can do better, and yesterday I announced that an independent review will be undertaken into the floods we have recently seen. It will be an independent review that will look at the causes of, the preparation for, the response to and the recovery from those floods. It will be led by Professor Mary O'Kane and former police commissioner Mick Fuller, who will be engaging with communities and talking to individuals, councils and stakeholders. There will be an opportunity for submissions to be put forward so that we actually hear from the community about what is needed.

I note that the member is rightly saying that this is a government that will continue to support those communities. When they provide their feedback in three months' time, it will come to the Premier. The Government will once again respond. Professor Mary O'Kane assisted when we had the bushfire inquiry, and a number of recommendations were made through that process. The New South Wales Government adopted a number of them and they are underway. No two natural disasters are exactly alike. Every time we see natural disasters, will we have everything perfect? The answer is no. But can we learn from them? The answer is yes. Should we get better every time? I agree governments need to do that. We are looking forward to seeing that report come back.

The question was in relation to those communities across the State that have been impacted by the flooding. Support worth billions of dollars is already on the ground and going into assisting individuals, primary producers and businesses to bounce back. We want these communities to bounce back and rebuild better than they have been. I have made this point on a number of occasions as I have travelled around the State, especially in the Northern Rivers. I have indicated to those communities that this is not going to take weeks and this is not going to take months. This is going to be a long process; it is going to take years to support those communities. Let me assure all of those communities who have been impacted by this flooding that we will stand side by side with them, every step of the way.

I have had the opportunity to work with the local members for these areas. I give a shout-out to them for the work that they are doing on the ground with their communities. I also give a shout-out to the mayors, the general managers and the councils that are leading the rebuild in their communities. It will be a long pathway to get these communities back to where they were. But I assure them again: The New South Wales Government will be there every step of the way to ensure that they can bounce back.

Anyone who has been to communities that have been impacted by flooding will have seen that it is devastating. To look people in the eye and talk to those whose belongings have gone from within their homes or businesses—who have lost everything—is tough. You see that frustration, despair and hurt, and you also know that it will be a huge rebuild. Fires come and go through and burn everything out. After floods, people are reminded about that every day while they clean out their buildings. They are throwing out heirlooms. They are throwing out furniture. They are ripping up wet, soggy carpet and throwing it into the streets. Then there is the gyprock on the walls of those buildings that are no longer able to be used. There is a huge clean-up ahead of us. Emergency services have done an amazing job. I give a shout-out to police and emergency services and thank them very much for their efforts. But there is a long way to go.

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the former member for Coffs Harbour and former Assistant Speaker, who is in the gallery.

NORTHERN RIVERS FLOODS

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (14:34): My question is addressed to the Acting Premier. Will the Acting Premier update the House on what the Government is doing to support residents impacted by the floods in the Northern Rivers region?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:35): I thank the member for Clarence for his question. I acknowledge the incredible

work that he has done for his community on the ground. I am sure he never thought that he would be going into some communities and seeing the level of devastation that has occurred in those areas and the impact of flooding on smaller outlying towns like Coraki, Woodburn and Broadwater. I say thank you to him and, again, to those members on the ground who have worked tirelessly. The recent floods in the Northern Rivers were like nothing that I have ever seen before. Like many in this place who have visited the regions, I have seen the work that our emergency services are doing on the ground to help locals get back on their feet. Just yesterday I was in Lismore and Kingscliff having a look at some of the work that has been undertaken already. Sadly, the scale of the job is unimaginable. Thousands of people have lost their homes and most or all of their possessions. They have lost a life that they spent many decades building.

Amidst some of the worst smells and sights that I have ever experienced, every day I was amazed by the selflessness and dedication shown by the emergency service workers and volunteers. I met an SES volunteer from Casino Unit who came to help out at Coraki and relieve some of the local crews. In two days he had clocked up over 160 kilometres on the water, travelling up the river systems to deliver supplies and to check in on people. He was helping out with food drops, fodder drops, fuel drops and evacuations. He slept in the SES unit on a stretcher using a life jacket as a pillow. In Broadwater I met with locals Carina and Dave, who dropped everything. That community saw water go through and impact 80 per cent of the community that lived there. Once those waters started to recede, one of the first things they did as a community was band together at the community centre. They ensured that the community centre was cleaned up and operational straight away. It became the beating heart of the community, enabling them to get supplies and shelves into those areas. They ended up having an opportunity to conduct medical checks on people at the end of the day. We forget that, with these waters, a high level of infection can occur in these areas. But they were, again, supporting those communities.

As the Minister for Police, I was blown away by the dedication of our serving officers. A number of them, not only from the local area but also from across the State, travelled to the Northern Rivers to support those communities. In the town of Woodburn, the Richmond River rose higher and faster than anyone expected. As the floodwaters continued to increase, Senior Constable Adam Bailey helped coordinate the rescue of around 400 locals from their homes, with New South Wales SES volunteers and members of the community all banding together to save dozens of lives. Adam's home and the Woodburn police station were inundated with water. Yet he remains buoyed by the incredible community spirit that he has seen from his neighbours and his mates. He said:

Over my career, which has been 19 years, I've never felt prouder than I have in the last couple of weeks, the support has been overwhelming ... I can't thank them all enough.

I also had the pleasure of meeting Dean Childs and his wife, Tammy. Dean is the sergeant of the Coraki police station. Both his house and station were flooded. They had to camp in their car for the first few nights, but they still worked tirelessly to help out their community. Again, I thank our MPs and reiterate that this is a long, hard road for the people of the Northern Rivers. The New South Wales Government will do everything it can to get those people back on their feet. So far we have announced billions of dollars of support for flood-impacted areas, including grants to flood-impacted residents, small and big businesses, and local councils, as well as support for farmers and landholders, and funding to re-establish critical water and sewerage infrastructure. [*Extension of time*]

Our support goes well beyond cash payments. Yesterday on the ground I met a specialist team that was formed by the New South Wales Government to help reunite lost and displaced livestock. We talk about houses and businesses, but in these areas we also have primary producers that rely on their livestock. Some have lost their livestock, which has been washed hundreds of kilometres away from their farms. Already over 2,000 head of cattle have been rescued with the support of the New South Wales Government, the Department of Primary Industries, and livestock stock and station agents. Many of those farmers lost their houses and suffered serious damage to their property, so the efforts of the stock recovery team have been greatly appreciated. Despite that support, I know it will not be enough for many residents. Government can provide support but, sadly, in too many cases it is impossible to replace what has been lost. All we can do is ensure that we keep working for the people of the Northern Rivers in the coming weeks, months and years, and I commit to doing just that. We will rebuild and we will ensure that the region comes back stronger than ever before.

MEMBER FOR KIAMA

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:41): My question is directed to the Acting Premier. What action will the Government take against the member for Kiama, given the serious nature of the charges laid against him this morning?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:41): I thank the member for his question. The member for Kiama faces criminal charges following an extensive investigation by police and a review of the matter by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

While the member is entitled to the presumption of innocence, as any citizen is, the standards expected of an elected member of Parliament are not compatible with the seriousness of the charges he is facing. Following discussions today between myself and the Premier, attempts have been made to contact the member for Kiama to seek his immediate resignation from the Parliament. I have no further comment.

NEW SOUTH WALES FLOODS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (14:42): My question is addressed to the Treasurer and Minister for Energy. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Coalition Government is financially supporting flood-impacted communities?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:42): I thank the member for Wollondilly for the question and thank him for his advocacy on behalf of his community in this very difficult time. I acknowledge the enormous suffering that those flood victims have endured over the past few weeks. I take this opportunity to acknowledge in particular the amazing work of our volunteers and emergency services personnel. I had the opportunity to visit the Northern Rivers to see firsthand the impact that the floods have had on those communities. Indeed, I also heard the stories about the impacts of the floods on communities right across New South Wales. In particular, I acknowledge the bipartisanship shown by all members of this place and all people across the community. I acknowledge the leadership of the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, who has done an outstanding job. I also acknowledge the shadow Minister for Emergency Services. I pay particular tribute to the member for Lismore, who I had the opportunity to meet with. She has been at the forefront of leading the response for her community and is an outstanding advocate for it. I appreciate her engagement in making sure we develop an appropriately tailored response to this disaster.

It is often the case that the worst of times brings out the best in people, and this flood event is no different. Just as the New South Wales Government did during the drought, the bushfires and the pandemic, we will stand shoulder to shoulder with those impacted by these floods, make sure they get back on their feet and help them to come out the other side better than before. The New South Wales Government has announced over \$1 billion worth of initial support and is working with the Commonwealth Government, which also has contributed close to \$1 billion. This package will see money going out the door as quickly as possible to where it is needed most. It includes grants of up to \$350 million to support communities in the immediate clean up of properties and public, community and environmental assets and in waste disposal.

The Government has also put aside money to support small businesses and local economies to get back on their feet, providing grants of up to \$50,000 for eligible small businesses. The payments can go towards the cost of safety inspections, building repairs, cleaning of equipment, materials needed to resume trade, disposing of debris and spoiled stock and leasing temporary space. We understand that small businesses will be doing it particularly tough during this time, so we have worked with stakeholders to tailor a package to support them during this difficult time. These floods have impacted the regions and our farmers are also doing it particularly tough, so we have put aside grants of up to \$75,000 for primary producers that have been impacted by these floods. Eligible small businesses will go through an application process to obtain the funding. We want to make sure we support our primary producers and our farmers. In addition, the Government has set aside \$150 million for the primary industry sector, which is targeted at assisting primary producers to protect supply chains and to boost recovery and rebuilding efforts.

Councils in particular are doing it tough. I acknowledge the advocacy of the member for Lismore, the member for Ballina and the member for Tweed in standing up for councils in their electorates. The Government has set aside \$120 million to support those councils. Up to \$40 million of that will be used to provide grants to councils to address urgent and medium-term financial and operational challenges, such as reconstruction and recovery programs. In addition, the Government will contribute up to \$80 million to a working capital fund to provide concessional loans to councils to compensate for residents who are unable to repay their rates due to hardship from floods. We want to support our councils who are doing it tough at this time due to not getting the rate revenue that otherwise had been forecast.

Obviously, individuals and families are doing it particularly tough, so the immediate financial support package has focused on providing people with temporary accommodation. We have put aside \$285 million to provide temporary housing support. That funding includes a \$248 million rental support scheme, which will provide 16 weeks' support—*[Extension of time]*

The rental support scheme will provide 16 weeks' rental support, which will be accessible by the end of March. Further, it includes \$20 million to extend the temporary housing program, which will allow people to stay on their land in a temporary pod dwelling whilst they rebuild their property. In addition, there is \$10 million to supply temporary accommodation through mobile motorhomes—the first 20 have already been delivered.

Additionally, there is a rural landholder support package of \$35 million which will provide grants of up to \$25,000 to impacted landowners statewide who are not eligible under the existing support mechanisms. There is also a \$150 million support package for those Northern Rivers communities that were not included in the disaster relief areas. That support package will go to small and medium businesses in the Lismore, Richmond Valley, Tweed, Ballina, Byron, Kyogle and Clarence local government areas. In addition, there is \$142 million available for the demolition of properties that have been found to be uninhabitable as a result of the floods in those disaster-declared LGAs. There is a further \$145 million available for the urgent repair and replacement of water and sewerage critical infrastructure capacity in the Northern Rivers disaster-declared LGAs.

We recognise that this is just the beginning. We recognise that there is a long journey ahead for those communities. As I said, just as the Government did during the drought, just as it did during the bushfires and during the pandemic, we will stand by those impacted communities and citizens every step of the journey to help them get back on their feet and to rebuild better.

MEMBER FOR KIAMA

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:49): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. I refer to his answer moments ago. I draw the Deputy Premier's attention to a statement made by the Premier earlier today where he said it was the Government's intention to move a motion for expulsion of the member for Kiama if he refuses to resign. Will the Deputy Premier confirm to the House that is the Government's intention?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:50): I have already made my point very clear. I have said in this place that the member for Kiama faces some very serious charges. The Premier and I have had a discussion today and we have asked him to resign from the Parliament. I understand that at this point in time the Premier has not been able to speak to the member for Kiama directly. Again, I will make no further comment.

NEW SOUTH WALES FLOODS

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:50): My question is addressed to the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery. Will the Minister update the House on the multi-agency response to the recent flooding by emergency service volunteers and staff and how the recovery effort is progressing?

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (14:51): I thank the member for Tweed for his question. I note that the last time we were in this place I answered a question from him as well. At that time it was in reference to the flooding that had occurred over the summer period, particularly the events of 9 November and the impact that had on communities all across New South Wales, particularly through the central west and west of the State, and the toll on our emergency services volunteers and communities more broadly. I could not have known then—none of us could have—what we would experience in just the past three weeks.

I start by offering my deepest condolences to the families of people who have sadly lost their lives during this devastating flood event. The event commenced one month ago today and since that time nine lives have been lost: one on the Central Coast, five up in the Lismore-Northern Rivers region and three out in the Hawkesbury-Nepean area. My thoughts are also with those who have lost their homes and businesses. Many have lost everything that they own. We have heard many stories today from Ministers on this side of the House, but I have had the opportunity to touch base with members right across the divide. I thank all those who have been to the affected area, who have been out west, for everything that they have done and are doing to help these communities get back on their feet and for offering comfort to people when they really need it most.

To get back to the member for Tweed's question, I have been working at pace for more than three weeks, catching up with as many people as I possibly can in our flood-impacted communities, whilst at the same time meeting our incredibly brave emergency services workers. I must say, it was truly hard for me to leave the Northern Rivers region yesterday to come back down here for parliamentary sittings. There really is just so much work to do. The collaboration of members in this place, as I have indicated, has been absolutely outstanding. It really has brought out the best in all of us as members of Parliament. I particularly want to thank the members for the electorates of Tweed, Clarence, Ballina and Lismore for their tireless efforts in supporting their communities across the Northern Rivers region and for the feedback and advice that they have passed on to me and to my office, which has helped inform our decision-making going forward. I also acknowledge members from across Greater Sydney, the Central Coast, the South Coast and the Hunter region. Members must not forget that those communities have also been the subject of evacuation warnings and orders and, as we have heard today, 58 natural disaster declarations for local government areas right across New South Wales.

As I indicated, one month ago today—on 22 February—a significant weather event started to affect many parts of our State. In the Northern Rivers we were expecting minor to moderate flooding in the days ahead, based on forecasts from the Bureau of Meteorology. Instead, the Northern Rivers region was hit on the morning of the twenty-eighth with unprecedented rain that saw the rivers across the region peak several metres higher than ever recorded. To give probably the most prominent example, the Wilsons River through Lismore exceeded its previous record of 12.17 metres, set in 1954, and reached 14.37 metres. The volume of water and the impact that it has had is just unimaginable. Between 22 February and 14 March the SES received 25,184 requests for assistance and carried out 2,082 flood rescues. As of this morning, 4,680 boots are on the ground from the SES, Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue, police and the Australian Defence Force. Members may be interested in some of the latest numbers. There are currently 1,482 people in emergency accommodation, including 1,340 people on the North Coast. [*Extension of time*]

I thank the House. Over 20,000 building impact assessments have been conducted, and more than 4,000 homes have been deemed not habitable at this stage. That could go up or down in the weeks ahead as further work is done in that space. Almost 13,000 people have received support, advice and assistance from 16 recovery centres across the State, and almost 12,000 truckloads of waste have been deposited at transfer stations. There are kerbside crews deployed right across the Northern Rivers. It is truly a whole-of-government approach in response to this unprecedented disaster. Members have seen all of our emergency services rise to the challenge over the past month, supporting the SES as the lead combat agency during the response phase and now Resilience NSW in the recovery.

I particularly thank the many thousands of volunteers and staff from a number of our agencies who have been out and about 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to protect lives and property. True to form, the Rural Fire Service has continued to provide a number of personnel, both paid and volunteer, to kickstart the flood recovery effort. I had the opportunity to visit their base camp—it is a pretty amazing set-up at Wollongbar TAFE—and also to visit a number of the brigades right through the region over the past three weeks. I look forward to seeing the clean-up continue. Government members are absolutely dedicated to ensuring that we see this recovery right through to the end. It will take some time, but we will stand with the community through this phase.

MEMBER FOR KIAMA

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:58): My question is directed to the Acting Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales and Minister for Police. Is the Minister aware of any other complaints that have been made against the conduct of the member for Kiama prior to the establishment of Strike Force Condello on 13 May 2021?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:58): I have made it very clear that in this Parliament the Government expects the highest standards from the MPs who are elected to come into this place. Our communities expect the highest standards. I have made it very clear that the Government has asked the member for Kiama to resign. If the member for Kiama does not resign then the Government will move a motion to move him on.

WESTERN SYDNEY FLOODS

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (14:59): My question is addressed to the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney. Will the Minister update the House on the status of the recovery from the floods in western Sydney and what the Government is doing to help businesses recover?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:59): I thank the member for Hawkesbury. I will come to her question in a second, but I take a moment to acknowledge the new members of Parliament with us today: the new members representing the electorates of Willoughby, Monaro, Strathfield and Bega. I congratulate them on their victories in their various elections. It is an auspicious occasion in any person's life when they walk into this Chamber for the first time and are sworn in. It is a pleasure to have them here. This is a room where the ideas of the State are contested, but members do so in an appropriate way and always put the citizens of this State first.

During this flooding crisis, we have seen our people rise and inspire us right across the State. The member for Hawkesbury was telling me the other day about people in her communities who have really stepped up. One of the people that she mentioned to me was Kevin Jones, the head of the Hawkesbury SES unit, and the work that he and his son have been doing over the past week or so to get into some of the remote locations through the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley and particularly up to the Macdonald Valley. It is immensely difficult to get access

to those locations. Community groups like the Mountain of Joy have also been out ensuring that food is being delivered to communities in remote locations.

Building on the response that has come from the emergency services Minister, I thank the member for Cootamundra for her extraordinary leadership over the past few weeks. It is always a challenging time when the State is met with a disaster like this but, for someone who has just come into that portfolio, the way she has approached the position has been incredibly dignified. People across the State are responding to her presence. I thank all of the volunteers in our various emergency response agencies. I think a lot of people do not realise the SES, in particular, has a substantially smaller volunteer base than the more well-known Rural Fire Service. They have been under an amazing amount of pressure over the past four weeks but, time after time, they have turned up in those orange overalls to support communities in their time of absolute need. The RFS and Resilience NSW are on the ground coordinating the response and making sure that recovery centres are set up, whether they be in western Sydney or in the northern beaches.

Across western Sydney, away from Hawkesbury, areas that are not well known for flooding saw impacts and flood evacuation orders—places like Milperra and Chipping Norton. Low-lying areas in Camden and some parts of Wollondilly were subject to flash flooding, with people being evacuated from their homes at very short notice. The Hawkesbury-Nepean once again saw floods impacting the community, just 12 months on from last year's floods. I was talking with turf farmer Graham Collis—a great character of our State whom the turf farmers of the Hawkesbury have really rallied around—about the impacts that have happened across those businesses. Over \$90 million worth of turf was lost. When I was talking to him in a coffee shop at Windsor early one morning he had another turf farmer staying at his place because his house was completely inundated. That is our community at its absolute best—opening its doors and making sure that there is a person there to help them when needed.

That is also why the New South Wales Government, along with the Commonwealth Government, has invested over \$2.5 billion in our response. The Government has the capacity to continue to support businesses and individuals through disaster declarations. Members have seen the strong support that has come from the Commonwealth through both the Australian Defence Force and other government services. The Government has worked quite hard to ensure that people have had access to temporary accommodation. Those numbers that the emergency services Minister went through earlier are extraordinary—the large volume of people who have had to find their way into crisis and emergency accommodation. As the tourism Minister, I was really pleased that Airbnb was able to respond straightaway by making properties across the northern part of the State and western Sydney available for people who have been displaced from their home. That is a good example of businesses and corporates stepping up and supporting communities in this time of need. We know that in the Hawkesbury-Nepean the challenge is not going to go away. This location has one of the highest flood risks in the State. In fact, if you look at the work that we did in 2017 around the Hawkesbury-Nepean— [*Extension of time*]

We saw through the work that we did for the *Resilient Valley, Resilient Communities—Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood Risk Management Strategy* that for us to improve the way we respond to floods will require a multidimensional response. That is why there are nine different action items in that strategy. It is hard to believe that when we first formed government there was no flood evacuation signage anywhere in the Hawkesbury-Nepean. That has now been changed. One of the big challenges that we have seen is the fact that as our climate changes, but, more importantly, as our weather moves through its traditional cycles, we go through long gaps without experiencing those significant flood events. In fact, prior to last year, the last significant flood in the Hawkesbury-Nepean was in the 1990s. That means a person aged 50 has not experienced as an adult a significant flood of the scale that we have seen in the last two years.

Building more community knowledge around floods and what to do in floods is absolutely critical. I want to see residents across western Sydney and, indeed, the Northern Rivers making sure that they have a flood plan for their own household, in the same way we have entrenched in residents of highly bushfire-prone areas the need to have bushfire plans and to know where they are going to evacuate to and how they are going to respond in that community. We also know that we need to reduce the volume of water that moves into this valley at times of flood, which is why raising the Warragamba Dam wall by 14 metres to hold back almost a thousand gegalitres of water will have an impact. We know from the studies that we did on last year's floods that in a flood event of last year's magnitude, which was very similar to this year, had we had that capacity to hold that water back, we would have lowered the height of the flood in the Hawkesbury by 3½ metres. I know anyone who has been through Lismore or who live in the Hawkesbury know how impactful that 3½ metres would be on their house, on their business and on their community.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (15:06): My question is directed to the Treasurer. Given the New South Wales Government has allowed big fossil fuel companies to profit from climate-destroying activities, will it now

act to make them pay for the climate disaster they have created, or will the people of New South Wales have to bear the cost of climate crisis response and adaptation?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (15:07): I thank the member for Newtown for her interest in this very important area of public policy. The New South Wales Government recognises the impact that climate change is having on the environment and the increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters. We have seen that only in these past few weeks. In recent years our State has experienced a series of unprecedented disasters. We have witnessed disruption, destruction and loss of life from drought, floods and bushfires. I acknowledge the toll this has taken on local communities and I can assure the member for Newtown and all members of this House that the New South Wales Government takes this issue very seriously.

The Government understands that climate change is the challenge of our times and the serious risks to our State if no action is taken. That is why the New South Wales Government was one of the first jurisdictions anywhere in the world to announce our net zero target in 2016. This commitment firmly positioned our State as a world leader, and I acknowledge the Minister for Infrastructure, who led that, ensuring that New South Wales made the commitment before the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union. We are already taking strong action to reduce emissions and invest in renewable energy in ways that grow the economy, create jobs and reduce the cost of living and doing business in this State.

Our Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, supported by almost all members of this House—and I acknowledge the support from the Opposition and The Greens—saw the Government's plan to transform our electricity system into one that is cheap, clean and more reliable. That is not only great for households; it is great for business and our economy. The road map will support the State as we transition away from coal. It will unlock up to \$32 billion worth of private capital in regional energy infrastructure to 2030, including in strategically planned and coordinated renewable energy zones. The Government's Energy Security Safeguard is supporting energy efficiency and reduction in demand at peak times. The New South Wales Government's Hydrogen Strategy, released in October, is specifically targeted at developing a green hydrogen industry in the State. It will provide up to \$3 billion in incentives, including \$70 million in hydrogen hubs in the Hunter and the Illawarra.

In September I announced, as part of our net zero implementation update, that a climate adaptation strategy for the State will be delivered this year, and a statement consistent with the Taskforce on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures will be prepared on a whole-of-government basis. This will take into account the physical and financial risks to New South Wales posed by climate change. I am pleased to advise more than \$900 million of the Climate Change Fund is now going towards climate resilience and adaptation, some of which includes private land conservation, climate modelling and communication, coastal risk management and bushfire management. The Government also recently announced its the \$125 million Primary Industries Productivity and Abatement program to support our farmers to not only protect the planet but also improve their productivity across the State. We take action on climate change in a way that grows our economy, lowers the cost of living and sets us up for a more prosperous future. That is the basis on which our policies are developed. Together our policies have put us on track to halve our emissions by 2030 on 2005 levels.

Climate change has been a much contested area of public policy. This Government has been working to bring the community together with a focus on those things that will grow our economy and reduce our emissions at the same time. The reality is that we are only going to reduce our emissions in a way that supports our prosperity by developing low-carbon technologies that are competitive, grow our economy and reduce the cost of doing business and our cost of living, and then rolling those technologies out at scale. Fossil fuels form a large part of our energy mix today because for decades they have been the only viable source of energy for our electricity system and our heavy industry. That is the reality, and it takes time to develop the new low-carbon technologies and deploy those technologies across the State by building the energy infrastructure of the future.

I do not think that we should be penalising those workers and businesses who have provided us with an essential public service in circumstances where there were not commercially viable low-carbon alternatives. My message to the member for Newtown and to everyone like me who wants to see strong and decisive action on climate change is that we need to build broad coalitions across our community for reducing our emissions, and the best way to do that is to unite behind a more prosperous, more sustainable and lower carbon future, not play the politics of division. The Government's record speaks for itself. We are acting now to mitigate future climate change and to address the many challenges presented by climate change that is already occurring. We will continue to ensure that our response delivers for the people of New South Wales.

NEW SOUTH WALES FLOODS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:12): My question is addressed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government. Will the Minister update the House on how Service NSW is assisting communities to recover after recent flood and storm events across New South Wales?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government)
(15:12): I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for the question and for the support he has given his community over these trying times. The floods have impacted so much of New South Wales. Having been in the Northern Rivers and seeing it firsthand, it is extraordinary what is going on there. I have never seen anything like it. I will speak briefly to what support Service NSW is providing. Service NSW is supporting Resilience NSW in 16 disaster recovery centres across the flood-affected regions, along with multiple other agencies, charities and insurance groups. Service NSW is acting as the single point of contact to navigate customers through available support. As of today, 65 Department of Customer Service and Service NSW team members are on the ground supporting 16 disaster recovery centres. Disaster recovery care teams are assisting customers in those centres, including completing online registrations to deliver support services and triaging customers to the appropriate agencies for support.

A few days ago marked the ninth anniversary of the creation of Service NSW. It has been a massive journey from where it was in its previous incarnation, being the RTA or RMS. No-one would have envisaged that a government agency like Service NSW would be triaging people during disasters. The first responders in emergencies, whether they are firefighters or SES, are critical but, increasingly, we are seeing the second line of response is getting people back on their feet, and Service NSW was there. It was a proud moment to see all of the Service NSW staff at the very front of those disaster centres speaking to people on the ground and listening to their concerns. Some of the concerns are horrific. I heard reports that people were speaking to Service NSW personnel about self-harm issues. They listened to that and carefully navigated them to mental health services that exist within the disaster centres. I give my gratitude to the people at Service NSW for the great support that they are providing to those in need.

A lot of grants are being provided, together with mobile service buses. As one would expect, there has been a significant increase in the call volumes to the disaster assistance line. Since 28 February 2022 they have answered over 50,000 calls. Disaster assistance hours have been extended to support customers and are operating seven days a week from 7.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. As the Treasurer has already articulated, significant funding has been provided to those impacted by the storms and floods, and further support is to be provided, including the Northern Rivers flood small business grant, which is a \$10,000 grant for small and medium-size businesses that were impacted by the floods and experienced a minimum 40 per cent decline in turnover in March 2022.

I speak briefly about the Mobile Service Centres and buses. They rotate across rural and regional communities, as well as community events. They are custom-fitted buses that deliver customers every major Service NSW transaction, including Driver Knowledge Tests and Cost of Living appointments. Service NSW delivered four Mobile Service Centres in 2019 and, on 12 February 2022, they celebrated their third birthday. These buses are not really required but, given all of the natural disasters that the people of New South Wales have suffered over the past three to four years, they have been in high demand. Routes are designed in collaboration with stakeholders, such as local councils, to ensure the needs of the community are met and that customers without a Service NSW point of presence are visited. I thank the personnel at Service NSW, who are working with other agencies to support people in dire need as a result of the floods.

Documents

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 74 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Investigation into political donations facilitated by Chinese Friends of Labor in 2015*, dated February 2022, received out of session on 28 February 2022 and ordered to be printed.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 142 of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016, I announce receipt of the following reports of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission:

- (1) *Operation Kurumba*, dated March 2022, received out of session on 15 March 2022.
- (2) *Operation Kainite*, dated March 2022, received out of session on 15 March 2022.

I order that the reports be printed.

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

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 40/57*, dated 22 March 2022. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: I also table the minutes of the committee meeting regarding *Legislation Review Digest No. 39/57*.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Tourism Industry Financial Support

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to provide targeted financial support for travel agents and tour operators in New South Wales, received from **Ms Tamara Smith**.

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

Public School Funding

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to fully fund New South Wales public schools in line with the original Gonski agreement, received from **Dr Marjorie O'Neill**.

Toxic Waste Dumping

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Minister for Transport and the Premier to urgently intervene to prevent toxic waste from the construction of Sydney's Northern Beaches Link from being dumped in Newcastle, received from **Mr Tim Crakanthorp**.

Hawks Nest Land Zoning

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Minister for Planning to direct MidCoast Council to prepare a local environmental plan to rezone land in Hawks Nest, received from **Ms Kate Washington**.

Coila Lake Foreshore Development

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Eurobodalla Shire Council to undertake a comprehensive environmental impact statement prior to development adjacent to Coila Lake foreshore, received from **Mr Paul Scully**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

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

The Hon. David Elliott—Central Coast Bus Services—lodged 15 February 2022 (Ms Liesl Tesch)

The Hon. Stuart Ayres—Sport and Gender Equity—lodged 15 February 2022 (Ms Jo Haylen)

The Hon. Paul Toole—Goulburn-Crookwell Rail Trail—lodged 15 February 2022 (The Hon. Wendy Tuckerman)

*Business of the House***BUSINESS LAPSED**

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that, in accordance with Standing Order 105, general business notices of motion (general notices) Nos 3000 to 3068 have lapsed.

*Members***INAUGURAL SPEECHES**

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (15:22): I quote:

And the Snowy River riders on the mountains make their home,
Where the river runs those giant hills between;

Banjo Paterson's bush hero, fearlessly racing down the mountain in pursuit of the "colt that got away", first entered public consciousness in 1890. More than 130 years on, *The Man from Snowy River*, and the place with which he is so closely associated, Monaro, continue to capture the wider imagination, and both have long earned their place in the annals of Australian history. Well before and ever after, the deep connection of our locale's ancient peoples can be witnessed in some of the most significant traditional sites in our great nation, which coexist within the broader bounds of Monaro.

In respecting the heritage of the oldest continuing culture in the world, it was from the first languages that the place name "Monaro" ultimately emerged. Altered many times—Monera, Moneroo, Maneroo and more—before its final incarnation, the meaning is still debated, but it is thought to embody the essence of the diverse landscape for which it is recognised. Then there is that tricky pronunciation. It is held that Holden's original 1967 coupé was named for the area. A member of the company's design team passing through Cooma apparently spotted it on a council sign. Proving he was not a local, the popular model was dubbed Mon-ar-o rather than Mon-air-o, and every resident will expect you to know the difference. That is yet another fascinating thread woven into the cultural fabric of this special place, first happened upon by the land's newest arrivals almost precisely two centuries ago as they began to venture south of Sydney.

In a 1976 publication marking the 150th anniversary of settlement in the south-eastern corner of the colony of New South Wales, Mrs Lauri Neal wrote of the "characters with whom we can feel an emotional link, whether they be the young shepherds, the lonely stockmen, the struggling farmers, the hopeful diggers, the hardy merchants, or the quiet engineers". From our colonial past to the progress we witnessed from the turn of the twentieth century, to our embrace of modern multicultural Australia in our ongoing national evolution, each of these elements of who we are has played and continues to play an important part in shaping our destiny. With all of that in mind, how delighted I am to have called this region home for more than three decades. And beyond that, the pride I feel in being elected to serve as the parliamentary representative of this extraordinary electorate must be visibly radiating from me.

It is an incredible thing to stand here in this most historic of establishments, to speak of a famed poem, and to have the chance to wax lyrical on a location unique in the length and breadth of our "sunburnt country". Nerriga and Araluen are its top, through to Braidwood, Queanbeyan and the many satellites in their orbits, including Bungendore and Captains Flat. Travelling through its heart along the primary thoroughfare created in 1938, marked on maps as the Monaro Highway 20 years later, is Cooma and beyond: Nimmitabel, Bombala, Jindabyne, Adaminaby, Delegate, where it marks the waypoint with the Victorian border. I refer to the rolling plains and the foothills leading on to the slopes of "The Snowies", our portion of the Australian Alps, the pinnacle of which is the awe-inspiring Mount Kosciuszko, or, closer to its native Polish, "Ku-shoo-zko".

I am not going to overlook Dalgety. In the early 1900s it was one of the top contenders in the battle to become the capital city of a newly federated nation. It was pipped at the post and instead Canberra landed in Queanbeyan's backyard. I refer to all of the other smaller villages and hamlets too, from Bredbo to Majors Creek, nestled within the more than 20,000 kilometres of Monaro's boundaries. A political seat since the first sitting of this very Parliament in 1856, it has been served by 24 different members. It has only recently come to my attention that one of those members has a statue almost directly in front of this great House and for whom Sydney's civic heart, Martin Place, was named. Sir James Martin, as his monument attests, was a "champion of self-reliance and public education". He was also the fourth MP for Monaro in 1864. He subsequently served as Premier three times before being appointed Chief Justice of New South Wales. Dare I say, that is quite a record of public achievement to be following on from.

As the twenty-fifth member for Monaro, not for a moment lost on me is the historic import and the equally great privilege of being the first woman to ever represent the electorate in more than 165 years of its European story—not the reason why I am here, but a significant and poignant realisation nonetheless. I do not deny I am in awe of actually standing where I am today. The last five months have been quite the ride for me also, and for those on this journey with me. I am a mum, a wife, a daughter, sister and aunt, and a friend. I have been a journalist, a small business owner, an author, a community champion and, you probably will not be too surprised to learn, an avid historian.

My interest in politics began early and while it had variously crossed my radar in the course of an otherwise diverse life path, finding myself here now is somewhat unexpected. In saying that, to channel musical icon Julie Andrews as she climbed every mountain in search of her dream: When a door closes, somewhere a window opens. While not raised in Monaro, it turned out I had quite a longstanding connection. My grandparents had lived there during the 1950s. My pop was a shearer on the historic property Carwoola, between Queanbeyan and Captains Flat. I was born and grew up in Griffith, New South Wales, in the heart of the Riverina. It is a terrific, diverse regional city and I have many friends and family still there. My mum was a trainee nurse when she met my father, a truck driver. Both were very young when I arrived, to be followed by a sister and brother. It was a tough childhood. There was not much money, nor a great deal of household harmony, and we had to deal with a lot.

As difficult as some of my early life experiences were, they produced in me characteristics I would not change: resilience, forthrightness, empathy, a rather pronounced streak of determination—some might say occasionally stubborn—and loyalty. And when I give you my word, you can be assured I will back it. What I will not do though is promise the world and deliver a globe, personally or professionally. Growing up, we spent much time with our grandparents at their small property at Hay where it backs onto the Murrumbidgee. There I did what country kids do: I swam and fished in that river, rode horses and motorbikes, and drove a tractor around the paddocks. I also saw the real job—the successes, the hardships and the dedication of those living, working, running farms and small businesses and raising families in regional and rural Australia. In my teenage years, much talk over the dinner table revolved around interest rates approaching 18 per cent as the country hurtled towards what Paul Keating told us was "the recession we had to have". I experienced first-hand the almost crippling effects on my wider family alone.

Our local State and Federal members of that period were well known to us and highly regarded generally, Tim Fischer, Noel Hicks, Jim Small and Adrian Cruickshank—Nationals all. That grassroots nature of genuine local politics—representatives who had similarly lived and worked in their communities, who knew their communities and what mattered to them—resonated for me then and now. Some of my early interest in journalism came from my pop's seemingly inexhaustible archive of *The Weekly Times*, known for more than 150 years as the "Bible of the Bush", for good reason. While I also had an interest in law, the more creative side of me prevailed. A communications degree at the University of Canberra followed. I was the first in my wider family to ever go to university. I moved four hours from home to Queanbeyan, more or less because it reminded me of the country town that I had just left. For me, Canberra was still a big city. My career started out on the *Tumut and Adelong Times*, a fabulous all-round experience.

I was quite keen on the business world too. Back in Queanbeyan I launched a local entertainment magazine when I was still in my early twenties, with \$100 in the bank and no financial backing. I sold that successful business six years later. I had returned to my first passion—media and communications. I also earned something of a reputation as a regional historian during my husband Tim's 17 years in local government. This would include his 13 years as mayor of Queanbeyan and Queanbeyan-Palerang, from 2008 until his decision last year that almost two decades of service to the community in that guise was accomplishment enough. Thanks to that time, I am not a complete novice when it comes to elections. I ran Tim's four successful campaigns. By-elections, though, I can now fully attest are such unusual beasts. Monaro has not had one since 1918.

While in some ways the feeling is a little like being the colloquial "12th man", awaiting a generally unexpected and highly visible late entrance to the field of play, I also had the privilege to experience great teamwork. Even prior to putting myself forward, I had been encouraged, backed and supported not only by my friends and family but also by The Nationals family. From our Monaro branch, State team and executive, our leaders, Ministers, MPs, members and supporters, so many rallied behind me and for me from the outset. So, too, others who are part of this Coalition Government, and Federal colleagues also, who came out to stand beside me. In stepping up to demonstrate that your faith and confidence in me is deserved by working as hard as I could every single day over the course of a long campaign, so will I continue to work just as hard for you, for my electorate and for our great State, New South Wales.

I am a team player. One of the reasons I have enjoyed team sports my entire life—a shout-out here to some of my previous and current teams, Queanbeyan Bears Softball Club, Queanbeyan City Football Club and Monaro Panthers FC—is because I believe it reveals much about character: playing your part to the absolute best of your ability and encouraging others to do the same, being reliable and dedicated, and never giving up until the final siren sounds. One of the most meaningful compliments I received throughout my election campaign was from a local who I have played against rather than with. Her message to me was, "If you're as hardworking and tenacious in standing up for the community as you are on the soccer pitch, Monaro will do well." As I have in all aspects of my life, I promise to be just as hardworking and tenacious in standing up for my communities in this role.

Most put themselves forward for public service such as this on the basis that they want to make a difference. For me, it is also about doing things differently, effecting change not just for the sake of it but because it is

necessary. My passion for exploring and animating the past also fuels my forward thinking. From a political perspective, this is not only for a year's time or the four years after that but, as the old saying goes, looking to plant trees under the shade of which I will never sit. We can proudly boast as our own some of the greatest examples of this we have ever witnessed: the groundbreaking Snowy Hydro and now the Snowy 2.0. I am committed to seeing the continued development of the special activation precinct at Jindabyne, a 40-year vision for the transformation of the gateway to one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country.

The critical key that opens so many doors is education. To be able to bring to fruition the long aspired to new and upgraded schools for Monaro is something I am determined to see happen, not because of an electoral cycle but because I know how long my communities have been calling for these vital pieces of infrastructure and services in our region. And they are so much more than just infrastructure. Schools are the very heart of our communities, shaping both the future of our young people as well as the places we call home. To continue to positively shape them, we need to be able to educate our own, train our own, provide for our own and keep our own. This is how our communities continue to thrive.

Looking after our most vulnerable is another area of great personal importance to me. Over the past few decades, my involvements have included seven years as president of Meals on Wheels Queanbeyan, being chair of Queanbeyan headspace, involvement with local education facilities and fundraising endeavours for our local health services, as well as supporting organisations involved with victims of domestic violence and the homeless. How we care for those in need is one of the great testaments to who we are. This includes our elders, ensuring that those who have given so much of themselves know that they continue to be valued members of our communities and are afforded the dignity and respect they have earned.

As everyone knows, when it comes to aged care and health care there are major challenges, and it is even harder in our smaller regional and rural areas. However, that is when it becomes even more critical to ensure they are not overlooked. This is a situation, I am very saddened to say, we are currently facing down in Bombala at a residential aged-care facility, Currawarna, which was originally brought into being through the hard work and dedication of the town's residents. While the provision of such services is the purview of the Federal Government, ultimately it is about us all. What is required is cooperation and collaboration across levels, and I will do all I can to support the formulation and implementation of long-term, sustainable solutions in this regard. There are the more commonplace issues, too, be it the state of our roads, which have taken such a beating, or biosecurity, from wild dogs to invasive weeds and the damage they inflict on what is one of the most significant agricultural and grazing regions in the country. It is not necessarily headline-grabbing stuff, but they are everyday matters that matter to everyday lives and so also matter to me.

Over the past few years in Monaro we have dealt with most of what nature can throw at us. And, of course, this is on top of two years of incredible hardship that none of us could have imagined, despite the lessons that should have been better learnt from history and the influenza pandemic of 1918-19. More than a century later I have had one tired and frustrated young person, in talking about the impact of COVID on themselves, their friends and family, describe it to me as "a time of non-life". With that phrase ringing in my ears, my focus now and into the future is on our continued recovery, not only economically but also psychologically. It is on backing small business, ensuring secure work and job opportunities, and assisting in the provision of homes people can afford to live in, particularly those for whom this is an ongoing struggle. It is on caring for our environment too—indeed, continuing to be at the forefront in this in the example this Government is setting, offering attainable and sustainable solutions, which is something our farmers and land managers in particular are attuned to more than most.

And in light of everything we have faced locally, as a State and nationally, with the heartbreak and devastation of the last month alone uppermost in our minds, and acknowledging the incredible assistance already provided in this respect, my focus is on how we continue to further improve our capacity to anticipate and deal with disasters both natural and man-made. In 1956 then Senator John F. Kennedy wrote in a book, *Profiles in Courage*:

... there are few, if any, issues where all the truth and all the right and all the angels are on one side.

Political compromise, he went on to say, is:

... the fine art of conciliating, balancing and interpreting the forces and factions of public opinion, an art essential to keeping our nation united and enabling our Government to function.

I could not agree more. No-one really gets by in life without the support and care, and sometimes the prodding, of others. I have so many who have helped me on my path that sees me here before you today. Supporters and friends, new and old, how I would like to individually name every one of you—but that would possibly lead to my first ejection from this illustrious Chamber! However, please know that all of you are in my mind and my heart.

Those I will talk of briefly include the former member for Monaro and Deputy Premier, John Barilaro. Monaro is not a safe seat, and John's accomplishments over more than a decade were remarkable. He delivered much for the electorate, precisely as his role as its representative and primary advocate demanded. I now look forward to building on this and forging a new road forward. I wish John well for his future and thank him for his confidence in me to continue to advance Monaro's cause. I also thank for being here today the Hon. Gary Nairn, AO, Federal member for Eden-Monaro from 1996 to 2007 and a long-time family friend. So do I thank NSW Nationals State director Joe Lundy, chair Andrew Fraser and all those in the head office team. I thank my dedicated campaign team, Angus Webber and Rowan Carter, backed up by Alysia and Ashley and supported by George Lemon. Rowan suggested that we pulled off what would normally equate to a year-long campaign in just four months, and I appreciate all of their efforts in achieving what we did.

So am I grateful to our Monaro branch members, including some of the newest that I have had the pleasure to introduce. I am grateful to the Ministers who travelled far and wide with me in the course of the campaign: Sam Farroway, Dugald Saunders, Kevin Anderson and Sarah Mitchell, who could not have given me more support with our local schools. I am so looking forward to working more closely with you all, as well as the rest of our team. And of course I thank our deputy leader, the indomitable Bronnie Taylor, who has been such a support for me throughout it all. I thank Dunc Taylor too for putting up with us fretting around the Taylor kitchen at all hours. Thank you to you both—perhaps most of all for your friendship.

I would also like to mention Sue Litchfield of Cooma. I am sure Sue will not mind me revealing she has recently turned 80, and she remains a local powerhouse and the epitome of dedicated women throughout regional and rural Australia. I was so pleased that one of my first official duties was to nominate and present Sue as our 2022 Monaro Woman of the Year. To those who are essentially family to us and rallied as my own supporter army—including Brent and Kat Hunter, who are here today with baby Eliza; Trudy and Shane Taylor; the Brays; Biscottis and Nat Harper—a heartfelt thanks to you all. Also thanks to members of our clans on both sides, my sister, Michelle, and her Albury-based family; my brother, Damon; and my mum, Lorraine, in Queensland.

As I have mentioned, it was not an easy road for us when we were kids, but my mum worked hard to keep a roof over our heads and to make sure we had the opportunities of an education, and has always believed in us unequivocally. Thanks, Mum, for all you did and for the sacrifices I know you made. I also beg your indulgence to note here today my grandma Shirley. I am sad to say she died just a few weeks before the by-election, at almost 90, still living on the family property on the Hay Plain. A hardworking and gracious woman, I am so pleased I at least had the chance to let her know that I had put myself forward for this great challenge. Her words to me were, "I've always had faith in you."

Finally, I turn to three of the finest people I know, beginning with our sons, Nick and Alex. I am a little bit biased, but they are amazing young men—and I would think so even if I did not have the privilege of being their mum. I am so proud of you both for who you are. And of course there is Tim Overall, always in my corner whatever I have put my mind to over our 25 years of marriage—a milestone just passed on the first of this month, the same date they officially declared the poll. Again, biased I may be, but there are plenty who agree that Tim is truly a top bloke—and an accomplished one too, not least for having delivered a transformative and well-received vision for the Queanbeyan-Palerang area of Monaro. Thank you, Tim, for agreeing to marry me when I asked you, for encouraging me to be who I am and for being by my side through it all.

The Deputy Premier, currently Acting Premier and our NSW Nationals leader, the Hon. Paul Toole—to whom I also owe much thanks—recently described me as someone who is intensely passionate about, and a champion for, my communities. I truly love the place I have called home for more than 30 years, where I have worked, run businesses, raised a family and been involved in my community in many ways. This, now, is all about Monaro and my fellow residents. My role is to listen, engage, hear, and progress their hopes and aspirations for where we live. That does not mean I will always be able to please everyone all the time, but they can have confidence that I will stand up for them and fight as hard as I possibly can to ensure their voices are heard.

Thank you, then, for this greatest of honours to be the elected representative of our magnificent Monaro. I will do everything in my power to deliver what is wanted and needed as we step forward into the future together. Thank you.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

The SPEAKER: I now have the pleasure of calling for the inaugural address of the member for Willoughby. I acknowledge three former members who are with us today. They are Phillip Ruddock, formerly of the Federal Parliament; Charlie Lynn, formerly of the other place; and Peter Collins, formerly of this place and a Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Liberal Party.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (15:56): I was just 11 years old when an eye doctor told me, Mum and Dad that I would go blind. The diagnosis of retinitis pigmentosa followed eye issues and difficulties since birth. I remember the looks on my parents' faces. For months we lived with this condition and started to face a future in which I would not see. Much as we all sought to be strong, there were many quiet tears shed. I remember committing myself to making the most of what I had, to doing my best to be my best, no matter what life threw at me. This was my lifelong resolution from a young age and how I was raised. Some months later, it was confirmed, in fact, to be a misdiagnosis.

Dad and I used to jog around the block each week. The hill up Eastern Valley Way back to our place on Penshurst Street was always tough. But, when given the all clear—namely, that I was not going blind—I ran harder and faster than ever up that hill. To some degree, that is what I have done ever since. This experience 35 years ago shaped me greatly. It defined my character and outlook and continues to demand that I never take anything for granted, that I dream big and do my best and make a difference when given a chance to help those less fortunate. This personal ethos drives me every day and has guided me to this place.

To represent the people of Willoughby in Parliament is a precious opportunity, a distinct honour and a humbling responsibility. I thank the people of Willoughby for putting their trust in me. It is up to me to live up to that trust, just like my predecessor Gladys Berejiklian did. I again salute her outstanding service to Willoughby and to New South Wales. I thank Gladys for her counsel and support along the way. It is a high bar of public service that has been set in Willoughby, a standard that takes time, respect and trust. I will strive to reach it. Both Gladys and, earlier, Peter Collins, whom I am delighted to acknowledge today, served with distinction locally for two decades and rose to become Liberal leader. I thank Peter and his wife, Jennine, for their counsel and encouragement.

I briefly mention another former member for Willoughby, from 1978, Eddie Britt of the Labor Party. Eddie was a good man who served in World War II and, together with his wife, Mary, had a strong commitment to community and the elderly in particular. One further mention of a former local member: Edward "Ted" Larkin was the first Labor MP elected north of Sydney Harbour. Ted represented Willoughby from December 1913 and was an advocate, rightly, for building the Sydney Harbour Bridge. He had earlier played for the Wallabies, before becoming a rugby league pioneer. I think he would be with me today in support of the North Sydney Bears' bid to return to the NRL. Within 10 days of the outbreak of the Great War, he signed up. Ted was killed in action on the first day of the Gallipoli campaign, in April 1915. There is a tablet right here in this Chamber in commemoration of him and George Braund, the other serving member who fought and died for us. I salute their sacrifice.

It gives me pride to mention members beyond my own party. I believe we must all strive to put people and community first, not politics nor partisanship, for our purpose here should be the greater good and the higher goal of public service. I will put a photo of Ted Larkin in my electorate office as a reminder that everyone is welcome and we all play a part in building our community. As my old boss John Howard often said, what unites us as Australians is stronger and more enduring than what divides us. That is the approach I will take as the member for Willoughby.

Willoughby was home to the Cammeraygal people for thousands of years. It was a strong and sizeable clan, benefitting from the best of lands and fishing grounds. I honour their legacy and their Elders. The Willoughby electorate today is welcoming, warm and hospitable to people from all around the world. In the early days of settlement, though, it was seen to be inhospitable. Distance and topography held it back yet helped to preserve its precious natural environment. In those days, it was individual initiative and community spirit that led to Willoughby's development. People of enterprise and courage took risks and worked hard to build businesses and lives locally. Willoughby was the first council proclaimed on the North Shore, in 1865. Its first meetings took place in a slab hut behind a cottage on Penshurst Street, the street on which I grew up 110 years later.

The train line came in 1880 and opened up the area, most particularly around Chatswood. Around that time, my great-great-grandparents George and Maria James moved to Crows Nest. George served on the founding committee of the Royal North Shore Hospital and was present when the hospital's foundation stone was laid by Sir Henry Parkes, in 1887. Parkes, the father of Federation and a former State Premier, was then local member. His local connection warrants greater recognition and reinforces the high bar I spoke of earlier.

Enterprise, hard work and community spirit still define Willoughby today. Local people and community make our area strong, vibrant and successful. Willoughby is a centre of education, featuring strong public and independent schools. It is naturally beautiful, bounded by Middle Harbour on one side and the Lane Cove River on the other. Local people are passionate about our local environment and the effects of global environment issues too, likewise our rich architectural heritage, from Federation homes to Californian bungalows, each of which I was fortunate to grow up in, and the Burley Griffin influence in Castlecrag. Willoughby has a bustling commercial and retail centre in Chatswood. That is where I worked my first job, in 1992, for Grace Bros. There are many local

shopping strips and villages locally, mostly small and family businesses, which are the engine room of our economy. I will be a strong voice for small business.

The Willoughby community is all the richer for its cultural diversity and vibrancy. About 20 per cent of the electorate has Chinese heritage. We have a large and proud Armenian community. Likewise, many people of Korean, Nepalese, Japanese and Indian background call Willoughby home, along with earlier waves of European migrants. There is a strong community tradition in Willoughby, which sustains us all. Church and faith communities, RSL clubs and veterans' groups, sporting and registered clubs, progress associations and service organisations, chambers of commerce, musical societies and arts centres, charities, school groups and many more—these, together with the most important part of any community, the family, are the little platoons that Burke championed, for they anchor us as individuals and as a society. Willoughby's are among the finest little platoons imaginable. I will represent them very strongly. Willoughby locals are thoughtful and respectful. We expect the highest levels of accountability over public money. We volunteer, lead and care. We are grateful for what we have, while striving and working hard for more. Those local values reflect my character and values and naturally align with our Liberal values. I will give voice to those values and advance them at every step.

While much has been done by my predecessors locally, there is more to do. I want Willoughby to be leading New South Wales, to be our best and to have the best. My vision for Willoughby includes building two new schools in Chatswood and Gore Hill, and expanding current schools; growing Royal North Shore Hospital and ensuring the suitable use of its site; investing in new road and traffic initiatives to tackle congestion; listening and acting on the tunnel to uphold Willoughby's interests; improving and adding to green space and parklands to meet environmental and sporting needs; lifting public transport, including completing the metro and fighting to restore local bus services; and ensuring that local icons like the Haven Amphitheatre and Northbridge Baths are enjoyed for generations to come. I put on record that I heed the messages of the by-election campaign. I will listen, consult and take account of local concerns about development, infrastructure and environment—noting all points of view—and work across the community and Parliament towards solutions.

Like much of New South Wales, Willoughby has been held back by COVID. During the campaign I heard from many people about its effects on them, their family, businesses and community. I will be a strong voice for recovery, reopening and, I hope, never returning to lockdowns. There are many lessons from this COVID period that warrant careful reflection and action. I acknowledge the extraordinary contributions of local frontline workers during this difficult time. The challenges of the past two years, though, are different to those faced by earlier generations. I think of my great-grandfather Harry of Northbridge and my grandfather Jack of Naremburn. Both had sons whom they met after three years overseas at war. They barely spoke of the horrors of war. They lost loved ones and mates. Together with their wives, Laura and Marjorie, they gave up so much, and yet they achieved so much on their return, building families, homes and businesses locally. Many in Willoughby would share such a history, for that is how our community was built. Whenever life gets tough, I think of them—of their service, sacrifice, enterprise, hard work, and love of country and family—and likewise of my maternal family who forged a similar path in America and a very proud heritage for me. Those values guide me and give us hope and strength. It was these values and the need to tackle the threat of socialism that led to the formation of the Liberal Party in 1944.

I joined my party in 1993, aged 17, identifying with its core values of freedom, enterprise and individual empowerment, and believing we deserved better than "the recession we had to have". My local branch, Willoughby Young Liberals, met in the Crows Nest Club and made me welcome. I cut my campaigning teeth in the 1996 Federal election. I would go doorknocking on a Sunday morning with my local Liberal candidate, Joe Hockey. I will do so again with and for Trent Zimmerman, our member for North Sydney, in coming weeks. The Coalition's slogan in that 1996 campaign was compelling: "for all of us". Its message of bringing us together, lifting us up and seeing us confident, strong and proud as a people remains the standard today. I believed then, and I still do, that the politics of division and special interests diminishes us all. Today we see a lot of negative, lowest-common-denominator identity politics that judges people on attributes, not character. It demeans us all and fails a fundamental principle: that every person is of equal dignity and worth, and should be afforded equal opportunity and freedom to be their best. This is at the core of my political belief and why I am a Liberal.

I inherently reject the principle—too often favoured by those opposite—of equality of outcome, for it counters and crushes the human spirit. We all have it within us, and we will live our potential when we are "to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield", as Menzies made out in his "The Forgotten People" address. This is the Liberal spirit that sparks my character. How fortunate Australia was to have the strength, courage and leadership of Prime Minister Howard and a bright, young Joe Hockey as part of his team. My six years working in their offices was the best schooling in public life, and I thank them. Anthony Roberts just happened to be the very first person I met during my earliest campaign experience in 1993. It was sheer and fortuitous coincidence. Little did I know that we would work together, would each become UTS Union president and would, indeed, become colleagues today. I thank him deeply for nearly three decades of support and friendship.

I was a proud member of the NSW Young Liberal movement for over a decade and, then and now, the Liberal Party, to which I owe so much. I acknowledge party president the Hon. Philip Ruddock, who is with us here today. Along the way, volunteering and community has been at my core. We get back even more when we give to community. I was proud to serve my local progress association in Artarmon in my early twenties. I thank its then president, John Peacock, for his continuing contribution. Menzies said that the first duty of government is to create the conditions for enterprise to flourish. It is business, enterprise and individuals that employ people, create wealth and grow our economy, not government. We need policymakers who will understand and uphold that duty. I came to know this in my full-time roles with KPMG, Allens, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson, among others.

I believe in the power of education. I acknowledge those who have taught me along the way across many degrees, most recently my Master of Business Administration. In particular, I wish to thank Professor David Barker for his inspirational teaching during my time at UTS. I thank all those at Life Education whom I served for 10 years as a volunteer director. The education and health of our children is so vital. Good policy arises out of coherent and long-term principles, and listening. That is at the core of the Menzies Research Centre [MRC], where I recently worked. I thank Nick Cater, the MRC team and board. The art of researching, developing, and implementing policy is one all governments can improve upon. We should not expect the public service to lead nor dictate policy. It is so essential that we run good policy processes if we are to achieve good policy outcomes. I love my home State of New South Wales. I am hopeful and driven for our future. Australia needs New South Wales to lead.

I mention three areas for policy leadership that I will champion. The first is housing affordability. Home ownership is a path to security and grounds us in community. Home is a place to grow, belong and shelter from life's storms. Yet home ownership is out of reach for too many today. The median house price in Willoughby is now \$3.4 million. It is \$1.2 million for an apartment. The mobility gap between home owners and renters in Australia is the highest among advanced economies. Unless we address that, our communities will turn into ever-moving tribes of nomads. There is no shortage of land in New South Wales, and our State property taxes are simply punitive and problematic. Today I call for stamp duty for first home buyers to be removed so that young people can get a start in real estate. I fear that too many will be left behind otherwise. Willoughby's beauty, proximity and community mean that the area will always be desirable and prices will reflect that. But we must also be aspirational and accommodating across generations. It must be the financial goal of the next five years that we remove stamp duty for first home buyers up to a reasonable ceiling. My proposal is for the Productivity Commission to inquire and tackle this essential need.

The second area for policy leadership is education. As a parent, I have a deep interest in education. "Here we deal with the future," Menzies said of schools. Our education system must first teach the basics well and ensure that every child in New South Wales can read and write. We need a system in which timeless core values are taught, including respect and resilience, and where the classroom is free from politics. We need a system in which our global rankings are rising and meeting today's competitive challenges. The third area is our Federation. We must take action for a more clear and functional Federation, including on taxation. I recall the original tax reform plans of 20 years ago, while working for Mr Howard. Only half of them were delivered at the time. It is now time to revisit this and address the States' inefficient tax base. State Governments should be rewarded for getting budgets in the black and delivering on productivity. Premier Perrotet's recent call for action on healthcare reform for our Federation was courageous and correct. In addition to those big issues, I am passionate about care for the vulnerable and voiceless, the mental health issues plaguing our young, respect for the rule of law and the strength of our democracy. I feel a particular duty to support those who are vision impaired.

There is much to do. None of this can be possible without the support of generous people. I thank Chris Stone and his team at Liberal Party headquarters for their expertise and hard work during the by-election. Likewise, I thank the Premier, Ministers and members who came to Willoughby and contributed to the campaign. I particularly recognise Alister Henskens for his very generous commitment. I record my deep thanks to Victor Kerr, Willoughby SEC president, and every member of the Liberal Party family, both locally and beyond, who gave time and energy to our by-election campaign. There are many people who have been on a political journey with me for a long time now. There is a small group who creatively call themselves "Team Tim", and for years we have met and made sacrifices together. I cannot thank them enough—they know who they are. To my many bosses, colleagues, mentors, advisers and many friends from so many walks of life—thank you all.

Nothing means more to me than family. As I now know, a parent's love knows no bounds. My parents, Bruce and Trish, are my longest supporters. I could not have more loving, generous nor wonderful parents and role models. Likewise, my big sister Susan, her husband Keith, my niece and nephews—I love you all, dearly. To my extended family on both sides of the Pacific—aunts, uncles and cousins, as well as my mother-in-law, sisters-in-law and brother-in-law—thank you all. I particularly want to mention my mother-in-law, Lesley, a strong and capable woman who has endured a great deal and does so much for us and our community. She is

simply incredible. Six days after the by-election, Nikki and I welcomed baby Xavier to our family—timing is everything, they say. Together with our daughters, Chloe and Madeleine, we could not be happier, albeit a bit busy. My wife and children are my inspiration every day. I am so fortunate to have a beautiful and healthy family. I thank them for their never-ending love and support. And I thank God for this and my other blessings in life. Nikki is the most wonderful partner in life, love and community. She makes me better and I am ever grateful for her.

As a young child, I played in the metal rocket structure in Muston Park, just down Penshurst Street. We always called it "the rocket park", and I loved it, as do my kids today. For a while it seemed I may not actually see the stars I sought to reach from that rocket. Today, thankfully, I see clearly and now have the opportunity to pursue a big vision for Willoughby and New South Wales. I look ahead, and aspire to this Theodore Roosevelt quote: I will "keep my eyes on the stars and my feet on the ground". I will take nothing for granted, dream big, and always give my best for Willoughby and New South Wales. Thank you very much.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

The SPEAKER: I join with members in congratulating the member for Willoughby and the member for Monaro on their inaugural speeches.

Bills

MINING AND PETROLEUM LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (16:20): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Mining and Petroleum Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill sets in place legislation to establish the Royalties for Rejuvenation fund. This program is a key part of the regional development strategy set out in the Government's 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW, providing the framework for reliable access to energy, a skilled labour force and sustainable economies. The establishment of this fund also honours a key commitment made during the Upper Hunter by-election. The bill also includes a suite of changes to both the Mining Act 1992 and the Petroleum (Onshore) Act 1991 that harmonise, modernise and update the legislation to ensure that it remains fit for purpose for the ongoing responsible development of resources in our State.

These changes will ensure more effective decision-making over the lifecycle of a mine, from exploration through to rehabilitation. The updates include practical changes to the applications for and administration of titles to help streamline processes, remove duplication and give greater certainty to titleholders and the community. The bill also includes improved compliance tools which will discourage illegal and fraudulent activities, provide a clear operating framework for the mining and petroleum industries, and encourage ecologically sustainable and responsible development of mineral resources and an appropriate return to the State. The bill also includes ruling out mining for mercury to ensure Australia's compliance with the Minamata Convention on Mercury. A number of housekeeping and administrative changes are included in the bill that will update and modernise operational processes to reflect a modern-day business environment.

The amendments are sensible and practical, improving consistency across the legislative framework and updating policy and processes to support best practice in the management and regulation of extractive industries in New South Wales. These amendments are the result of extensive consultation, and we have listened to the feedback from a range of stakeholders on the need to remove unnecessary barriers to doing business and to update and modernise the legislation and government processes. For landholders, I would like to emphasise that there are no changes to the current land access framework or the requirements for an exploration licence holder to have a valid land access agreement before they can access the land. We have also shown how mining and farming can coexist and there are strong protections for productive agricultural land through a robust assessment process, activity approvals and lease conditions, and the strong regulatory regime for rehabilitation.

Agricultural land is critical to a strong and sustainable future for our State, and I want to be clear that nothing in the bill changes the commitment that the Government has to supporting farmers and the agricultural sector, which has such a vital role to play across regional New South Wales. The Government's regional plans reflect this balanced approach and acknowledge the range of different industries and land uses that make up our

diverse regional economies. Mining contributes more than \$26 billion to the New South Wales economy each year as well as significant employment and economic development in regional communities throughout New South Wales. Future technologies and products will continue to require mining, especially for critical minerals that form a vital part of the supply chain for a whole host of new and existing items that we use every day.

New South Wales is well placed to meet that demand and holds significant resource potential, particularly for copper, lithium, rare earth elements, nickel and cobalt, with further unexplored potential. In November 2021 I released the Government's Critical Minerals and High-Tech Metals Strategy to help unlock that potential and make New South Wales a leading global supplier. I want to make New South Wales the number one mining investment and advanced manufacturing destination. The strategy provides a platform to assist miners and mineral processors to establish and grow the critical minerals and high-tech metals value chain, creating jobs and driving investment in regional New South Wales. As such, it is vital that the Mining Act and the Petroleum (Onshore) Act are updated and remain relevant in this changing landscape.

I turn now to the amendments in the bill. The bill delivers on the Government's commitment to introduce a Royalties for Rejuvenation fund to support regional towns and communities that are reliant on coalmining and associated industries. The New South Wales coal sector is an engine industry not only for regional New South Wales but also for the entire New South Wales economy. It is a key employer in regional New South Wales and it is on track to deliver record royalties again this financial year. That will have flow-on benefits for our communities. The sector is currently seeing increased demand and record coal prices. In the medium term, demand is likely to remain relatively stable. Under some scenarios, global demand for thermal coal could be sustained for the next two decades or more. But the Government also recognises that Australia's domestic reliance on coal is gradually declining. Many of the mines supplying coal-fired power stations have the capacity to pivot to export, and that is why now is the time to introduce this fund—while demand for New South Wales thermal coal is strong.

As set out in the Government's *Strategic Statement on Coal Exploration and Mining in NSW*, our goal is to manage diversification during the coming decades without unnecessarily undermining businesses, jobs and communities. That approach strikes a balance between supporting responsible coal development in areas suitable for mining and recognising the need to support and diversify the economies of coal-reliant communities. Every year at least \$25 million will be contributed to the Royalties for Rejuvenation fund to go towards supporting coalmining communities by diversifying their economies. The money will come from coalmining royalties and is an investment in future economic opportunities and the creation of future jobs and growth, which will ensure our regional communities continue to thrive.

The Royalties for Rejuvenation fund delivers on a key commitment to support the growth of new jobs and industries in traditional coalmining communities. That will not happen overnight but requires detailed, long-term planning to ensure the regions continue to have growth industries that offer skilled, well-paying jobs. The new section of the Act specifies the purpose of the fund:

... to alleviate economic impacts in affected coal mining regions caused by a move away from coal mining by supporting other economic diversification in those regions, including by the funding of infrastructure, services, programs and other activities.

Locals are best placed to understand their community's needs and develop emerging opportunities. That is why the bill provides for the Minister to establish expert panels to advise the Minister and make recommendations about the payments from the Royalties for Rejuvenation fund. That will ensure that regional communities and industries play a central role in shaping the fund's priorities through support and provision of comprehensive advice that will guide long-term decisions on the fund's investment. The bill establishes a requirement to review the fund after three years to consider whether the fund is meeting its policy objectives and whether the provisions in the bill remain appropriate. That review period will give the Government time to see how the fund is operating and provide an opportunity to make improvements or adjustments to the legislative framework if required.

It is important that legislation remains fit for purpose in the twenty-first century as the resource landscape evolves and as we strive towards a more customer-focused approach to applications and titles management as well as an outcomes-based focus on regulation. During the past two years the Government has created clarity and certainty for industry and communities with four key strategies: the NSW Minerals Strategy, the Strategic Statement on Coal Exploration and Mining in NSW, the Future of Gas Statement and the Critical Minerals and High-Tech Metals Strategy. Each is a transparent statement for industry and communities on the future of mining in this State.

The NSW Minerals Strategy outlines how the State will grow investment in exploration and mining to position New South Wales as a major global supplier of minerals. The statements on coal and gas provide the framework for securing supplies of those critical energy resources for the people of New South Wales into the near and medium term. They also outline the State's balanced approach to exploration, coalmining and gas

production, including greater clarity to industry and community about where coal and gas exploration and extraction will and will not occur. The Critical Minerals and High-Tech Metals Strategy provides a platform to assist miners and mineral processors to establish and grow the critical minerals and high-tech metals value chain, creating jobs and driving investment in regional New South Wales.

As the resources sector responds to changing needs and expectations, the bill aims to provide the legislative framework to support that evolution. The bill seeks to reduce redundant processes and duplication to reduce the administrative burden for business, providing a clear structure for mining and petroleum businesses to operate and encouraging environmentally sustainable and responsible development of mineral and gas resources and an appropriate return to the State. The bill moves some of the more prescriptive and procedural requirements from the Acts into the regulations, which is a better way of dealing with them. That will provide more flexibility for the Government to modernise and adapt to changing circumstances. Many of the changes are housekeeping and best practice updates to clarify and simplify requirements for industry and improve government processes associated with applications and authorisations. I reassure the Parliament that the Government will release a consultation draft of the regulations for public consideration before they are introduced.

The concept of a fit and proper person is fundamental to determining a person's honesty, integrity and reputation. The fit and proper person test is used to ensure that a person is an appropriate person to participate in our mining sector and that they will take seriously the privilege and responsibility involved in being granted an authorisation to explore or extract the resources that belong to the people of New South Wales. The Acts currently include a fit and proper person test that gives the decision-maker power to restrict operations, suspend or cancel an authorisation or refuse to grant an authorisation if the person is found to be not fit and proper.

The bill broadens the scope of the provisions, enabling the decision-maker to make a standalone declaration at any time that the person is not a fit and proper person. It provides for a suite of enforcement actions, including a caution or reprimand, disqualification from making applications for a specified period of time or for an indefinite period, directions to do or refrain from activities associated with an authorisation and rejection of applications made by a disqualified person. Penalties for not complying with directions made against those who do not meet the fit and proper person test will be set at up to \$1.1 million and, for a continuing offence, a further penalty of \$110,000 each day that the offence continues. The bill also introduces new penalties for prospecting without a valid access arrangement. Provisions to protect inspectors and other authorised persons have been expanded to ensure that it is an offence to assault, threaten or intimidate a government official in the course of their duties.

New flexibility has been included for the renewal of exploration authorisations, focusing more directly on an area that is genuinely required to meet the exploration work program rather than a nominal percentage figure. That will encourage more efficient exploration by promoting a "use it or lose it" approach to ensure that the development of resources is providing an appropriate return to the State. The bill continues to support the State's updated framework for rehabilitation. Recent operational reforms and amendments to the mining regulations require mining leaseholders to undertake progressive rehabilitation over the lifetime of the mining operation. The bill supports those reforms, ensuring that a security deposit is always held against a rehabilitation liability by requiring a security deposit to be held on registration of a transfer of an authority such as the sale of a mine. The provisions for ancillary mining activities will also be updated to ensure that non-mining activities that directly facilitate mining are subject to rehabilitation obligations under the Act, whether they are directly adjacent to the mine or some distance away. The bill will also help to ensure Australia's compliance with the Minamata Convention to ban mining for mercury by removing the ability to apply for a mining lease for mercury.

The mining industry, like all industries, is evolving over time. New technologies create new opportunities and communities demand higher standards and protections. It is our role as government, and for me as Minister responsible, to manage competing demands and ensure that mining can continue to provide critical resources and benefits across New South Wales. The bill is the result of a long process of consultation and development. The resulting amendments to the legislation will ensure that it remains fit for purpose to support investment and growth in the resources sector in New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

GREATER CITIES COMMISSION BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Rob Stokes, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (16:36): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Greater Cities Commission Bill 2022. The bill provides the foundation for a six cities vision for planning across a globally significant metropolitan region. By bringing six cities together and involving all parts of the region in strategic planning for our future, New South Wales can build a world-class city region that has the scale to provide better jobs, housing, education and lifestyle opportunities for its people. The six cities model will create a polycentric region where each city builds on its existing strengths and local character while leveraging the benefits of scale to attract new talent and investment as well as enhanced infrastructure and amenities.

In 2015 the Greater Sydney Commission was established with bipartisan support. At the time the commission was a revolutionary model for metropolitan governance in Australia. Planning for Australian cities has long been held back by the conflict and disconnect between State and local governments. Governments of either colour have known the challenges and difficulties of trying to plan for large cities without the levers to coordinate all aspects of urban policy. On one hand, the State Government has disproportionate fiscal powers and service delivery responsibility for infrastructure and services like public transport, roads, health and education. It also has a broader interest in the economic and social progress of a much larger community over space and time. On the other hand, local government, with great restraints on its fiscal and political autonomy, has less capacity to help meet the State's broader objectives. Local communities that deliver housing and jobs growth shoulder the burden of growth, while investment in necessary infrastructure may not have been proportionate to manage that growth.

In this context, bringing together State and local governments into a single commission model binds levels of government together in a more coordinated governance model. The great success of the Greater Sydney Commission has been how it operates in the face of politics, in a way unbound by the partisan politics of any one moment or place. The commission model, bringing together deep knowledge and connection to State and local government, allows the commission to get on with setting the necessary long-term objectives and plans to manage and coordinate growth, while being able to withstand short-term political pressures and exigencies. In my experience, the easiest job of a politician is to say what you are opposed to. The commission allows us to face the difficult planning actions we need to take, safe in the knowledge that the challenges cannot be shirked or ignored. I say at the outset that the Government will work with those opposite and on the crossbench to ensure the bill will have a lasting legislative architecture that will support the planning not only of the Government of today but also of future governments.

Under the leadership of the inaugural Chief Commissioner, Lucy Turnbull, AO, the commission quickly developed a reputation for world-leading planning. In 2018, for the first time, the Greater Sydney Region Plan, the State Infrastructure Strategy and Future Transport 2056—the long-term transport master plan—were released together. This meant that the State's plans for land use, transport and infrastructure were built on the same assumptions, evidence, data, objectives and time horizons. Our infrastructure investments would inform our decision-making about land use, housing supply and job creation. How we experience and move around the city would impact on our transit choices. We need to take a whole-of-government approach to planning, and by bringing the three plans under my portfolios, we have a brilliant opportunity to embed this consistency in the next cycle of planning.

Together with Infrastructure NSW, the commission built an evidence and expertise base for strategic planning focused on identifying and resolving the major challenges of growth for Greater Sydney. In contrast to other States and Territories, the Greater Sydney Region Plan took a significant step to ensure that, rather than being a glossy document sitting on the shelf, metropolitan planning objectives were perpetual planning considerations that cascaded down the hierarchy of strategic plans from State to local. A central pillar of the Greater Sydney Region Plan was the establishment of the three cities—the Eastern Harbour City, the Central River City and the Western Parkland City. For so long, the spatial geography and economy of Sydney has drawn long arcs across the city—people commuting from their homes to jobs in the east. This plan was a conscious effort to change the distribution of jobs closer to homes across Sydney.

The Eastern Harbour City is shaped around the Sydney CBD and the global economic corridor, which stretches from Macquarie Park in the north to Sydney Airport in the south and was first identified in the City of Cities plan of 2005. In the Central River City, the astronomical growth of Parramatta, unmatched by any other suburban centre in Australian cities, has concentrated employment and economic opportunities closer to where so many Sydneysiders live, while also creating a dense, walkable and beautiful city centre close to transport and amenity. The development of the Western Parkland City, including the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, along with the centres of Campbelltown, Liverpool and Penrith, is contingent on collaboration across levels of government, as evidenced through the city deal. The Western Sydney City Deal, ably negotiated by current Chief Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission, Geoff Roberts, AM, on behalf of the

New South Wales Government, has secured a new way of collaborative planning across and between levels of government to ensure the Western Parkland City's success. It was interesting to note that this approach was emulated in South East Queensland with the release of its city deal just yesterday.

The commission model is being promoted elsewhere as a powerful model to resolve the tensions of strategic planning in Australian cities. The Greater Hobart Committee was established in 2019, bringing together four Tasmanian Government Ministers and agencies with the four councils of metropolitan Hobart to guide strategic land use and infrastructure planning. In 2020 prominent Australian urban planner Marcus Spiller called for the Victorian Government to establish Melbourne's version of the Greater Sydney Commission. He said that, unlike Melbourne citizens wondering how individual infrastructure projects add up to a long-term vision for Melbourne, the Greater Sydney Commission has devised a compelling metropolitan strategy that has captured the popular imagination.

On 2 December 2021 the Premier announced that the three cities would become six, by adding the Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City, Central Coast City and Illawarra-Shoalhaven City. This expanded metropolitan region will span more than two million hectares with a projected population of above eight million people in the next two decades. The opportunities of the six cities are incomparable with most other cities in the world. The region features three international airports, three deep water ports each with individual functions and six of the world's top 200 universities. There are a huge number of nodes in the region's global connections. They create opportunities for economic innovation and productivity unmatched in this country and, arguably, anywhere else in the world.

Research published by the Greater Sydney Commission last year showed the rise of city regions on the international stage at a time when the pandemic has also affected where people choose to live and work. The great shift towards more flexible work practices forced upon us by the pandemic has completely changed the geography and spatial economy of jobs. Suddenly, commuting time is no longer the upper limit as to how far we can live from work. Digital catchments around cities have encouraged some regions to branch out from a 60- to 90-minute metropolis to a three- to four-hour city region. Regions such as metropolitan Seoul, the Paris region and the greater Amsterdam Randstad are embracing the opportunities that come with the scale and complementarity of a broader city region and are working together to improve physical transport connections and increase collaboration.

The idea of the mega-region model is being used to interpret the economic success of places like the Ruhr valley in Germany and the Pearl River Delta of China and Hong Kong. The Regional Plan Association's advocacy for coordinated planning in the New York tri-state area emphasises the importance of planning beyond arbitrary or dated boundaries. The Randstad of the Netherlands is particularly instructive for our context. It concentrates a huge share of the Dutch population in a small geographical area, bound and interspersed by green space and natural hazards, and is globally connected as a hub for air and sea transport and interconnected by freight. As Sir Peter Hall and Mark Tewdwr-Jones have explained, the Randstad is not only polycentric in a physical nature but in a functional sense too. Amsterdam is the focus for finance, retailing, tourism and culture; Rotterdam for the port, business and heavy industry; The Hague for government; and Utrecht for its world-class university.

In many ways, today's six cities vision has echoes in past plans for metropolitan Sydney. As the great Bob Meyer has noted, the Sydney Region Outline Plan of 1968 prioritised developing the Sydney-Newcastle-Wollongong area as one interrelated, linear urban complex, with special emphasis on a north-south communications corridor linking the three areas. Rather than the green belt approach adopted in the County of Cumberland plan, influenced by Patrick Abercrombie's Greater London Plan, the Sydney Region Outline Plan drew on the Scandinavian influences of Copenhagen's Finger Plan to channel growth along corridors supported by transport and infrastructure. Areas including Parramatta, Campbelltown, Gosford and Wyong were first identified as growth areas in this plan more than 50 years ago.

In 1995 *Cities for the 21st century* was a framework for planning for the greater metropolitan region, including Newcastle, the Central Coast and Wollongong, alongside Sydney. Although taking a less spatial approach to planning than other recent strategies, it attempted to better distribute the opportunities for growth across the wider region by focusing on better government decision-making, ecological sustainability and achieving more compact urban forms. A 2018 report by the Committee for Sydney, chaired by Kyle Loades and Professor Paul Wellings, reignited the wider spatial approach, proposing the sandstone mega-region as the model for future planning. The report, which advocated for a Minister for Cities and an expanded Greater Sydney Commission covering the region as proposed in this bill, concluded that:

Each of the cities in the Sandstone mega-region has great potential and all of them have an opportunity to get better as they grow. By improving the connections between the cities we can make it more likely that each will achieve its potential and more likely that they will thrive and compete at a global level, while maintaining their unique characteristics and enviable liveability.

I acknowledge calls earlier this week from Matthew Deeth, the Deputy Mayor of Wollondilly and Chair of the National Growth Areas Alliance, for a Federal Minister for growth areas, recognising the particular organisational

and fiscal challenges of managing growth on the urban fringe. It is important for us to frame the extent of our cities to focus on where our planning interventions should be focused. In New South Wales, the six cities vision is for a world-class region of better jobs, housing, education and leisure. It is a polycentric region that is productive, sustainable and accessible to all. It is a region where each of the six cities will build on its own signature strengths and character. As part of a larger region, the six cities will have more leverage to attract new business and investment and improve physical and social infrastructure.

Planning is an imprecise science. Famously, the County of Cumberland plan of 1948 foresaw Sydney having a population of 2.25 million by 1981. Sydney reached that population 20 years earlier. The Sydney Region Outline Plan then projected that Sydney's population would reach 5.5 million by 2000—a figure not yet reached. Its purpose is not to give an accurate picture of what the future will look like; it is to equip the community with the information and options available to them to plan for different futures. As the recent floods in the Hawkesbury-Nepean this year and last have shown us, we are reaching the feasible limits of outward metropolitan growth for Sydney.

It is not feasible, for a range of economic, environmental and social reasons, to continue Sydney's outward march. Sydney is framed by the Hawkesbury River to the north, the Royal National Park to the south and the Blue Mountains to the west. It is important that we retain these natural frames for our urban growth as places of heritage, leisure and recreation, as well as economically important resources. Much of today's Western Sydney Parklands was established as the green belt of the Sydney Region Outline Plan, and I encourage the other place to support the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021 as a way to protect, improve and expand the parklands estate as our cities grow.

We need to build the six cities vision not as a path to consolidation but as a way to celebrate and promote a diversity of places and communities that happenstance has put close to one another. For instance, the incredible renaissance of the Newcastle city centre in recent years has been a spectacle to behold, driven by careful planning, coordinated economic development, improved public transport, investment in public spaces and an engaging cultural scene. Newcastle could have faced the fate of so many post-industrial cities around the world experiencing decline, but it has worked hard to become a globally renowned city. I acknowledge the hard work of local leaders—in particular, Lord Mayor Nuatali Nemes—and wonderful thinkers like Marcus Westbury in achieving this outcome.

There is a paradox at the heart of building the city region that better connections between the six cities will undermine the differences that make each city so great. Better connections will allow each city to undertake its roles better. That is why the six cities vision is so important for future fast rail planning and digital connectivity. It can do so in a way that strengthens the role of each city, not in a way that diminishes them. To bring this vision to life, the Greater Sydney Commission will become the Greater Cities Commission. The bill creates the new commission, updates its objectives and expands its remit to encompass the six cities. It retains the strengths of the commission's governance to set up a model for metropolitan planning for the future of the six cities region.

The bill will repeal the Greater Sydney Commission Act 2015 and replace it with the Greater Cities Commission Act 2022. It will also amend the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and make consequential amendments. Schedule 1 sets out the 43 local government areas that will make up each of the six cities and the expanded metropolitan region. The six cities region will extend from Maitland and Port Stephens in the north, to the Blue Mountains and Wollondilly in the west, and the Shoalhaven in the south. If debate suggests changes to the boundaries, these can be made by regulation under clause 4 of the bill.

The membership of the Greater Sydney Commission has been one of its greatest strengths. It features local perspectives, through district commissioners; economic, social and environmental expertise, through the thematic commissioners, whose role it is to operationalise the wonderful vision for ecologically sustainable development that sits at the heart of the commission's remit; central government engagement, through the secretaries, who are ex-officio members; and the leadership of the chief commissioner. Under the bill, city commissioners will take the place of district commissioners in clause 6.

The terms of the existing commissioners will continue under schedule 3, with three new city commissioners to be appointed for the Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle, the Central Coast and the Illawarra-Shoalhaven cities. The recruitment process for city commissioners will include strong local council representation, satisfying the legislative requirement to seek advice from councils retained under clause 6 of the bill. A fundamental reason for the commission's success and legitimacy is that city commissioners faithfully represent the councils comprising the cities that they serve. Commissioners will only be appointed following the advice of the leadership of the relevant councils, as is currently the case.

The Greater Cities Commission will continue to be supported by the three committees provided for in clauses 13 to 15 of the bill. The membership of these committees will be updated to reflect the important role of

the city commissioners in the governance of the new commission. The commission will be able to appoint city commissioners as ongoing members of the infrastructure delivery and finance and governance committees. The first principal objective of the commission, under clause 9 of the bill, will be to lead metropolitan planning for the six cities region. The framework for strategic planning is in part 3 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, and schedule 4 to the bill sets out a series of amendments to that part. The effect of these amendments is that the commission will prepare a draft regional strategic plan for the six cities region on the same time line that it was due to review the Greater Sydney Region Plan—by the end of 2023—so that will be able to be made by the Government by the end of 2023.

The new commission will also prepare district strategic plans, to be known as city plans, for each of the six cities. Transitional provisions will apply so that there is continuity of the existing plans while the Greater Cities Commission undertakes this work. After the first round of planning, each of the plans will be reviewed on a five-year cycle. I acknowledge the trepidation in some parts of the three cities concerned that being a part of the extended metropolitan region means becoming an exurban extension of Sydney. Let me be clear that this is the precise outcome we are aiming to avoid. A broader approach to region planning means that we can focus and collaborate on the new connections that will draw these distinct cities together while retaining their individual strengths and character.

I also acknowledge that there will need to be clarity about how the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan, the draft Central Coast Regional Plan and the draft Hunter Regional Plan will transition to the new commission model. I recognise that substantial work has been done in recent planning processes and the commission will build on existing governance models to enhance outcomes, rather than start with a clean slate. The commission's objectives in clause 9 of the bill include to promote the supply of housing, including affordable housing and a diversity of housing types. Housing supply and affordability continue to be a challenge for cities around the world, including in our city region, and there is no simple solution. The Greater Sydney Commission set five-year housing targets for each local government area in Greater Sydney, applying to the last five-year period. These targets were included in the commission's district plans and we have seen more than 180,000 dwellings completed against the target of almost 190,000 dwellings over this period.

Schedule 4 to the bill will introduce a requirement in section 3.4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the Greater Cities Commission to set "net additional dwellings" targets in its next city plans. Targets will be set for each local government area over five-, 10- and 20-year periods. Local councils are required to submit their local strategic planning statements to the commission under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and the commission will review consistency with these targets along with the other planning priorities. Three changes to the objectives in clause 9 highlight the important work that the commission will continue to do under the bill. The first of these is in relation to climate change. It is more important than ever that the next round of strategic plans developed by the commission addresses anthropogenic climate change. In this regard, I believe that there is a terrific opportunity for the new region plan to be aligned in accordance with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, so we can align, set and measure our local planning objectives with our international obligations.

The second objective is to increase the involvement and participation of First Nations people in environmental planning and assessment in the six cities region. The commission has identified embedding Aboriginal voices as a crucial part of its work, and it is important to acknowledge that in its legislative objectives. Finally, a new objective has been included setting out the commission's role in coordinating the delivery of key economic precincts. We have seen the success of this work in Sydney and I expect the new commission will identify a globally significant precinct in each of the Lower Hunter, Greater Newcastle, Central Coast and Illawarra-Shoalhaven cities, drawing on the economic potential of the six cities model. In developing the six cities model, the Greater Sydney Commission has worked with local councils and stakeholders across the area. This collaborative approach is one of the commission's key strengths and will continue as it transitions to the Greater Cities Commission.

In mid-2022 the Greater Cities Commission will release its six cities statement, setting out a framework for strategic planning and inviting the community to join the discussion. The new commission will continue to collaborate across government, industry and community to realise the vision of a polycentric region of six cities: a series of interconnected dynamic and resilient places, each with their clear and unique identity. In creating this six cities vision, New South Wales will join leading global cities like New York, Hong Kong and London that operate as part of a sophisticated network of connected cities and regions. This is not about extending Sydney's borders or replicating a one-size-fits-all planning model. Rather, by planning in this connected way, we can build on the unique assets of the six cities and provide the community with greater housing diversity and affordability, more robust supply chains, linked international gateways and greater access to the culture and lifestyle assets for which our State is famous and which are a major drawcard for talent and investment. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.*Public Interest Debate***NEW SOUTH WALES FLOODS****Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:57):** I move:

That this House acknowledges the ongoing response and recovery by many communities to the recent devastating floods across New South Wales.

About three weeks and two nights ago, much of the Northern Rivers region had experienced about a week of very heavy rainfall—in fact, it had not really stopped raining since about Christmas—but that weekend an east coast low had settled over the Northern Rivers and we knew that this could be quite a catastrophic flood. As a former farmer I used to constantly watch the weather radar. As the night wore on, I refreshed the radar and saw the sheer amount of rain falling over that catchment. I was hoping that it would not come further and that it would disappear rather quickly. In the early hours of Monday morning, that rainfall intensified further and we saw some quite horrific flooding in the Northern Rivers.

Further south, in Coffs Harbour, we were expecting that the rain would then fall over our area by about lunchtime. Many businesses had sent staff home in preparation for a flood event and people were preparing for the worst, but, thankfully, the rain that was expected did not eventuate. But looking further north to the Northern Rivers, from Grafton, from the Clarence, all the way through to Gympie in Queensland—including Tweed—we saw the effects of what happens when we have record rainfall over a short period of time. Probably a day and a half after the extent of the flood was known, I, the member for Clarence, the Premier and the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience undertook an aerial reconnaissance flight over the area because roads were still cut off. Looking at floodwaters from the air—we were flying about four or five kilometres inland from the coast—we could see water stretching as far as the eye could see to the west and nearly stretching to the ocean in the east and, underneath that, towns and villages that are part of the Clarence electorate, the Lismore electorate, the Tweed electorate and the Ballina electorate. One image that I think we can agree we will never forget is seeing cars stranded on the Woodburn bridge and seeing rooftops where we would ordinarily see a bustling riverside town.

Mr Christopher Gulaptis: And the horse on the bridge.**Mr GURMESH SINGH:** And seeing the horse on the bridge as well. They are images that will live with us for a long time, but they have been replaced with images of utter devastation and destruction in places like Lismore, Coraki, Woodburn, Evans Head, Murwillumbah, Mullumbimby, all the small towns to the west of Tweed Heads. We have seen devastation like we have never seen before. Lismore is a major city on the North Coast. A lot of government offices are based there, a lot of organisations have their head offices there, and the macadamia industry has a lot of industry in that area. To see the devastation of that town is not something that will leave us quickly.

On the Wednesday afternoon immediately after the floods we saw a whole bunch of volunteers trying to get into the area. Some of them travelled through my home town of Woolgoolga where they cooked up two van loads worth of meals and somehow took every back road they could into Lismore. By Thursday morning the call had come to some relatives of mine that those volunteers had run out of food, could they drop some more off? We hopped in a truck and took a pallet of potatoes and onions, rice, oil and a few other things to Lismore so that those volunteers could start cooking again for the community. They had taken over someone's garage in Goonellabah and they started cooking again.

When we were driving into Lismore we crossed over a creek near the airport—the airport is on the southern outskirts of town—and the first thing we saw was a light plane on its head, overturned. It had been sucked out of the airport and had been deposited there on that road. As we drove further and further into town we could see the devastation and the destruction to people's lives—all their possessions from their businesses and their homes, every single one of their possessions were being thrown out onto the street because, as we heard earlier today, not only did the floodwaters affect the first storey of those houses but for many the floodwaters went right up to the ceiling of the second storey.

As soon as every town's access opened—into Coraki, then into Woodburn and Broadwater and other towns—the emergency services were able to go in and deliver better care and essentials, get people taken out in ambulances if necessary and begin the clean-up in earnest. One of the great initiatives of our local government in Coffs Harbour was Adopt a Town. As a government, we can sign cheques, we can give people money to do things, but one thing we cannot conjure out of thin air is resources—people, machinery, trucks, excavators and those sorts of things. Our council was able to provide those to Woodburn and that is greatly assisting in the clean-up of that town.

Another thing that needs to be mentioned is the sheer amount of agriculture that happens in that area, from sugarcane to macadamias, dairy and beef cattle. There have been more than 2,300 calls to the Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area hotline, and 2,253 tonnes of emergency fodder has been supplied to farmers in that area, often by aerial drops. Two helicopters are engaged. There have been 229 requests for livestock disposal. It is heartbreaking. We are seeing farms that have been completely decimated, where every plant and tree looks like it is dying off because it has been affected by floodwater or entire herds have gone missing. I commend the community for the spirit they have shown in helping each other out, and this is something that the community will draw on. It will draw on its inner strength for the many months and years of recovery to come.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (17:05): I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for bringing this debate to the House. At the outset I thank all of the local MPs in flood-affected areas for the work they are doing, and I give a special shout-out to my colleague Janelle Saffin, who is still up there. I had the great pleasure of joining her, when I saw firsthand what an outstanding local MP can do. We have all heard her story when she had to swim to safety, taking nothing with her. She has been able to get herself going again. I congratulate all of the local MPs on their efforts and I thank them for what they are doing.

The flooding crisis has tested our resolve, but it has tested the resolve of some more than others. Therefore, I start by offering my condolences to the families who have lost loved ones and friends, who tragically lost their lives. The Dorothea Mackellar poem *My Country* promises that "for flood, fire and famine, she pays us back threefold". I know that nothing can make up for the absence of loved ones, but I really do hope that people find the love and support that they need in these difficult times. For others, as we have heard, as a result of the destruction their livelihoods are gone. Businesses have been completely wiped out, washed away in hours. This rebuild must hold our attention and be given our energy and resources for as long as it takes, and that has been a clear theme from the Government, the Opposition and the crossbenches.

We saw scenes of towns underwater, struck by massive deluges of water, and people stranded by floodwaters being rescued by ordinary citizens. That image is seared into our memories. While they waited for assistance, local rescuers were aboard whatever boats they had—kayaks, jet skis—and people paddled in any way they could. We saw scenes of flood-wrecked towns being aided in the clean-up by local and neighbouring towns and supplies being delivered by not-for-profit organisations. The response to the recent flooding disaster demonstrates yet again that so much of the response is citizen led, and I thank our citizens. It is a testament to our people, but unfortunately it is also a reflection on a Government that was too slow to act.

Much can be said about the Government's disaster response. It was clear that there was a lack of coordination between agencies. Coordination came from multiple sources, which created confusion and anger. That is certainly the message I got when I visited. There are questions as to why the offer of an Australian Defence Force deployment was rejected twice before being asked for three days later, and why only 275 personnel came when we had been told there were going to be a few thousand. It remains clear that the Government's key planning and logistics are falling short, especially with the emergency response for accommodation. Families were forced to seek refuge with friends or in evacuation centres, such as at Southern Cross University. Indeed, as I heard, some people found refuge wherever they could. We now know that pods were promised but not delivered, and motorhomes were delivered but left unattended. We cannot make these promises and then not fulfil them. We owe the community that, at the very least.

It is also very clear that whilst promises were made about money and financial support, the money did not get out the door quickly. There were instances where people could not access funding because EFTPOS machines were down or there were no ATMs. There was a shortage of fuel. A number of things went wrong. We have to make sure that these things do not happen again. While I am pleased to see that there will be a review and there has been a call for a parliamentary inquiry, we have to learn the lessons so that we can improve our response in the future. We cannot keep saying, "We will do better next time." Too many communities are left behind.

In the short time I have available, I want to reiterate a couple of stories that I thought were quite touching. There were communities like Coraki that felt abandoned because supplies were not provided quickly enough. During my visit, I spent the day with Janelle Saffin, the local MP. We went to a place called The Stockpot Kitchen, which had been washed out completely. But Graeme and a couple of his friends had set up a barbeque and were putting on food—about 2,000 meals a day—supporting anybody they could. I said to Graeme, "Mate, we'll see if we can help you out," and he said, "I've heard too many things from polliets. I don't believe it."

I am pleased to say Fettayleh Smallgoods in Punchbowl sent over 300 kilos worth of meat on the weekend. The GWS Giants cooked 3,000 meals to help the community along. The community spirit was unlike anything I have ever seen. Of course, how could we not thank our volunteers, not only our community members who do not wear a uniform but also our volunteers, including the SES and the RFS. The member for Prospect, Hugh McDermott, was there as a member of the RFS doing his thing. I could speak for hours on this matter, but I want to say that we need to learn the lessons. We need to stand with the communities. We need to make sure we do not

just make promises to them but that we ensure we do everything to support them and to rebuild. We cannot forget them.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (17:10): I am pleased to be given the opportunity to speak on this matter. I note the contribution of the member for Coffs Harbour and the comments of the member for Lakemba. It is a very difficult time. This is the fifth major flood that I have gone through with the good people of Tweed over the past 20 or 30 years. This one was probably more severe than the others; the water rose up far more quickly. I welcome a review, but as much as I appreciate the effort of members here, I think you have to be on the ground. I acknowledge that the member for Lakemba has been to the area, as well as other members on both sides of the Chamber.

Disaster response is very difficult to organise. We all have stories. As to what I have seen personally and experienced firsthand, for three days I sat on a boat. The whole of the Tweed was cut in four or five places and there was no road access to deliver product. To my way of thinking, the agencies did their very best. I will speak about them in a moment. For a while there on the Tweed River, it was like the flotilla going to Dunkirk. I was loading stuff into tinnies. There were speedboats and jet skis. Famous surfers—bless their cotton socks—headed up the river, not really knowing where they were going.

As to the agencies, I think it was on the Sunday that the Bureau of Meteorology changed its warning five times. It went from minor to major to moderate. It was all over the place and made the situation very difficult. I am a big believer in the agencies such as the SES and the RFS. They have copped criticism up there. But in Murwillumbah, which has a population of just on 20,000, there are 14 members in the SES, and seven of them are over the age of 70. In Tweed Heads there are 30, and half of them are over the age of 65. My best flood boat driver, Tommy, is 80. There are three boats in Tweed Heads and two in Murwillumbah. There is a lack of volunteers in those agencies.

We were very lucky that surf lifesavers and other volunteers came to help. There were cows stuck up trees and a whole range of stuff going on. A lot of people, I must admit, did not want to leave their houses, probably rightly. But at midnight when the tide came in, that was a very poor decision and a mistake. A lot of rescues were made by a lot of great people, but now we can see the anguish in people's eyes. It is fine for those who have insurance, but so many people in lower socio-economic areas have lost their job, their house and their car. They are very down at the moment, but there are also signs of resilience. I was talking to a lass, young Beverley, who is 84 years old, and she said she will rebuild. All she wanted was a cuddle. That is all she wanted—a hug; a human gesture.

There is going to be a lot of information to digest. Tweed Shire Council General Manager Troy Green has gone through about the same number of floods. We believe the Government's response this time is probably three weeks in advance of what it was in 2017. It is easy to criticise—we should have done this and we should have done that—but it was such a severe weather event. It chopped and changed; it flooded different areas. Floods are very difficult to manage. At the end of the day, it is easy to throw stones but our agencies and our Ministers acted. Most members in this place know that I was not impressed with the Prime Minister; I have made that quite clear. I thank Tamara Smith from The Greens and the member for Lismore, Janelle Saffin. We have put politics aside and we are working as a team—even my good friend the Hon. Catherine Cusack in the other place. We are doing it for the betterment of our communities because that is what they deserve.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:15): I thank all members who stand today in this Chamber and speak on behalf of their communities for whatever reason. I think we are at our best when we speak from the heart and on behalf of those whose voices need to be heard. I extend my condolences to all those who have suffered losses of any kind. I extend my deepest gratitude to the many souls who have assisted in myriad ways—those who are volunteers and those who are paid professionals. We should not, and we cannot, always rely on volunteers—even though they are the heroes of our communities and they are whom we stand and thank at times like this. Government has a role to play. Government agencies have a role to play. There are echoes of that sentiment, I know, in many communities across New South Wales. Why does government rely more and more on volunteers? It needs to step up.

Many emergency services personnel whom I met during my time as shadow Minister for Emergency Services told me that they are underfunded and under-resourced. They told me that before the Black Summer fires, but they still get in there and do their absolute best. They have done so again with the flood recovery. A couple of our RFS brigades told me about the time they travelled from the upper Blue Mountains to Lismore, turned up at base camp, settled in a bit and then were tasked with a number of jobs. They got out on the road and amongst the communities to attend to those tasks. Fifteen minutes into those tasks they got a call to come back to base camp, not because they had forgotten some resources but because the Prime Minister wanted a photo—and they were furious. They were absolutely furious. In front of hundreds of people, they said, "Bugger that". Excuse

me, Madam Deputy Speaker—I could say worse. They turned around and they headed back out to the people for whom they were there.

I note that the floods that have particularly and badly impacted South East Queensland and the Northern Rivers of New South Wales have been devastating. That loss and that heartbreak is felt by a number of communities, but particularly by those in the flood zones. And it is profound. The floods came so fast that people had no time to evacuate. The people from that area whom I met during the fires told me how they climbed into roof cavities and onto rooftops and sat and listened to people drowning. Lives were lost. Homes and lifetimes of memories were washed away. What is left behind is a huge clean-up job—a huge recovery job—and heartbreak, despair and the stench of a flood that has left people shattered and those towns changed forever.

It is important for me to note that, in the absence of timely government support and adequate boots on the ground to assist, members of the community rose to the challenge. It was a citizen-led effort in recovery. We have all seen images of the sculpture in downtown Lismore—a big red heart held up out of the floodwaters by giant hands—and the symbolism of that is profound. People are broken. Lives are broken. But there is so much more to do beyond us talking about it today to mitigate the effects of climate-induced disasters. That is what we have to attend to. Disaster preparedness is crucial if we are going to survive in the face of adversity. We are going to deal with these events again and again because of climate change. These events are not unprecedented; they will keep happening. In the few moments remaining to me, I note that the Blue Mountains is still suffering the impact of the flood event, with our roads in disrepair, our rail line down and people struggling.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (17:20): The recent catastrophic floods in Hawkesbury have left local communities devastated, and residents, businesses and primary producers are again beginning the mammoth task of cleaning up. This is the third flood we have endured in three years. But this flood was bigger, mightier and more damaging—in fact, a metre more, which made so much difference because areas that were not flooded in the past suddenly went under. I saw the resilience of people. Hawkesbury did it better this time than last time; it was better prepared. I talked to people who live right on the riverbank at Windsor in houses built in 1895. They ripped out their light fittings, their carpets and all their furniture and took it to higher ground because—guess what—the flood took the entire floor. But they told me that they removed it all and put it into containers.

I saw acts of kindness when I was walking through Windsor and people were mopping up all the sludge and the mud in their houses. Brooke, wearing gumboots, a T-shirt and a pair of shorts, came around the corner with a mower. She said, "Can I mow your lawn?" She went up and down the street and mowed lawns for everybody. As the water subsided, I had 56 fire trucks ready to roll in Hawkesbury. You cannot say that the community were not supported by this Government. Resilience NSW kicked into play; I saw it happening. People were so heartened by Fire and Rescue teams that appeared throughout Hawkesbury. South Windsor had not been flooded before. One woman there is very close to my heart. She has a troubled marital background and fled to the area to be safe, only to be flooded out. She hung out all her washing amongst the trees because she could not get into her backyard. I heard stories of kindness right throughout the Hawkesbury.

Mountain of Joy is a group of women who went through the Bilpin bushfires and wanted to give back to people during the floods. They put together a Facebook team and people were Facebooking them to say, "I need help. I'm a mum. I have a four-month-old baby. I need formula, I need food, I need sustenance." So the volunteers joined with Woolworths and Coles, put packs together, liaised with SES Hawkesbury Superintendent Kevin Jones and took all the labelled packages down. Guess what? The SES flew them by helicopter to remote areas or took them there by boat. This is a community who did things better this time. We have learnt from three floods, three years in a row—and so I think have the SES volunteers and the police. I acknowledge Karen Flower, who runs the emergency operations centre in Hawkesbury. Many people in this community maybe had not been through an event this bad before, but they just knew to kick into gear, pull together and get everyone supported.

Hawkesbury City Council bore the brunt of this disaster. Over \$50 million worth of broken infrastructure must be repaired. I put on record that I do not feel that the council is equipped to run these projects. Rivers have sucked out roads, which have collapsed. We must work together with the Central Coast Council and with those in the Hawkesbury area. I am talking to the member for Gosford as well. We are all working together to try to get some good outcomes, but I need support from the State Government in oversighting these projects. The Government is connected with big organisations that can come in and run these projects and that have the engineering capability to rebuild. We all need to work together on this. I have spoken to Minister Cooke, and I am delighted to have Minister Tuckerman and Minister Ward coming to Hawkesbury to tour round. Now that the water has receded, we can see the damage.

People who live on Greens Road in Lower Portland will be stuck with travelling on an almost impassable dirt road for two years before they get a normal road again. Taking their children to school, which used to take five minutes, is now a 50-minute single trip. They are trying to go to work as well. These are the challenges we face when getting into recovery mode. As the Government and as the Opposition we must work together to restore

people's lives and get them back on track. They know that they live on a flood plain. They accept that. As I doorknocked and walked around, they were having little garage gatherings as they helped each other. I saw that in the community. I want to make sure that we all work together to get this recovery underway.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:26): I speak on behalf of The Greens and particularly on behalf of my colleague the member for Ballina, Tamara Smith, who is unable to be in the Chamber today. She was unwell and awaiting a PCR test. I am glad to say that it is all clear. But I understand that those in regional areas might have to wait a little longer for their results than others. So, unfortunately, she could not be here today. I know she will be putting the views of her community and her response on the record later this week, when she is in the Chamber. On behalf of The Greens and the member for Ballina, I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for bringing the motion and join with the member for Lakemba and all members in acknowledging the work of all affected local MPs and their staffs. They were not only impacted by the extreme weather events but also tried to support their communities at the same time. I recognise that this is still very raw. The sense of crisis and the trauma people are feeling and the realities of what they are facing are happening right now, still to this day, and will take a long time to repair and recover from. There are massive challenges that lie ahead.

We have heard about and seen the work that the member for Ballina and others have been doing on the ground. I recognise that there are many gaps in services, and that is partly because the scale of the disaster is nothing like we have seen before. But we need to recognise that, when we are at a crisis point—whether it be the pandemic or this recent flooding or the bushfires of the past—the existing inequalities and problems in our communities and society can affect how the crisis impacts on individuals. It could be because of economic inequality, housing insecurity and unaffordability, not having access to income support or other services, or challenges with language and other things. We need to recognise that everyone has gone above and beyond but also that some existing inequalities are escalated in a crisis. As is often said, we experience the same circumstances, but the infrastructure and the support networks we have around us are not equal for everybody.

The recent floods in the Northern Rivers rendered several thousand homes unlivable, turning the already existing housing crisis into the emergency it is. I have been working closely with the member for Ballina to look at the escalating housing crisis in the region. No-one would deny it was a problem before these floods hit or not now realise it is of epic proportions. The community is traumatised and overwhelmed by what has happened. In addition, families, mothers and elderly people are being forced into overcrowded housing with friends and relatives, are parking caravans on front lawns or living in makeshift shelters, including tents, or are living beside properties that have been condemned.

The member for Ballina is calling for immediate relief for flood victims in the Byron shire and for the Liberal-Nationals Government in New South Wales to honour its election commitment around capping short-term holiday letting at 90 days as one of the simple solutions. There are many other things we could do. Today I introduced a bill into this place, which I will give the second reading speech for this week, that will cap rents for 12 months in flood-affected areas so that people do not profit from this crisis. It will also stop any evictions from occurring in flood-affected areas, because we know that can be a risk. People kick people out and then do the house up and charge an astronomical amount of rent, and we see further escalation of rental prices. I hope members will look at that as a possible solution.

Although nothing I have seen on television or heard in stories compares in any way to what the members who have contributed to this debate experienced, I did experience something from afar. I received a text message at 6.56 in the morning from one of my sisters who lives in Cabarita Beach, where the floods hit. At 6.56 it was a somewhat light-hearted message. She said that the pool seemed to have encroached into the house. We had spent the summer there and swum in the pool. By two o'clock that afternoon—after much stress and worry—she, her partner Jake and their dog were lucky enough to have been evacuated in a tinnie. That things escalated that quickly gave me a taste of what must have been the trauma, heartache and pain suffered by so many in those communities. I can give them my absolute commitment, The Greens' commitment and the member for Ballina's commitment, that we will do all we can to make sure the adaptation and disaster response serves the needs of the community.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:31): I acknowledge the member for Clarence, the member for Tweed, the member for Coffs Harbour and the member for Hawkesbury, who are here. I know what their communities have been through. I have been to their communities. I know. I also need to acknowledge the member for Lismore. She spoke very highly of the member for Tweed and the member for Clarence whilst I was in Lismore. I thank them.

The New South Wales floods have devastated thousands of people. More than 2,000 homes have been lost. Property and belongings have been lost. When you go into Lismore, you see double-storeyed houses that have been built especially for flooding. You look at the trees beside them, which are higher, and you see the mud lines a metre or two above those houses. The guts of the houses have been pulled out. The walls, which are flooded and full of water, have been pulled out. People have lost everything. It is not like the bushfires, where the fire comes

through and cleanses everything and you start from scratch. With floods, all your belongings and everything else sits there, rotting. The smell is truly indescribable. Whether it be from the floods in Penrith and Londonderry, along the Hawkesbury and the upper Hawkesbury or at Lismore in the Northern Rivers, the stench is terrible and continues on.

The tragedies that have unfolded over the past few weeks have been incredible, as has the bravery of so many citizens who stepped up to help their communities. The member for Tweed touched on a number of issues, which I will speak about, to do with the State Emergency Service. I thank the SES volunteers. There were not enough of them, but they stood up anyway and went there and fought. People from all over the State were deployed and tried to get up there. When the State emergency plans are activated, a certain agency is put in charge. In this case, it was the SES. During the bushfires, it was the Rural Fire Service. The SES volunteers stood up, but there were not enough of them. However, they continued on. They rescued hundreds, if not thousands, of people.

The other ones we should acknowledge are Fire and Rescue NSW, the RFS and the NSW Police Force. As agencies who were waiting for coordination, which did not seem to happen, they stepped up anyway and did the work. Being part of the RFS, I was not used to doing flood work at all. I never had before. But the work that had to be done to save lives needed to happen. I thank all those volunteers for their service and dedication. I acknowledge the flotilla of dinghies and jet skis et cetera.

Mr Geoff Provest: Dunkirk.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: It was like Dunkirk. Those people stepped up and saved their communities. I thank them for doing that.

We have also seen the Australian Defence Forces step in to assist, which has been wonderful. But we really must be honest with ourselves. There are a number of hard truths about failures in the coordination of the emergency response to the disaster. The genesis of much of that failure happened over the past few years. The SES in some of the areas hardest hit by floods in northern New South Wales had warned that closures of regional offices in country New South Wales in 2020 would reduce the ability to respond to natural disasters. In November 2020, 12 SES units in the Northern Rivers and Richmond Valley wrote to the commissioner warning that a restructure threatened the continued existence of units and risked the failure of the service. Unit commanders from Kyogle, Ballina, Broadwater, Casino, Coraki, Lismore, Mullumbimby, Murwillumbah, Richmond and Tweed—many of the towns that were affected by the floods—complained that they did not have the ability or the resources to deal with major flooding.

The answer from the SES Commissioner was "Yes, there will be reductions in staff. Yes, the connections with units will be damaged. But we must meet government saving targets." Government departments imposed an efficiency dividend on the SES. Efficiency dividends cannot be imposed on emergency services. It cannot happen and it must be reviewed. It is so important that we support our volunteers and our paid staff in emergency services. Warnings were given in 2019-20 about the potential for this to happen if there was a major flood. A flood episode like this will happen again in the next few years. More and more we will see natural disasters due to global warming. We must come together and work out how to deal with them. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:36): In reply: I thank the member for Lakemba, the member for Tweed, the member for Blue Mountains, the member for Hawkesbury, the member for Newtown and the member for Prospect for their contributions to this debate. I also call out the following State and Federal members of Parliament and their staff: Janelle Saffin, Tamara Smith, Geoff Provest, Christopher Gulaptis and Kevin Hogan. They were all affected in their respective electorates. When I saw Janelle for the first time after the floods, she came up and gave me a big hug. Janelle Saffin and Kevin Hogan have gone through tremendous personal loss during this unprecedented flood event. When discussing the floods, we must remember that they were unprecedented. The flood level, particularly in Lismore and further downstream, was over two metres higher than the previous record flood. As other members have said, on the day before the floods the Bureau of Meteorology changed the forecast from minor flooding to major flooding and back to minor flooding again. There was a fair bit of uncertainty about exactly how much rain would fall.

The member for Lakemba spoke about motorhomes. Those motorhomes were delivered but, unfortunately, in our society we have to put up with the logistics of connecting motorhomes to power, water and sewer before putting people in them. Commissioning those motorhomes took some time. However, people were in them before the weekend just gone. It is also important to acknowledge the mental wellbeing of people in the Northern Rivers. We talk a lot about mental health. It is entirely normal for people to be feeling the emotions of denial, anger, bargaining and depression. They are quite normal emotions to go through after such a crisis. It is important that we recognise that their mental wellbeing is looked after over the long term. The Government is determined to stand by these people in order to do that.

Both sides of politics need to give these people hope—hope that governments of all levels on all sides are standing with them so that they can rebuild their lives and their communities. Finally, I touch on comments made by the member for Tweed and the member for Prospect. If there is one message that I take from today's debate it is that we need more people to join the SES. I ask anyone who has skills or who thinks they have something to contribute back to their community to please join the SES. Not enough people volunteer. Compared to the RFS, there are far too few SES volunteers.

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

Motion agreed to.

Announcements

INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS OFFICER

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I report receipt of the following message from the Legislative Council:

The Legislative Council desires to inform the Legislative Assembly that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:

MR SPEAKER

(1) That this House adopt the following resolution to establish an Independent Complaints Officer:

(1) Establishment of position

That this House directs the President to join with the Speaker to make arrangements for the establishment of the position of an Independent Complaints Officer to expeditiously and confidentially deal with low level, minor misconduct matters so as to protect the institution of Parliament, all members and staff.

That this House also directs the President to join with the Speaker to make arrangements for the establishment of a panel of people with appropriate skills and expertise ('the Panel') to whom the Independent Complaints Officer can direct complaints for investigation, where he or she does not conduct the investigation him or herself.

(2) Functions of position

The Independent Complaints Officer shall have the following functions:

(a) Receive and investigate complaints

The Independent Complaints Officer may receive and investigate complaints confidentially in relation to alleged breaches of the members' code of conduct, not related to conduct in proceedings of the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly or their committees, including:

- (i) misuse of allowances and entitlements,
- (ii) other less serious misconduct matters falling short of corrupt conduct,
- (iii) allegations of bullying, harassment and other types of inappropriate behaviour,
- (iv) minor breaches of the pecuniary interests disclosure scheme.

In regard to bullying and harassment, consideration of complaints will take note of members' legal obligations including the:

- *Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013;*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977; and*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

In addition, the Independent Complaints Officer shall have discretion to refer a complaint to a member of the Panel, who has the requisite skills and expertise, to investigate rather than investigating the complaint him or herself.

(b) Monitoring Code of Conduct for Members

The Independent Complaints Officer shall monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members, the Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983 and the members' entitlements system, and provide advice about reform to the Privileges Committee as required.

(c) Educational presentations

The Independent Complaints Officer and members of the Panel shall assist the Privileges Committee, Parliamentary Ethics Adviser and the Clerk as requested in relation to the education of members about their obligations under the Code of Conduct for Members and the Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983.

(3) Amendment of the Code of Conduct for Members

The Members' Code of Conduct is amended by

(a) the addition of the following paragraph:

"Clause 10

A Member must treat their staff and each other and all those working for Parliament in the course of their parliamentary duties and activities with dignity, courtesy and respect, and free from any behaviour that amounts to bullying, harassment or sexual harassment"

Commentary

Section 22(b) of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 makes it unlawful for a member to sexually harass a workplace participant or another member in the workplace, or for a workplace participant to sexually harass a member."

- (b) the insertion into the second paragraph of clause 9 the following words:

"A minor breach of this Code may be the subject of an investigation by the Independent Complaints Officer"

(4) Term of appointment

- (a) Appointment by Presiding Officers

The Presiding Officers shall appoint an Independent Complaints Officer within three months of the mid-term point of each Parliament, or whenever the position becomes vacant, for the remainder of that Parliament and until the mid-term point of the following Parliament, on such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon with the Presiding Officers, not inconsistent with this resolution. The proposed appointment must have the support of the Privileges Committee in each House. An appointment may be extended for a period of up to six months so as to ensure there is no period in which there is no person holding the position.

- (b) Appointment by Presiding Officers – the Panel

The Presiding Officers are to appoint a panel of three independent persons – the Panel – within three months of the mid-term point of each Parliament – or whenever a position becomes vacant – for the remainder of that Parliament and until the mid-term point of the following Parliament who can be retained as needed to investigate complaints referred to them by the Independent Complaints Officer. Proposed appointments to the Panel must have the support of the Privileges Committees of both Houses.

The Panel must include two persons who have appropriate skills and experience to investigate complaints about bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour by Members. The Panel must also include a person who has appropriate skills and experience to investigate complaints about other matters covered by the Independent Complaints Officer system such as breaches relating to Member entitlements and pecuniary interest disclosures.

- (c) Contract with Clerks of both Houses – Independent Complaints Officer

The appointment of the Independent Complaints Officer is to be confirmed by the Clerks of both Houses entering into a contract of employment with the appointee.

- (d) Contract with Clerks of both Houses – the Panel

The appointment of persons to the Panel is to be confirmed by the Clerks of both Houses entering into a contract of employment with the appointees.

(5) Complaints investigations

- (a) Protocol

The Independent Complaints Officer shall, within three months of his or her appointment, develop a protocol to be approved by the Privileges Committee and tabled in the House by the committee chair, outlining how complaints may be received, the manner and method by which complaints will be assessed and investigated, the definition of low level, minor misconduct, and arrangements for the referral of matters between the Independent Complaints Officer and the Independent Commission Against Corruption and other relevant bodies (including the most appropriate agencies in relation to bullying and harassment matters), subject to relevant legislation (including section 122 of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act*).

- (b) Standing

This protocol shall include definitions of standing such that:

- only current members of the parliamentary community, that is Members of the NSW Parliament, those who work for Members of the Parliament of NSW in their capacity as Members or Ministers, those who work for the parliamentary departments, contractors or subcontractors, volunteers, interns and trainees, have standing to lodge complaints
- that an individual may make a complaint up until 21 days following termination from their employment, but not have standing after that date if not part of the parliamentary community
- complaints must be lodged within two years of the incident alleged to have occurred, unless this is not fair or reasonable to a complainant or member
- no complaint may be considered which is alleged to have occurred prior to the passing of this resolution.

- (c) Confidentiality

Members of the parliamentary community who are not Members of Parliament and who make complaints shall be required to maintain confidentiality concerning complaints and investigations. Others involved in any complaints investigations, for example witnesses shall be required to maintain confidentiality concerning complaints and investigations.

There shall be an expectation that, except in extraordinary circumstances, Members of Parliament will maintain confidentiality about complaints and investigations. However, nothing about this expectation affects parliamentary privilege and, in particular, the parliamentary privilege of freedom of speech.

- (d) Protocol with the Independent Commission Against Corruption

Where the Independent Complaints Officer has concerns that a complaint may potentially involve corrupt conduct, he or she should cease the complaint investigation and invite the complainant to raise the matter with the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

The Independent Complaints Officer in determining to draw back from the investigation of a complaint may make a notification to the ICAC but should not hand over papers and records obtained under the Independent Complaints Officer system unless under legal compulsion.

The Independent Complaints Officer is not required to notify the ICAC when he or she begins an investigation.

(e) Investigatory report to the House

Where the Independent Complaints Officer or member of the Panel retained to investigate a complaint ("the investigator") considers that there has been a misuse of an allowance or entitlement, the investigator may order repayment of funds misused. Where the investigator considers that a member has otherwise breached the Members Code of Conduct the investigator may recommend corrective action.

Subject to (f) below, the Independent Complaints Officer or member of the Panel will make a report if the member does not comply with the order or accept the recommendation as the case may be and, in the case of bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour matters, only where the complainant consents to the making of the report. This report will be presented to the Privileges Committee – and notified to the Independent Complaints Officer if it is made by a member of the Panel. The Committee will consider whether to adopt the recommendations of the Independent Complaints Officer or member of the Panel and whether to report to the House.

(f) Minor breach

Where the Independent Complaints Officer or a member of the Panel ("the investigator") investigates a matter and finds that a member has breached the Code or Regulations but in the investigator's opinion the breach is minor or inadvertent and the member has taken action to rectify the breach – including the making of appropriate financial reimbursement – the investigator shall advise the member in writing of the finding, and the complainant in writing of the finding and the action taken by the member. The investigator shall briefly report his or her findings and the rectification action taken by the member on a confidential basis to the Privileges Committee – and to the Independent Complaints Officer if the investigator is a member of the Panel. However, if the matter relates to bullying, harassment or inappropriate behaviour, the report must only be made to the relevant Privileges Committee with the complainant's consent. No report to a House is required in this circumstance.

(g) Declines to investigate

If the Independent Complaints Officer receives a complaint but upon assessment declines to investigate the matter, or upon investigation finds no evidence or insufficient evidence to substantiate a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members or the Constitution (Disclosure by Members) Regulation, the Independent Complaints Officer shall advise in writing the member and the complainant of the decision. The Independent Complaints Officer shall also briefly report the decision to the relevant Privileges Committee on a confidential basis. However, if the complaint relates to bullying, harassment or inappropriate behaviour, the decision must only be reported to the Privileges Committee with the complainant's consent. No report to a House is required in this circumstance.

(h) Breaches where the Member has failed or declined to take rectification action – reports and appeal rights

Where, after investigating a complaint, the Independent Complaints Officer or a person retained from the Panel to investigate finds that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct for Members or the Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983, or has engaged in bullying, harassment or inappropriate behaviour and the Member has failed to undertake the stipulated rectification action or declined to do so pending appeal:

- the investigator shall report his or her findings and conclusions to the Privileges Committee on a confidential basis (and to the Independent Complaints Officer if the investigator is a member of the Panel), including recommendations as to the sanctions, if any, that should be imposed by the House. However, if the matter relates to bullying, harassment or inappropriate behaviour, the report to the Committee must only be made with the complainant's consent.
- the Member in question shall also have the right to lodge an appeal against the investigator's findings, conclusions and recommendations with the Privileges Committee where they have been so reported to the Committee.

Further, after receiving:

- an investigatory report from the Independent Complaints Officer or a member of the Panel about a breach for which the Member has failed to take the stipulated rectification action, and/or;
- an appeal from the Member in question concerning the investigator's findings, conclusions and recommendations;

the Privileges Committee shall:

- form its own conclusions
- have the power to report its conclusions and recommendations – including as regards appropriate sanctions – to the House
- have the power to decide that a report to the House and/or sanctions are not warranted in a particular case e.g. where the Committee disagrees with the investigator's findings.

(i) Expert assistance

The Independent Complaints Officer and persons from the Panel retained to investigate a complaint shall be able to engage the services of a person or persons to assist with or perform services for the Independent Complaints Officer, and in the conduct of an investigation, within budget

(6) Powers of the Independent Complaints Officer

The Independent Complaints Officer and members of the Panel who are retained to investigate a complaint shall have power to request the production of relevant documents and other records from members and officers of the Parliament.

Members, their staff and parliamentary officers are required to reasonably cooperate at all stages with the Independent Complaints Officer's inquiries including giving a full, truthful and prompt account of the matters giving rise to a complaint.

The Independent Complaints Officer may report to the Privileges Committee any failure to comply with a request, and the committee will recommend whether the matter requires the determination of the matter by the House.

(7) Keeping of record

The Independent Complaints Officer and members of the Panel retained to investigate complaints shall be required to keep records of advice given and the factual information upon which it is based, complaints received and investigations. The records of the Independent Complaints Officer are to be regarded as records of the House and are not to be made public without the prior approval of the Independent Complaints Officer and resolution of the House, except for the referral of information between the Independent Complaints Officer and other relevant authorities in accordance with the protocol to be developed in accordance with clause 5 (a), or where the member requests that the records be made public.

A member requesting the records be made public should present the records to the Clerk, to be tabled in the House at the next sitting. During an extended break in sittings the Privileges Committee is empowered to publish records of the Independent Complaints Officer, on the recommendation of the Officer that expeditious publication is required.

(8) Reports to Parliament

In addition to reports on investigations, the Independent Complaints Officer shall provide to the committee chair to table in the House quarterly reports that contain general, de-identified information about matters dealt with under the Independent Compliance Officer system including:

- the number and types of complaints received
- the number of investigations undertaken
- the number of matters found by an investigator to be unsustainable
- the number of matters involving breaches that were dealt with via the rectification procedure, and the rectification action that was taken for these matters, such as repayments
- the number of matters an investigator found to involve breaches for which a Member failed to undertake the required rectification action, that were reported to the Privileges Committee but not to the House
- the number of matters an investigator found to involve breaches for which a Member failed to undertake the required rectification action, that were reported to the Privileges Committee and to the House
- the results of matters reported to the House including the type of sanctions imposed.

(9) Annual meeting with relevant committees

The Independent Complaints Officer and any persons retained from the Panel to conduct investigations of complaints is to meet annually with the Privileges Committee of the House.

(10) Review of the Independent Complaints Officer System

The privileges committees of both Houses are required to review the Independent Complaints Officer system within 12 months of the establishment of the Independent Complaints Officer position, in consultation with key stakeholders. The committee must examine how the system is operating in practice and whether any changes are needed and in particular:

- the confidentiality provisions applying in respect of complaints and investigations under the system, and
- the timeliness of complaints assessments and investigations conducted under the system.

Following the initial review the committee is also required to review the Independent Complaints Officer system once every parliamentary term, in consultation with key stakeholders, to examine how it is operating in practice and whether any changes are needed.

- (2) That this resolution have continuing effect until amended or rescinded.
- (3) That a message be forwarded to the Legislative Assembly conveying the terms of the resolution agreed to by the House.

Legislative Council
22 March 2022

MATTHEW MASON-COX
President

I set down consideration of the message as an order of the day for a later time.

Community Recognition Statements

COMMUNITY ACTION SERVICES AUSTRALIA

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:40): On Saturday 12 March 2022 Community Action Services Australia, CASA, hosted the Women Arise breakfast at Smithfield RSL. The event was held to acknowledge the work of women in society and to inspire women to achieve their goals. The gathering was inspired by several guest speakers who reflected on their personal stories and the motivations that contributed to their success. CASA president, Mrs Gabby Tolomeo, hosted the question-and-answer panel consisting of healthcare practitioner

Ms Elizabeth Mucci; CEO of the Sisters of Charity Foundation, Ms Louise Burton; and Fairfield City Deputy Mayor, Councillor Dai Le. The event would not have been possible without the compering skills of Miss Belle Faggiano. Special thanks to *The Voice* contestant Elishia Semaan for keeping everyone entertained with her acoustic set. It was a pleasure to acknowledge the achievements of the Fairfield electorate's Local Woman of the Year, Marta Faggiano, on her home ground at CASA. I congratulate Marta, Gabby, Belle and the organising committee for celebrating International Women's Day in grand style. Happy International Women's Day.

VAUCLUSE ELECTORATE STUDENT LEADERS

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (17:41): Recently I had the pleasure of reading about some of the Vaucluse electorate's new student leaders in our local paper. I enjoyed reading about their vision for their schools and their futures. Featured were school captains Nicola Steele and Timothy Sanford from Rose Bay Secondary College; Reddam House Bondi Senior Judiciary members Jason Krutik, Maya Bienstock and Aaron Dong; and head prefects from Scots College, including Head Boarder Prefect William Purvis, Head Day Boy Prefect Sam Berckelman, Deputy Head Prefect Ryan Zylstra, and Head Prefect Jack Hawthorne. Their shared vision was a desire to reignite the sense of school community spirit that was impacted by the pandemic. Whether through extracurricular activities or student advocacy, it was heartening to see that they were so passionate about making their school communities even better places. I thank all our local student leaders for their leadership and look forward to being back on campus soon.

TRIBUTE TO JONNY BELL

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (17:42): I acknowledge Lake Munmorah Rural Fire Brigade life member Jonny Bell, who sadly passed away earlier this year. Jonny was a founding member of the station, which was formally established in 1966. Prior to the station's establishment, Jonny joined the bushfire brigades in 1965. Over the years Jonny played a vital role in the Lake Munmorah Rural Fire Brigade and helped uphold the health and safety of the Central Coast community by mitigating fire hazards. In 2003 Jonny was awarded life membership of the Lake Munmorah Rural Fire Brigade. In 2005 he also achieved the NSW RFS Long Service Award. I understand that Jonny's legacy continues in the brigade to this day, with his grandson Ben also a member of the Lake Munmorah Rural Fire Brigade. Jonny was an exceptional firefighter and member of the Central Coast community. He will never be forgotten. Vale, Jonny Bell.

MIDWIFE JEMIMA ERSKINE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (17:43): I congratulate Dubbo's Jemima Erskine for being selected for the 2022 Future Women NSW Rural Scholarship Program. Jemima is an early career clinician who is passionate about empowering women, especially rural women, physiologically and financially. As a midwife, Jemima's role is to be with women throughout their perinatal period. Of course, women's health and wellbeing does not exist in a silo. For rural women, health needs can be intensified by the tyranny of distance. Access to education and health resources is limited. However, rural women are inherently innovative and creative. Jemima is excited to explore the roles that medically trained professionals can play in improving women's health, not only through clinical practice but also through health promotion, policy, and engagement across industry. Jemima is keen to use the program to learn from other professionals outside the healthcare industry and to provide a platform for collaborative discussions. I congratulate Jemima and look forward to seeing her achieve plenty in this and all her other ambitions.

ST PATRICK'S DAY FESTIVAL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:44): The electorate of Coogee has the highest proportion of Irish-born and Irish-descent residents in all of Australia. To each and every one of them, happy St Patrick's Day! The Irish community are the only community in New South Wales and Australia whose citizens, on their national day, choose to become Australian citizens, which is a huge testament to the very deep and abiding bonds that exist between Ireland and Australia. This year's St Patrick's Day festival, held over the weekend, was absolutely amazing. It was the first time in a decade that it did not rain and did not feel like home. I send a huge congratulations and thank you to Karen Murphy and the Sydney St Patrick's Day committee, who are volunteers who work tirelessly to make the St Patrick's Day festival amazing.

WOLLONDILLY ELECTORATE FLOODS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (17:45): Once again, our community bravely faced disaster this month as the wet summer moved into a period of heavy rainfall for more than two weeks, which led to floodwaters causing property damage, road closures, and flooding to homes and businesses. With Wollondilly only just coming out of restrictions, it was disheartening to see the community hit again with another natural disaster. But the way our community pulls together never ceases to amaze me. It warms my heart and makes me proud to live in this wonderful part of New South Wales. The SES crews did a magnificent job prepping days

before flooding, warning locals and filling sandbags. The RFS were on the ground volunteering to get sandbags ready for shops in Picton and lending a hand wherever it was needed. I was in Picton at the height of the flooding on 2 March and it was so impressive to see emergency services teams ensuring the safety of residents and businesses. Once again, I thank all the volunteers from the Wollondilly shire and the Southern Highlands for their assistance.

MASCOT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:46): I congratulate Mascot Public School on its centenary. Mascot Public School was opened by the then Minister for Education and local alderman, the Hon. Thomas Mutch, on 18 February 1922. Since then, the school known as "Mighty, Mighty Mascot" has faced so much, including a fire in 1979 and, of course, an explosive rise in the local population. Through it all, Mascot Public School has remained the cornerstone of the Mascot community, successfully protecting the heritage character of the area, encouraging a richly diverse multicultural spirit and holding itself to a standard of excellence as it brings together and educates generations of local children. Today, with principal Helen Te Rata and her talented staff at the helm, Mascot Public School continues to forge itself as not only a terrific education institution but also a means of anchoring our growing and ever-changing community.

DR MAREE PUXTY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (17:47): I recognise Dr Maree Puxty of Armidale, an academic coordinator for the pilot program for final year students in the University of New England's Joint Medical Program. The program attracts doctors who aim to practise in rural communities and who themselves have come from rural communities. It is an opportunity for those medical students to experience real-life situations amid the host of ailments in general practice and diverse situations that country living presents. Sarah Appleby and Jess Chambers will be placed at Armajun Aboriginal Health Service at Inverell and at Inverell Hospital to gain experience with the diversity in those settings. I congratulate Dr Puxty on this innovative concept, which shows great promise in relieving the doctor shortage across the Northern Tablelands. I also congratulate Sarah and Jess on their dedication to the medical profession and on their commitment to the health of rural communities.

AMONG THE TREES

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (17:48): I am very proud to acknowledge the formal opening of Among The Trees, a new organisation that reclaims and recycles used timber in Marrickville. Made-to-use timber from plantation sites can take anywhere between 12 to 50 years to replenish and there are tonnes of existing timber that often goes unused or to landfill each year. Among The Trees ensures wood that would otherwise end up incinerated or in landfill gets used or renewed, adding another engine to our local circular economy. As well as upcycling and selling reclaimed timber, Among The Trees offers woodwork restoration courses, artist tenancies for sustainable makers in its workshop space, and acts as a collection point for timber that is unused and destined for landfill. A joint venture between Sara, Pete, Luke and Liz, Among The Trees is a long-term labour of love, bringing together the group's eclectic interests and expertise in woodworking, machining, design, architecture and education. The formal opening of the new premises on Sydney Street is the culmination of years of work. I congratulate the founders of Among The Trees.

CANTERBURY-BANKSTOWN LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (17:49): I congratulate the recipients from my electorate of East Hills who recently received Canterbury-Bankstown Local Business Awards. Hairdresser of the Year went to Hair Appeal and Beauty Connection at Revesby; the calming Deborah Watts from Reflexation Natural Therapies at Picnic Point won Sole Operator; Gemma Clarke Photography won Photography Business of the Year; "Mr Panania" himself, Paul Burgess, won the Business Person of the Year award for all of the outstanding work that he undertakes at Burgess Legal; and Echo Boards and Products from Condell Park won both Specialised Business and Business of the Year. A special mention goes to the wonderful team at Renew Community Store at Padstow, which won the Specialised Retail Business category. They do an amazing job caring for my community in Padstow and I am very happy to see they have been recognised for their tireless efforts. In what has been yet another extremely challenging year for small business, I say a big "Well done" to everyone who was nominated for an award for all that they have achieved in the past 12 months, and happy Small Business Month.

KEMPO RYU INTERNATIONAL KARATE ORGANISATION

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (17:50): I congratulate Kancho Peter Mylonas, who is the founder of and chief instructor at Kempo Ryu International Karate Organisation. The 26th Annual Kempo Ryu Championships were held last weekend, attracting hundreds of competitors and spectators. Kancho Peter Mylonas is a well-respected leader in the martial arts world, which was demonstrated by the attendance of various schools of karate, as well as kung fu styles. I was very impressed by the many internationally acclaimed trainers and

former champions who were in attendance to support the event—and amongst them, sitting proudly, was Peter's wonderful mother. Kancho Peter Mylonas is a humble character, completely masking that he is one of the world's leading karate instructors. His dojo in Blacktown provides valuable instruction not only in karate but also in life skills such as camaraderie and resilience through health and fitness. I thank the team at Kempo Ryu International Karate Organisation who worked throughout the difficult COVID lockdowns whilst providing hope and support to our local community. Osu!

GREY FERGIE TRACTOR MUSTER

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (17:51): The smell of diesel, the hum of a four-cylinder engine and the sight of a sea of vintage machinery—these are the sights, the smells and the sounds of the Grey Fergie Tractor Muster held in the great community of Bendemeer. It is an event like no other—a celebration of our proud farming history, with people from across New South Wales filling up the tanks, firing up the engines and making the pilgrimage to Bendemeer. It all started when Winston Doak decided to throw a fiftieth birthday party for his Grey Fergie in 2003, and the event has blossomed since. There is something about old tractors that brings people together, whether it is memories of days gone by, a fascination with our proud rural history or an interest in learning what it takes to keep old machinery going. We are attracted to the machines that built our country, and the mighty Grey Fergie is the star. This year's event attracted 1,000 visitors and 130 tractors, and was a very busy weekend for the Bendemeer Hotel. Congratulations to Anne, Winston and the committee—it was a great event for Bendemeer and I enjoyed being there to celebrate with everyone.

BLUE MOUNTAINS LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR ELLY CHATFIELD

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:52): I was honoured recently to stand with Elly Chatfield as she received the Blue Mountains Local Woman of the Year Award. Elly is a renowned artist, actor, poet, mentor and much-loved and respected Elder of the Blue Mountains Aboriginal community. She is a proud Gamillaroi woman, single mother of two, grandmother and highly regarded in her role as Elders support worker at the Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre. A child of the Stolen Generation, Elly's life and resilience is an inspiration. She is a skilled educator and environmentalist. Her art is inspired by her connection to land and sense of belonging. As an actor, she has appeared in feature films such as *Australia* and more recently starred in *Smoke Between Trees*. Elly is a mentor of First Nations people of all ages. She is a cultural adviser and supports numerous young people and community organisations. She is humble and strong. She is gentle and supportive. Elly has made a significant contribution to the Blue Mountains community and I am honoured to know her. Congratulations, Elly.

JUNEE RSL SUB-BRANCH PRESIDENT PETER HOGARTH

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (17:53): The Junee RSL sub-Branch will be facing some big changes as Peter Hogarth steps down as president after five years. I thank Peter for his five years of service to the community as president of the Junee RSL sub-Branch as well as his 18 years as an active member. A highlight of his time in the position was when Peter discovered that an Australian Defence Medal had not been presented to Roger Quine while he was in the army. Organising the medal and seeing that it was presented to Mr Quine while he was still alive is a source of great pride for Peter. I also take the opportunity to thank the members of the board who served with Peter for their commitment and contribution to the community. I thank Peter once again for his service to the Junee RSL sub-Branch and to the wider community. I hope to see his desire for new blood within the Junee RSL sub-Branch—with a new sense of purpose, worth, energy and vitality—fulfilled.

WOLLONGONG LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR MOEMOANA SCHWENKE

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (17:54): Congratulations to Moemoana Schwenke, who was recently named the 2022 Wollongong electorate Local Woman of the Year. Moemoana is a 21-year-old Samoan-born Wollongong resident who is completing her studies at the University of Wollongong. She travelled to Glasgow last year to speak at COP26, representing her home island of Samoa as well as other Pacific islands as part of the Pacific Climate Warriors. Listening to Moemoana speak with such passion, commitment and determination about the impacts of climate change on the Pacific islands left me struck that such a strong, coherent message was put so eloquently by someone so young. She is also active in promoting Samoan culture and teaching Pacific youth about cultural art forms, and she is one of only a few women in the world who are still able to perform the traditional Samoan dance Siva Afi. Moemoana has once again put Wollongong on the world stage with her activism and advocacy. Her efforts continue a long history of grassroots activism from Wollongong, which has helped create change and make a difference at national and international levels. Congratulations.

TOM AND JACK O'DEA

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (17:56): I recognise the dedication of Tom and Jack O'Dea to the Yass Valley community. Tom and Jack O'Dea are a father and son who have spent many hours collecting rubbish around the town of Yass and maintaining Hattons Corner Nature Reserve. I was pleased that Tom and Jack O'Dea were recognised at the 2022 Australia Day Awards, being awarded the Yass Valley Individual Community Service Award for the year. I also publicly recognise the efforts of Tom and Jack O'Dea and thank them sincerely for their efforts in looking after the Yass environment.

RIVERINA CANCER CARE CENTRE DR RENUKA CHITTAJALLU

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (17:56): Today I recognise Dr Renuka Chittajallu's incredible contribution to the Griffith community as a medical oncologist for Riverina Cancer Care Centre. For six years Renuka has travelled to Griffith from Sydney to run outreach clinics for thousands of rural cancer patients. That has saved cancer patients the trauma of having to travel long distances themselves while sick. Renuka is so much more than just a doctor. She has spent countless hours with Riverina patients and their families, talking to them and helping them through a difficult time in their lives. Renuka speaks three languages, so she is able to communicate with Griffith's large Indian population in their native tongues to make them feel more comfortable. Griffith, Leeton, Hay, Hillston and surrounds are indebted to Renuka, her colleague Sangeetha, the Riverina Cancer Care Centre and the local oncology staff for providing that lifesaving service. We look forward to the establishment later this year of a permanent oncology service led by the Riverina Cancer Care Centre, which will be able to treat so many more patients.

CELESTE GRACE PERROTTET

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (17:57): I congratulate the Premier, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet, on the birth of his beautiful daughter Celeste Grace Perrottet last week. I also congratulate Premier Perrottet's wife, Helen, on the safe delivery of their seventh child. I wish the Perrottet family health and happiness as they welcome their newest member. I am sure Celeste Grace will be treasured by her older brother and sisters. The preciousness of new life cannot be underestimated, and I am delighted for the whole Perrottet family as they begin the journey of raising another wonderful child. I wish the Premier and his wife the very best as they work on that most important task. I also pay tribute to the midwives who work tirelessly to support the families in our community, particularly our mothers. They play a critical role in bringing every wonderful child into this world.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): I announce that there seems to be a technical issue. The bells are ringing, but there is no division and no need for members to come to the Chamber to vote.

CENTRAL COAST FLOODS

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:58): I thank everyone involved in supporting Spencer, Gunderman and all the small communities in between during the recent floods. Many thanks go to Spencer RFS volunteers for doorknocking to get people out and making sure they were safe during the flood event. Apologies to those small communities that had their electricity cut off for significant periods of time, which meant the crisis was exacerbated as they had no connection to their support networks in the outside world. Thanks also to Central Coast Council's Brianna Pollock, Service NSW, Central Coast Local Health District mental health support person Lauren Winch, Services Australia, Resilience NSW, the Department of Primary Industries, the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, and Fire and Rescue NSW for supplying wi-fi to run the recovery centre. I thank Robyn Preston and Jane, who are part of the team at River Cares, for being great community members on the ground, trying their utmost to communicate with and support locals. I thank everyone in the local emergency management committee, and I look forward to working with them to build the Central Coast disaster recovery resilience network for the best possible outcomes for the people of the Central Coast in the future.

CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS NOMINEE JACOB SELWOOD

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:00): I congratulate Jacob Selwood of the 2021 class of Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School on his various nominations based on his Higher School Certificate major works. Jacob was nominated for the ARTEXPRESS 2022 exhibition for his visual arts major work entitled *River Dispute*. He was also nominated for OnSTAGE 2022 for his individual drama project set design. Well done to Jacob on those incredible achievements. Select major works in creative arts and performing arts subjects are showcased each year by the New South Wales Department of Education. Students across the State are invited to see the exhibitions and performances from the previous year's HSC high achievers that are nominated by the external markers of their major works. That allows the next year's HSC students to see the benchmark set for their works and to gain some inspiration. Northmead High in the Seven Hills electorate is a fantastic place for local students and those selected from across The Hills and Parramatta communities to explore their creative talents.

WINTER PARALYMPIC GAMES SKIER PATRICK JENSEN

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (18:01): Congratulations to Patrick Jensen, who has just returned from the Winter Paralympic Games after doing Newcastle and Australia proud in the para alpine skiing. In just his second games, Patrick finished in sixth place in the men's super-G visually impaired and eighth in both the men's downhill and slalom visually impaired. As an avid skateboarder, surfer and musician, Patrick has only been competitively skiing since 2014. But his hard work has paid off, recording top-10 results at the 2017 and 2019 world championships. Patrick has only gone from strength to strength, and Newcastle is thrilled by his dedication and success. Congratulations to Patrick. He has done Newcastle and Australia proud.

SOUTH COAST STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (18:02): I sincerely acknowledge, thank and congratulate the South Coast SES members for their incredible work across the South Coast electorate during the recent floods, combating multiple east coast lows. Nowra, St Georges Basin and Ulladulla SES crews have worked incredibly hard, working very long hours to assist their communities, which are facing horrific weather. They have certainly done an amazing job assisting our community. Although many of us in New South Wales have experienced dangerous weather conditions, especially with flooding, our local SES teams have done an exceptional job keeping our local communities as safe as possible. The Shoalhaven experienced some dangerous weather conditions, including flash flooding, destructive winds and major flooding of our waterways. The help of our local SES units has not gone unnoticed within the community. It is a pleasure today to be able to thank all of those involved in the SES and to congratulate them on their hard work and dedication to our community. We are all so grateful to the SES members throughout New South Wales who have made the time to volunteer and assist their communities.

GREATER BLACKTOWN BUSINESS CHAMBER BUSINESS AFTER FIVE EVENT

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:03): On Thursday 17 March it was great to attend the Greater Blacktown Business Chamber's Business After Five networking event. We were joined by NSW Labor leader Chris Minns, MP, who was a special guest speaker. The event was made possible by proud sponsors Mode Media, Blacktown City Lions Club and the Kids West charity. The Business After Five event is a great opportunity for hardworking business leaders in the Blacktown area to connect with, engage and cultivate their business leads. During the past few years our Blacktown community has experienced profound challenges, firstly with the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns and more recently with the extreme storm and weather events. However, businesses continue to provide services and products for our growing community. Events such as Business After Five are vital in supporting local businesses to collaborate and share important ideas that aid business recovery. Businesses are the backbone of our local economy as they provide much-needed resources to the community and create thousands of jobs. I thank Trevor Oldfield, president of the Greater Blacktown Business Chamber, for continuing to support business leaders in our western Sydney community.

WORM FARM INITIATIVE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:04): I am excited to announce to the House the launch of a new worm farm initiative aimed at encouraging the community to think green and sustainable through the recycling of organic material. North Haven resident and horticulturalist Marty Ware is developing a new recycling concept designed to transform used coffee grounds from hospitality businesses into garden fertiliser. The idea has the backing of local businesses Brew Haven Cafe North Haven, Camden Haven Signs & Stickers and Laurieton United Services Club, who all want to reduce the amount of waste material going into landfill. Marty moved to Three Brothers Landscaping Supplies at Dunbogan in an effort to expand his horticulture and organic gardening operation. Locally, Marty picks up anywhere from 50 to 80 litres of coffee grounds a day. His worm farm initiative converts the bio-waste into organic matter that has valuable nutrients, known as castings, for gardens. It is estimated that on average a cafe uses 20 kilograms of coffee beans each week, which equates to two tonnes of coffee grounds going into landfill per cafe. The worm farm initiative also accepts food scraps, paper and cardboard from public donations. I wish Marty all the very best.

ASHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (18:05): Ashfield Public School is one of 210 schools across New South Wales designated as high progress, with students demonstrating above-average progress in literacy, numeracy and reading. This will come as no surprise to parents and carers at the school, who have watched students go from strength to strength, thanks to the diligence, expertise and leadership of Principal Damien Moran. Part of the school's success is attributed to the introduction of early morning intervention groups, whereby teachers work with small groups of students needing additional support for 30 minutes each morning. However, those initiatives and targeted interventions are only part of the story. The school is known for its inclusive, compassionate and all-encompassing approach to education, where students are able to thrive, meet their full

potential and build on their strengths. In all they do, the educators at Ashfield Public School seek to embody their school motto: Every child, every opportunity. I warmly congratulate Principal Damien Moran and his team of superb staff, the wonderful P&C and, most importantly, the students on their success.

SENATOR MARISE PAYNE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (18:06): It is with great pleasure that I recognise one of Mulgoa's own as the longest serving female senator in Australian history. Having now served as a senator for over 24 years, Senator Marise Payne takes the record formerly held by Senator Dame Dorothy Tangney, who was first elected in 1943. In 2015 Senator Payne was the first female to be appointed as Minister for Defence and, in her first speech in that role, stated that she wanted to be judged based on her performance and not her gender. In 2021 Senator Payne delivered \$1.1 billion for women's safety, which was the largest single investment in women's safety in a Federal budget. The achievements of Senator Payne throughout her parliamentary career are extensive. On behalf of this House and the people of the Mulgoa electorate, I congratulate Marise on this remarkable milestone.

NORTHERN TABLELANDS FARMER MARLENE BREWER

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (18:07): I recognise Marlene Brewer for her resilience as a career farmer in the Northern Tablelands—one who has overcome the crippling events of the past few years. When her property Allambie entered its third year of drought she had to make some hard decisions, selling the remainder of her herd and getting a job in town. She worked briefly on another property and then moved into a benefit program helping farmers. When the rains came they brought the chance to restock, but the downpours also brought flooding, erosion and destruction. Restocking was not an option with cattle prices as high as they were and Marlene chose sheep, drawing on her past experience. Marlene loves her horses, her dogs, her livestock and just about everything to do with the bush. She is an entrepreneur and excels in any job she is presented with, proving to be a valuable journalist for the Bingara Magazine. Marlene exhibits what is recognised as the Australian spirit of endurance, courage and resilience. I congratulate Marlene on her many achievements and I commend her for her tenacity and generosity in sharing her story.

MANGROVE MOUNTAIN CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:08): I congratulate everyone involved in rebuilding the absolutely beautiful Mountain Community Children's Centre at Mangrove Mountain on the Central Coast. After a devastating fire in 2017, this champion community has worked together to fundraise and support each other in building an absolutely gorgeous new, state-of-the-art facility. Not only is the building spectacular, but you can tell the staff support the children and families with absolute love the minute you enter the facility. I was lucky enough to join everyone on a perfect early autumn day to officially open the centre, after the challenges of COVID had caused missed opportunities. It was a beautiful day. I was able to play with the kids on the gorgeous bike path; look at the artworks; hear stories; chat with community members, staff and parents; and celebrate the happiness within the community. It was wonderful to be able to dedicate the building to the Luci family, who have contributed so much over so many years. The children of the Mountain districts are incredibly lucky to have such a great facility and such fantastic, talented staff to wrap lovingly around them as they grow with resilience to thrive and take the next steps in education.

SIR JOSEPH BANKS HIGH SCHOOL

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (18:09): I congratulate the staff, students and leadership of Sir Joseph Banks High School on their outstanding 2021 HSC results. I acknowledge the school's highest performing students. Leyla Alameddine, the dux of the school, achieved an outstanding ATAR of 96.85 and a band 6 in advanced English, business studies, legal studies and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education [PDHPE]. Michael Le achieved an ATAR of 94.85 and a notional band 6 in extension maths, with an E3 result, and a band 6 in chemistry. The following students also received a band 6 in their HSC results: Steven Hoang in PDHPE, Nicolas Brex in biology, Anna-An Thai in advanced English, Riva Thapa in legal studies and Ngoc Vu in Vietnamese continuers. I am particularly pleased to see Leyla and Nicolas doing so well as I welcomed them as school leaders at Parliament House last year. I congratulate all our students in what was the most challenging of circumstances to undertake the HSC, and I commend the dedication, commitment and all the efforts of the staff at Sir Joseph Banks High School.

MARIO'S QUALITY MEATS

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (18:10): For 20 years Mario's has served up fresh, quality meats for Haberfield and the inner west community. Last week a new chapter in Haberfield began, with Mario's Quality Meats changing hands and a new business, the Haberfield Butchery, taking over the shopfront at 25 Waratah Street. That address has a rich and storied history as a butcher since 1915. While I know Mario's has been a

much-loved feature of the Haberfield community since its opening, the community is excited that the Haberfield Butchery will be continuing that legacy. Haberfield continues to be one of the most vibrant shopping districts in the inner west, bringing shoppers from across the city to enjoy its offerings of fresh produce, meats and excellent baked goods and coffee. I thank Mario's Quality Meats for its many years of service to the Haberfield community and I wish the very best to the team at the new Haberfield Butchery. I know that they will do great justice to the strong and unique history of the Waratah Street building.

YASS VALLEY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR BARRY O'MARA

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (18:11): I recognise the tireless dedication of Mr Barry O'Mara to the Yass Valley community. Mr O'Mara has been committed to raising money to support those individuals and families in the community who have been affected by serious medical conditions. The funds raised have supported those individuals to access vital treatments required. Mr O'Mara has also played a significant role in promoting and supporting local sporting and social groups as well as the Rural Fire Service. I was delighted that Mr O'Mara was recognised for his passionate work within and for the community at the Australia Day Awards, being awarded the Yass Valley Citizen of the Year. I also recognise the efforts of Mr O'Mara and thank him for his great sense of community and for recognising those in the community who require additional support and assistance to remain in the hearts and thoughts of the local community.

Private Members' Statements

TRIBUTE TO DR JOAN CROLL, AO

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes) (18:12): I pay tribute to Dr Joan Croll, AO, who died on 14 February. Many in this House will know the story of the 13 housewives who banded together and fought to save their beloved Kelly's Bush. Joan Croll was the last surviving member of the original 13. Joan was not, as she was often described, "one of those 13 bloody housewives". I hope that we can remember her for what she truly was—a ground-breaking physician, a committed activist and a beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Joan Holliday was born in 1928, the second of three children of Dr Roy Holliday and his wife, Una. Joan would spend the majority of her childhood living above her father's surgery on Anzac Parade in Kensington, with only a brief interruption when she was evacuated to Wentworth Falls with her siblings, Dick and Barbara, for the duration of World War II. Having been immersed in the medical field for so much of her life, it is no surprise that after graduating from SCEGGS Darlinghurst Joan went on to study medicine at the University of Sydney. It was here that she met her beloved husband, Frank. After spending her first few years out of medical school working with the Northern Territory's Royal Flying Doctor Service, delivering babies in the Tiwi Islands and treating leper colonies, Joan would marry Frank in 1955. They settled together in the Croll family home at Woolwich and went on to have five daughters: Timna, who is now deceased, Catherine, Philippa, Elizabeth, who is deceased, and Annabel.

During their daughters' formative years, Joan put her medical career to the side in order to care for her daughters; however, during those years she was anything but idle. In September 1970 Joan, along with 12 other women in Hunters Hill, gathered in the All Saints' parish hall and discussed the pending development of their beloved Kelly's Bush. It was here that the "Battlers for Kelly's Bush" group was formed. The women were determined to save their cherished bushland, writing hundreds of letters, making badges and banners, inviting local media to "boil the billy" events in the bushland and, to the surprise and chagrin of many, enlisting the support of the Builders Labourers Federation. Even children were not excused from enlistment. Joan's daughters, Annabel and Philippa, remember with fondness their involvement in the campaign, having been flung in front of bulldozers and sent out on daily treks to deliver pamphlets to neighbours.

Eventually, after years of community campaigning, the then New South Wales Government conceded and, in 1983, announced that Kelly's Bush would remain as a public space on a permanent basis, effectively becoming the first ever green ban in the world. Not only had these women fought and won to protect their beloved bushland, they proved to be a beacon of success to all community advocates and activists worldwide. The protection of Kelly's Bush was not the only remarkable achievement of Joan's lifetime. At the age of 47, Joan resumed her medical career. Age proved no barrier to Joan, and she was a remarkable pioneer in the medical field. She would spend the bulk of her remaining career as the medical director of the Sydney Square Breast Clinic. It was in this role that she promoted the introduction of ultrasounds and mammograms which, in the 1990s, led to establishment of the national breast cancer screening program.

I cannot say more about Joan except that she is one of the most remarkable people you will see in a generation. The impact that Joan's work had on the lives of all Australian women cannot be overstated, and it was for this work that Joan was inducted as an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1996. In the later years of her life,

Joan dedicated herself to her growing brood of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, but her passion for activism remained and she would often be found writing one of her many letters to the editor. Her daughters reminded me of one of Joan's campaigns in later life: Joan would often write to editors asking them to change the wording of their death notices, saying that individuals die; they do not pass away. I imagine that many editors across Sydney have carefully chosen their words, with great sadness, as one final tribute to Joan's memory. Joan's legacy of activism and passion, not only in the electorate of Lane Cove but across Sydney and the globe, will live on well past her death. On behalf of all members of the Lane Cove and Hunters Hill communities and this House, I pass on my sincere condolences to Joan's family. May she rest in eternal peace.

DINOSAUR FESTIVAL AUSTRALIA

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (18:17): A mesmerising, world-class dinosaur exhibition featuring life-sized robotic dinosaurs, various amusement rides and dinosaur-themed activities for the whole family is what the operators of Dinosaur Festival Australia promised but failed to deliver to residents across the Hunter, particularly Wallsend. First advertised to be held in February 2021, the operators postponed the festival on five occasions, with the latest occasion being just today.

I was first contacted last year about the proposed show, when people questioned the legitimacy of the operator following the less than world-class Monster Creature World show that was held in Western Australia in 2021 by the same operator, Mr David Huni. The event was widely criticised for failing to live up to the promises made on its website and Facebook pages. There have also been cancellations and postponements of events in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Ipswich and Toowoomba. To this day, many of the events have not gone ahead and, according to comments on their Facebook page and from people who have contacted my office, Dinosaur Festival Australia has still not refunded many of the customers who asked for a refund. That is the crux of the problem.

In January the operators contacted my office to assure me that they were 100 per cent legitimate. They assured me they were going ahead with the event and sent me numerous links to media stories about their events to try to prove their legitimacy. Sadly, not one of the links was about an event that had gone ahead. They all related to upcoming events that were subject to last minute postponements. The website of the operator advises customers that refunds will not be offered, except as required by law. In this case, the law needs a second look. There has been a repeated failure to put on the show, and thousands of legitimate customers are out of pocket and unable to attend the rescheduled events. The company, despite the legal statements on its website, offers customers unable to attend the rescheduled event a refund. I quote:

If you are a ticket holder and you are no longer able to attend on the new dates please email us a request for a refund through the email below but please note that refunds are done manually and can take up to 30 days to process.

It comes as no surprise that everybody who contacted my office is yet to receive a refund, well after the 30-day time frame promised by the company. Despite repeated attempts to contact the company, they have so far refused to speak with me about refunding customers. Sadly, when people seeking a refund contacted NSW Fair Trading, they were pointed to the refund policy on the company's website, which says that no refund will be issued and they are advised to seek legal advice. In Wallsend they are not men and women with deep pockets. They cannot pursue legal cases when they are out of pocket. In some cases they paid up to \$150 for a family ticket.

Fair Trading needs some teeth to be able to go after operators like Dinosaur Festival Australia. It might seem small, but it is not small to a family that is already struggling to pay their bills, with the increased cost-of-living pressures that we all have. I say to our constituents that I will support them as they pursue this issue. I ask the operator to do the right thing and refund the money to those who want it immediately, otherwise I will continue to pursue the issue. I expect the Government to pursue the operator so that no other community is out of pocket for an event that seemingly will never happen. We do not want that to happen again, so we ask for the Government's support on this matter.

MEADOWBANK PUBLIC SCHOOL AND MARSDEN HIGH SCHOOL

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government) (18:22): Last weekend I was fortunate enough to walk through the incredible new Meadowbank Public School and Marsden High School buildings with Mayor Jordan Lane, as well as Principal Lance Berry from Marsden High School and Principal Louise Imseih from Meadowbank Public School. As we walked through the incredible facilities, we marvelled at the amazing new features and incredible statistics, such as the 260 solar panels and 32 different colours that vibrantly paint and decorate the schools. Those features will create a modern, lively and futuristic precinct, giving all students an opportunity to explore their talents and skills in the best way possible.

The sheer size of the precinct was extraordinary to walk through. To put it in perspective, the precinct is the same size as six AFL pitches or 3.3 hectares. This vast layout will give all students the ability to pursue their

interests and goals. A facility of this size is going to hold 1,500 secondary students, 120 intensive English Centre students and 1,000 primary students. With the ever-growing population of Ryde, I am always amazed at the ability to continue to find new ways of ensuring equal opportunity for all of our community. As I walked into the fully fitted, purpose-built areas for high school students, I was amazed at the fixtures and equipment provided—from industrial ovens to dance floors and woodwork rooms. The fixtures will allow for the study of an array of subjects by a variety of students. The growing excitement for students to utilise the facilities was felt not only by myself but also by a cohort of students who had visited a week prior, as well as the wider community. It astounds me that one precinct can have science laboratories and state-of-the-art kitchens fit for Higher School Certificate exams and for younger students to learn, dream and grow in, simultaneously, and also have design and technology features capable of the same level of learning.

The greenery that surrounds the school provides a wonderful environment, ideal for optimum learning and recreational experiences. I was so pleased to see two full-size basketball courts as well as soccer fields and open grass areas, which provide opportunities for students to live out their sporting and recreational aspirations. There is no denying the benefits of physical exercise and daily movement, especially in an educational setting; it is key to ensuring successful growth and learning. And with the facilities available at the education precinct, every student has the opportunity to participate.

As I continued to walk through, I was amazed at the amount of art throughout the design. The diversity was incredible, from Indigenous art to international pictures and paintings. Having an array of art allows for all students to express themselves creatively whilst also learning from the past. This is especially evident in the 14 different star constellations described in the covered outdoor learning areas throughout the school. This contemporary design furthers the students' ability to learn flexibly around the grounds of the school, as we move away from the traditional styles of education. Art is an integral part of learning, and I am very proud of the quality of art that has been installed inside the precinct. I will be even more excited to see it combined with the artwork done by the students once it is open to them. Being able to put their own pictures next to that of renowned and famous pieces highlights the inclusivity being employed across all New South Wales schools and educational facilities.

The excitement of both Marsden High School and Meadowbank Public School is growing daily as we look forward to the opening of this futuristic precinct at the start of term 2, day one, in late April. Each student is going to have the opportunity to learn in a vibrant, purpose-built space where the incredible staff can utilise modern facilities to achieve the best results for their students. It was such a proud moment for me as I was walking through because that area was once not going to be truly utilised. But now, when we combine that with the incredible work that the TAFE is doing in digitising and creating a new state-of-the-art digital facility, as well as marrying that with the employment precinct that Planning is now working through, and having strong links with Macquarie University and the incredible powerhouse that is Macquarie Park, this is what future education should look like. When I walked through both the primary school and the high school, I kept thinking how it reminds me of a university campus or a TAFE campus. They are literally getting ready for success.

JUBILEE COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors) (18:27): Tonight I congratulate Jubilee Community Services [JCS], which celebrated its fiftieth year of operations last year. I had the pleasure of attending the celebrations held at the Jubilee Community Centre for that magnificent occasion. It was such a pleasure to meet the staff and the volunteers at JCS as well as community members who benefit from their incredible work. Fifty years of service is an incredible milestone for any community organisation, especially one that has contributed so much to make a difference within our local community. Jubilee Community Services commenced operations on 5 October 1971 and for over 50 years has developed a fantastic reputation for providing quality affordable services to those who need it most.

JCS is well regarded for its top-notch support for elderly residents living with dementia, people with learning disabilities and those who require support with English. Jubilee Community Services also provides adult leisure learning classes, an after-school care group and mental health services to some of the most vulnerable members of the community. These are particularly tailored to meet the immediate needs of the community and these efforts certainly do not go unnoticed. I have had multiple emails and calls to my electorate office praising the fantastic work that JCS does each and every year. I commend the staff and the volunteers working at JCS. Their contribution and commitment to go above and beyond is truly special.

It is the hard work of community leaders such as those at Jubilee Community Services that continues to uphold its reputation in such a high regard. This reputation and commitment have been retained over 50 years and local residents have relied on JCS to get through some of the toughest times. The COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years has been an unprecedented challenge, especially for community groups who rely on face-to-face interactions with the people they assist to continue to deliver their services. The hardworking staff at Jubilee

Community Services have taken this challenge head on with high spirits and tenacity. They consistently provide and adapt their service delivery to an array of ever-changing COVID restrictions. I personally thank and congratulate them on keeping our community safe during these times.

It has been no easy feat for us to get to the other side of the last lockdown. Our enormous vaccination drive has been amongst the largest in the world and has allowed us to get back to what we love doing much sooner. As a COVID-safe organisation, Jubilee Community Services was able to get back to visiting, shopping for and participating in social activities with the elderly, fundraising for their organisation and assisting in face-to-face learning within their classes. This was facilitated with the help of over 70 volunteers who donate their time and efforts to ensure services are run efficiently and meet the needs of the community. This fantastic work is administered by a community-based volunteer management board chaired by Marion Smith. Marion has done an outstanding job over many, many years as a member of the board and as chair.

I truly believe that organisations like Jubilee Community Services are the backbone of our local community. I am so proud to have an organisation of such a high calibre operating within my electorate. The St George area as a whole is better off because of the fantastic work organisations like JCS do. I once again congratulate Jubilee Community Services on an incredible 50 years of service to our community. I send my thanks to all past and present volunteers who have contributed over the years. I look forward to Jubilee's seventy-fifth and 100th anniversaries, which I am sure are to come.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL WAYNE HAWKER

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (18:31): It is with great sadness that I advise the House of the passing of Paul Wayne Hawker, who was not only a constituent of Campbelltown but a former mayor of Campbelltown and a Vietnam veteran. In fact, he was the first mayor of Campbelltown who was a Vietnam veteran. Tonight I acknowledge some of his achievements. He was first elected to Campbelltown City Council in 2004 and served on the council for 12 years. He was a former chair of the Community Safety and Campbelltown Arts Centre subcommittees. He also served on the Corporate Governance Committee, the City Works Committee, the Association of Mining Related Councils, Macarthur Zone Bush Fire Management Committee, Macarthur Zone Rural Fire Service District Liaison Committee and the Sydney Metro West Region Joint Regional Planning Panel.

He was also the president of the Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils, a senior director of Local Government NSW and a member of the Ministerial Advisory Group for Fit for the Future. He served as mayor for one year and was very passionate and did so many things. As the local member for Campbelltown, I was delighted and welcomed the opportunity to work with Paul, who I know had a passion to see better outcomes for our city and our town. When Paul first went to Vietnam he was Lance Corporal Paul Wayne Hawker, Service No. 1202380. From 17 May 1970 to 1 June 1971, a total of 381 days, he served in the very proud 2nd Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment. I lay his certificate of service on the table of the House.

Paul was a good man. He was not just someone who loved Campbelltown; he loved his family. He was passionate about what we needed in our area, and he remained as such. I am so disappointed that I did not get the opportunity to catch up with him before his passing. He achieved so many things on council. I was talking to my colleague Mr Anoulack Chanthivong, who served on Campbelltown City Council with him. When Paul arrived on council, he helped secure Campbelltown's push to become a regional city and did a great job. He helped facilitate upgrades at Macarthur Square to the tune of \$240 million—a fantastic place that has done so much. He also supported and worked hard for amenity improvements at various parks, including Glenfield, Ruse, Macquarie Fields, Kentlyn and St Helens Park.

He transferred to the military police after his time in Vietnam. He first enlisted as a lance corporal and discharged as a major. For myself as an enlisted man, yes, he went to the dark side—to the officer levels of the military—but I know why he did: because of the element of leadership that Paul had the capacity to provide. And he did so. I am saddened by Paul's loss. Those on the other side of the Chamber would be aware that he was not on the same side of politics as me. But we were always on the same side about what is right—that is, what is best for Campbelltown—and that is what he did in his public representations in every way. Whether it was in service to his country or his community, Paul always put everyone else first. On behalf of Campbelltown I offer my deepest sympathies to his darling and lovely wife, Sigrid; his children, Aaron and Daryl; and his grandchildren. We, as a city, are lesser without him. May you rest in peace, mate. You gave everything, and we thank you.

ABILITY AGRICULTURE FOUNDER JOSIE CLARKE

OXLEY ELECTORATE FLOODS

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (18:37): I offer my congratulations to Bellimbopinni's Josie Clarke, who is a finalist for the 2022 NSW-ACT AgriFutures Rural Women's Award. Josie developed Ability Agriculture, an online platform and community on Facebook and Instagram which tells stories of those with a disability in

agriculture. Ability Agriculture amplifies the voices of those who have been under-represented in the industry, and this passion for bringing about opportunity and equity for people with disability is something very close to Josie's heart. Josie Clarke was just five years old when she was rushed to Sydney with her three siblings after their father, Glen Clarke, had been involved in a serious truck accident. At the time, Glen was running a transportation company and beef cattle farm in Kempsey. He survived the crash but was a paraplegic.

When he returned to the farm, he found that things were not the same as when he left. Glen was 41 and, before the crash, had not taken a sick day in his life. However, Glen was determined not to let his injury define the rest of his life and retrained as a clerical assistant. He had his John Deere Gator all-terrain vehicle adapted so that he was able to continue to spray weeds and muster cattle on his farm. He retained independence and found ways to contribute. During this time, Josie began to recognise that her father's story was not dissimilar to those of many other farmers. It was this experience that inspired Josie to create an online community for farmers living with disability. Ability Agriculture is designed for social purposes, from sharing ideas on how to adapt farming equipment to offering support, to increasing the representation of people in the regions with disability, to improving employment prospects.

Ability Agriculture brings together people with disabilities who are passionate about agriculture. I thank and congratulate Josie not just for the impact she is having on our local community but also for her contribution to rural communities across the nation. Josie's nomination for the AgriFutures Rural Women's Award is well-deserved. The award is testament to the positive influence women make in business and agriculture. Behind every good farmer, there is often a very good woman. The Rural Women's Award winner will be announced at the Rural Women's Gathering in Forbes in April and will receive a \$15,000 Westpac bursary to enhance their project, in addition to access to business leadership and mentoring opportunities. My best wishes for Josie; fingers crossed for her success next month.

I would also like to take this opportunity to discuss the impact of the recent rains on our region. Just 12 months after the March rains of last year, my beautiful electorate of Oxley has had three weeks without our main road corridor, Waterfall Way, the main route between Armidale through to Dorrigo, Bellingen and down to Coffs Harbour. I thank the roads Minister, Sam Farraway, for putting up with many of my phone calls in the midst of what was a drama for the entire region, knowing my community's frustration and challenges from being cut off, such as school teachers not being able to get to school, nurses not being able to get to the hospital and kids not being able to get down to the coast for schooling. It has been another trial and tribulation that our community has had to deal with, but I thank my community for its patience and I absolutely respect their frustration.

I thank the crews from Transport for NSW and Bellingen Shire Council and the specialist contractors who worked to clear fallen trees and around 300 tip trucks of soil from one site near Thora that made traversing the mountain impossible. I note the importance of that route. Its closure means the milk tankers are not able to collect the milk from the dairy farms at Dorrigo. Everything that our community is has been challenged by it. I had the joy of having my niece and two of her friends come and stay with us at the bottom of the mountain so that they could get to their school. It was nice to have children in the house—other than the dog. It has been a real challenge.

The community has risen to that challenge, but I reiterate that I know they do not want it to happen again. I wish I could promise it will not happen again. But if we had the rainfall that the communities around Lismore experienced, I do not think the road would have been cut for three weeks; it could have been for a much longer period of time. We are going to continue to work on restoring the stability of that mountain. There are steel nails going into the wall of the mountain to improve stability and stop those falls. We are going to continue to work on it. We will continue to communicate with the community. I thank my community for their challenge and I offer our heartfelt best wishes to our cousins, friends and families in the northern part of coastal New South Wales.

SYLVANVALE FOUNDATION

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (18:42): I acknowledge the incredible Sylvanvale Foundation for the ongoing support it provides to families in our community. Established in 1947 by a group of passionate parents, Sylvanvale was formed to give children with disabilities better opportunities and quality of life through access to education and social equality. The Sylvanvale Foundation fills a gap in the market and provides a unique and tailored service for individuals living with a disability in our community. The crucial care and support it provides is in such high need that people come from all over Sydney to access the services that Sylvanvale delivers. The Sylvanvale Foundation is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme provider and supports more than 750 children and adults through the Sydney metropolitan area and the Blue Mountains to achieve independence and participate in the community without barriers.

Sylvanvale offers a number of services to help people with a disability live the life they choose. This includes short-term accommodation; clinical services; community hubs such as the Garden House, Adventurer's

Club and Caringbah Craft Centre; living support; and the Mikarie Child Care Centre in Kirrawee. At Mikarie, children and families in our community are provided with quality early education for children of all abilities aged six weeks to six years. In addition, the incredible teaching and support staff at Mikarie run a free-of-cost playgroup for children between zero and five years old who may not be reaching their developmental milestones and provides them with an encouraging and inclusive environment.

The playgroup runs weekly and provides children with access to early childhood educators and therapists in a stimulating setting. It gives each child and their family the opportunity to enhance their relationships in a nurturing environment whilst refining their skills and confidence and developing valuable friendships and support networks. Some of those support measures include fun and engaging play-based tools that families can implement at home, access to a clinical services team, weekly morning tea and picnic time, and the opportunity to make new friends, along with helpful techniques and resources. Over the past decade, Mikarie has had an incredible impact on the lives of local families and its outreach and support only grows stronger.

Sylvanvale also provides specialist disability accommodation to give individuals the ability to live as independently as possible within our community. Their properties include share houses, self-contained units and two- or three-bedroom villas staffed by compassionate carers who understand the unique needs of each individual. Specialist disability accommodation is housing that has been designed specifically for people with high support needs. It is often categorised into independent living or community cooperative living, which includes on-call support.

I am delighted to also celebrate Sylvanvale's specialist disability accommodation in Bangor, which will open officially on Tuesday 26 April 2022. The Bangor accommodation will provide six new residences for eight people living with disability in the Sutherland shire. There is high demand and an unmet need for this level of specialist disability accommodation. This important housing will provide residents with an abundance of open, private and carefully designed living spaces that can be shared comfortably with their guests. The Bangor homes are suited for individuals who require the highest level of accommodation and they give people living with disability more unique, luxury home options, allowing them to live as they choose. I look forward to celebrating the opening of these fantastic homes in April and commend the Sylvanvale Foundation for achieving this fantastic outcome for our community.

I was delighted to attend the seventy-fifth anniversary Sylvanvale Pre WWII Car Show in Sutherland on Sunday, one of the many fundraisers supporting this organisation. Making a return to Sylvanvale's origins, the event was held at Flora Street in Sutherland, which in 1947 at the Baptist church was the location of Sylvanvale's very first site. Due to the incredible turnout, the event raised over \$30,000 for the Sylvanvale Foundation, which will go towards a range of furnishings and equipment for the specialist disability accommodation in Bangor, making these new houses home. The event was run by the wonderful Ken Warburton, whose family helped found the Sylvanvale Foundation.

Sylvanvale has such an incredible impact in our community through the many services it provides. Earlier this year the Sylvanvale Foundation was named Community Service of the Year at the Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards. The local business awards are held over an 11-week period when our community members have the opportunity to nominate their favourite local business in a selected category. Winners are then selected based on the number of nominations they have received from locals. I congratulate the Sylvanvale team on this fantastic achievement. I acknowledge board members including Jeff McCarthy, David Kelly, Robert Brown, John Slack, Bethany Williams and David Rafferty, along with Andrea Mackay and executive committee members Leanne Fretten, Cathy Quinn, Deirdre Young and Ollie Parker for the important work they do in our community. The Sylvanvale Foundation provides such important services for our local community and I look forward to continuing to work with it to support people with disabilities.

NOWRUZ CELEBRATION

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (18:47): I wish a very happy Nowruz to all the Afghan, Iranian and Kurdish Australians and other communities who celebrated this special occasion on 21 March 2022. In addition, I thank all those who sent me their Nowruz wishes and shared with me their special Nowruz desserts. Nowruz has become a significant occasion in the Granville electorate with so many migrants and refugees from Afghanistan and Iran, in particular, making Merrylands, Granville, Guildford and Holroyd their home. Nowruz marks the Persian New Year and is a celebration of spring. Nowruz is a combination of two words—"now", meaning new, and "ruz" or "roz", meaning day—which together mean the new day or first day of the new Persian year. It symbolises rebirth and the affirmation of life in harmony with nature. It brings colour and celebration to hundreds of millions of people around the world, including in New South Wales. It has a rich history that dates back over 3,000 years.

Desserts such as samanak or samanu and fruits such as haft mewa—the seven-fruit cocktail—are the special traditional desserts for celebrating this wonderful day. Afghan people call it samanak whilst Iranians call

it samanu, and there is no simple English translation. However, it is the special dessert treasured at Nowruz time. If members want to try how it tastes, they can find it in different parts of Sydney—including in many shops a few doors away from my electorate office. The Iranian Ryyan Supermarket and Afghan shops including Kabul Supermarket, Walli Asr Halal Butcher Shop and Balkh Super Market have offered it this year. It is cooked once a year and involves a special ceremony and lots of effort—10 to 15 days are required to prepare it. The main ingredient is top-quality wheat that is watered daily. Once the wheat has grown sufficiently to produce thick white roots and, above them, green blades, the Afghan people gather around the tray with the wheat. Everyone makes a wish in their hearts and starts to cut the green blades with scissors. If the number of blades a person cuts is odd, it is believed that his or her wish will come true during that year.

Other common traditions include house cleaning, visiting friends and families during Nowruz—something I think we have all wished for after two years of the COVID-19 pandemic—and celebrating the success of the Afghan, Iranian and Kurdish Australians who have made our State their home. For the first time, the Cumberland City Council area was festooned with Nowruz banners to celebrate the festivities in our area. I hope that council will work closely with the community to celebrate Nowruz on a larger scale in the future. Our community has the largest concentration of Afghan and Persian businesses in the Merrylands CBD and it is a great opportunity to promote this unique and wonderful cultural asset to the wider Australian community. Also this year, I did not miss the opportunity to join my friends in sharing a fantastic Afghan lunch at the marvellous Kabul House in Merrylands to celebrate Nowruz.

While Nowruz is a time of great happiness, I place on record how challenging the past year has been for the Afghan community in my electorate. Watching the Taliban regime they fled take control of the country once again has been extraordinarily challenging. Hundreds and hundreds of local people and families are trying desperately to bring their family members to safety. The Australian Government committed to providing thousands of places for refugees from Afghanistan, especially those who are at great risk because they worked with the Australian forces or our allies, and I know I am not alone in wanting them to provide thousands more places.

The Afghan and Iranian families in my area often celebrate Nowruz with their relatives overseas via video link, and I know for many of them this will be more difficult now. I hope that the new year and new spring bring to life hope and good fortune for all those who are celebrating Nowruz, especially those who are trying to bring their families to safety. I hope that, despite those concerns, they can come together and enjoy Nowruz and the sense of optimism it brings. May they be blessed with happiness, success and good health. Nowruz Mubarak!

LAKE MACQUARIE ELECTORATE ENERGY INDUSTRY

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (18:51): Almost 14 years ago to the day, not long after I was first elected to the New South Wales Parliament, I stood on this very spot in this Chamber during question time and asked then Premier Morris Iemma about the recommendations of the Unsworth Energy Consultative Reference Committee. As I have done numerous times since, I raised questions about the way energy is produced in New South Wales. I argued against the privatisation of our power industries—as did you, Madam Temporary Speaker. I warned about the impacts climate change would have on our coal industry and the need to create a transition authority for communities reliant on coal and power generation. I also warned about the rapid global shift in energy markets that will have huge impacts on areas such as Lake Macquarie, which is so invested in coal and coal-fired power generation.

Of course I was not alone, and of course I was speaking out of self-interest, because Lake Macquarie is home not only to some very significant coalmining operations but also to Eraring Power Station, which provides more than 22 per cent of the State's power. In fact, it is Australia's largest power station. Within those industries are thousands of local jobs. Last month Origin Energy announced that it would likely close Eraring Power Station in 2025—seven years earlier than anticipated. I had personally expected that Eraring's closure might come a few years earlier than its 2032 closure date, perhaps in 2028 or thereabouts. However, that closure will now likely take place just 41 months from now. It does not really matter what your views are on climate change, although mine are well known. Sadly, successive governments—and indeed many in the community—spent too much time arguing about climate change and wind turbines to realise how quickly world energy markets were changing and shifting away from fossil fuels. Even more sadly, we are now starting our transition many years behind where we should have been.

Eraring directly employs almost 500 employees and contractors. Many more work in related industries. For example, Centennial Coal, which operates the nearby Mandalong and Myuna collieries, employs almost 1,000 staff, many of them highly skilled and highly paid. Centennial's biggest customer is Eraring Power Station so this closure will have a significant impact on it as well. On a positive note, Origin has assured me that it intends to remain on the Eraring site and become a renewable energy powerhouse. It also remains committed to dealing with coal legacy issues, such as ash, well into the future. Last year Origin announced plans to install a

700-megawatt battery on the Eraring site, which will go some way towards ensuring stability in the State's power grid.

It is also examining options for hydro or hydrogen energy production on the site, along with other options such as solar. Those are all good, but renewable energy production does not create the same number of jobs as coal-fired energy production. Lake Macquarie needs massive investment from the State and Federal governments not only in the renewable energy production sector but also in the infrastructure needed to attract new, high-tech, well-paying jobs of the future. That requires investment in roads, health and our natural environment. Now is the time for the State Government to invest in overdue infrastructure so that the Lake Macquarie community can have the best chance of being a major player in the new world of renewable energy. I acknowledge that I have had a number of meetings with the Treasurer and energy Minister. He is aware of the issues faced by Lake Macquarie and, indeed, other parts of the Hunter region that are on the same difficult road as Lake Macquarie. I recognise the member for Upper Hunter, David Layzell, who has similar concerns for his community.

To its credit, last year the Government responded to calls from me and other Hunter MPs to create a Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone. Not surprisingly, private commercial interests have already flagged more than \$100 billion worth of potential investment in renewable energy and storage projects in the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone, including pumped hydro as well as large-scale battery, solar and wind projects. Of course, not all of those speculative projects will get off the ground, but it shows the private sector is ready to invest and forge ahead with projects in Lake Macquarie and the region because of its existing access to the grid and its highly skilled workforce. We need the infrastructure to get them across the line. We need the attention of the Government, both State and Federal, to create clear pathways for that investment and a transition authority to steer the region in the future. Lake Macquarie and the Hunter more broadly has been the engine room of the State's economy for a very long time. The region has done the heavy lifting and kept the State's lights on for the best part of a century. It cannot be left in the dark now.

FAIRFIELD LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER MARTA FAGGIANO

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:56): I congratulate Mrs Marta Faggiano, who on 9 March 2022 was presented with the Fairfield electorate Local Woman of the Year Award at the 2022 NSW Women of the Year Awards in recognition of the significant contribution she has made to the Fairfield community. In 1978 Marta migrated to Australia from Argentina with her husband, Daniel. They settled in Sydney and had three children. As is the case with many migrant women, Marta faced challenges associated with being a newcomer to a foreign country, which she overcame through sheer determination and perseverance. Her early struggles inspired her to help others, and since 1984 Marta has worked with diverse communities. She has also worked in the welfare sector for many years. Her eagerness to assist others in need led her to take up a position as welfare manager for a Liverpool-based community organisation, where she practised the skills she would need to create her own organisation.

In October 2008 Community Action Services Australia, or CASA, was founded by Marta along with four other women from the community. CASA is a not-for-profit organisation based in Wakeley that services Greater Western Sydney. The organisation aims to provide a safe place for all members of the community and offers assistance, support and relief to everyone, regardless of their ethnicity, language, religion or sexuality. Marta also encourages vulnerable members of the community to become self-sufficient and pursue personal growth through programs run by CASA, which include volunteer training and financial advice. As a driving force for CASA, Marta understands the needs of the community and is an inspiration to those around her. Through her work and dedication, she ensures that CASA volunteers have the ability to serve others. In her role as CEO, Marta also ensures the organisation caters for the needs of the underprivileged in the local Fairfield community.

CASA runs health and nutrition seminars; financial, immigration and legal advisory services; and programs for people with disabilities. Since 2013 CASA has partnered with OzHarvest to provide essential food relief services to the local community through the distribution of food hampers. Throughout the lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, Marta did her utmost to ensure that no individual under her care went without food or essential goods. CASA volunteers distributed 5,230 food hampers and 14,500 cooked meals throughout the community. During the lockdowns, CASA also established The LunchBox Relief program for disadvantaged schoolchildren. The organisation also ran Help Now, an emergency relief program that helps members of the community who are doing it tough to pay their bills, put food on the table, put petrol in their cars and pay for medical supplies. This was a huge achievement, given the exceptional and intense challenges faced by our community during such a trying period.

Since CASA is largely reliant on the generosity of the community and local businesses to keep its programs running, Marta's job also includes applying for government funding. She works hard to secure grants and to fundraise as much as possible. Marta is one of those special people who form the backbone of the community, volunteering their time and energy and always striving to be a driving force for positive change. In 2020 she

received the Fowler Community Service Award and in 2021 the Fairfield City Council certificate of achievement for becoming a finalist in the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award. I acknowledge Marta's efforts and support for the local community. I thank her for the amazing job she does and for her continued efforts in support of Fairfield. Marta continues to make an incredible contribution to our community with an unwavering dedication to make Fairfield a better place. I commend Marta on that dedication to the community of Fairfield, on her passion for social justice and for the betterment of others and on her dedication to assisting those members of the community who are doing it tough. I congratulate Marta Faggiano on becoming Fairfield electorate Local Woman of the Year for 2022, and I look forward to seeing her in action in our local area for many years to come.

DRAFT WATER SHARING PLANS

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (19:00): I draw to the attention of the House the draft water sharing plans that are causing a great deal of concern among Upper Hunter electorate irrigators, farmers and many others in the community. On 17 January the draft replacement plan for Hunter unregulated and alluvial water sources was placed on public exhibition. Community feedback closed on 27 February, and submissions are now being considered by the Department of Planning and Environment [DPE]. The finalised replacement plan is proposed to take effect from July this year. The public exhibition period provided opportunities for water users, stakeholders and other interested parties to learn more about the proposed changes in the draft water sharing plan. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions and health and safety concerns, the consultation period was severely restricted. Public information sessions were limited to a series of webinars and short, one-hour, face-to-face sessions or one-on-one phone calls with DPE coastal water planning team members. While I applaud the efforts of DPE, too many people do not understand the changes. Despite the efforts of the department, I have been concerned from the start about the consultation process.

To begin raising such an important issue with water users in the December to January period, when many stakeholders were on their first proper break since the arrival of the COVID pandemic, was never going to be a successful strategy. A majority of water users did not even realise the draft plan affected them until the last week before submissions were due. Having printed the draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022 to read before participating in the webinars, I found this was a complex document that required time, attention and local knowledge to make an informed comment. I have written to the Minister to request an extension of the deadline so that water users can properly prepare their responses, as the legislated dates make that very difficult. I am particularly concerned about the cease-to-pump provisions in the draft water sharing plan, which may potentially adversely impact water users on all river systems in the Hunter Valley. I do not believe the proposed changes will achieve the social, economic and environmental goals that we seek as a society. I have voiced my concerns and objections to the draft plan. My position is based on very simple principles: We must grow and protect our farming capability across the whole Hunter Valley, including the lower Hunter.

The data for the social, economic and environmental impact is not yet conclusive and yet the impact of a misinformed decision from these changes could be devastating to farmers. There are way too many unanswered questions about the modelling when we compare what has been modelled now to what we know on the ground. I have heard many of the opinions of the community. Farmers have taken the time to sit down with me and help me to understand their concerns—in particular, Lower Hunter Agricultural Water Users Incorporated. I was disappointed that I could not make it to their public forum held last month but I have received feedback about the key issues that were expressed.

The amount of extraction in the Lower Hunter is not a significant amount. The farmers on the lower Hunter River and the Paterson River have managed their salinity levels for generations, so we should allow them to continue to do so. I thank the association for its work on this issue. In particular, I thank the tenacious Julia Wokes, Cameron Archer, Stephen and Roger Osborn, as well as Jesse Clarke from Phoenix Park Farm, for their time. In addition, I have spoken to the Hunter Valley Water Users Association. Many of the farmers have explained to me how the cease-to-pump provisions could impact the dairy industry, the hay industry and the lucerne farms. It could come just at the time when farmers need to ensure their supply of fodder crops to their cattle. Our farmers in the Hunter are the best environmental managers and they do manage our river systems. It is not a river system that is dying and needs to be fixed. This is a very important decision that we are making. Indeed, the decision we make now, based on modelling, will be in place for 10 years. We need to get this right. The risk is too great if we get it wrong.

SWANSEA ELECTORATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (19:06): Time and again Central Coast and Hunter residents have shared with me the difficulties they have endured in trying to secure affordable housing. Attaining housing across these regions has been a challenge for locals for quite some time. A report by Shelter New South Wales entitled *New South Wales Regional Housing Need Report 2021* demonstrates just how severe the housing crisis has

become. The report highlights the depth of the regional housing crisis by ranking local government areas by determining the number of people on the social housing waitlist, the proportion of social housing stock, along with those experiencing rental and mortgage stress. Sadly, the Central Coast was ranked the number one area of highest housing need in regional New South Wales. It also has the longest social housing waitlist in regional New South Wales—with 3,170 people on the general waitlist. The current wait time for social housing in the area is between five and 10 years.

A great number of Central Coast families are also suffering from rental and mortgage stress, despite the increased percentage of residents with a high average income. This may be because a great proportion of Central Coast households consist of single-parent families, who face additional financial pressures. In addition, the cost of housing on the coast is high, making residents more vulnerable to increases in interest rates and increased rental demand. Within the Hunter region, the Lake Macquarie local government area was found to have the second longest waiting list for social housing in regional New South Wales. A staggering 2,488 people are currently on the general waitlist. Cessnock was ranked as the third highest area in need of housing, Newcastle was ranked fourth and Maitland was ranked seventh. Cessnock, Newcastle and Maitland also had high levels of households under rental or mortgage stress.

The average wait time for housing stock across the Hunter region is between five and 10 years. The Hunter region is also witnessing a growing number of older residents. This demographic is also vulnerable to increases in interest rates and housing prices because many older residents are retired and working less than they used to. Like the majority of Australians, the people of the Central Coast and the Hunter are currently enduring increased financial stress due to the rise in the cost of living. The cost of essential items such as groceries and fuel have skyrocketed over the past months, leaving people hundreds of dollars extra out of pocket each and every week. Given the fact that many residents also have suffered financially throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise in the cost of living and the housing crisis are leading the people of the Central Coast and Hunter to absolute breaking point.

The Perrottet Government must take appropriate action now to prevent the Central Coast and Hunter housing crisis from worsening. The Government also must limit the financial burdens experienced by those residents. I am aware that the Government has released its Housing 2041 strategy and has committed to achieving an increased supply of affordable housing. It stated it would reach this goal through initiatives such as establishing a cross-sector expert housing advisory panel; maximising the impact of government-owned land and information to develop new housing types, tenures and delivery models; strengthening relationships with local governments, the community housing sector and private sector; and innovative housing solutions. The Housing 2041 strategy is a good starting point, but more action and investment are needed right now to address the housing crisis in the Hunter and Central Coast.

The Perrottet Government must provide support for renters, along with facilitating more residential land releases as a priority. The fact that those who can afford to rent simply cannot find a home and are being forced into homelessness is a damning indictment of the Liberal's housing policy over the past decade. This crisis simply must be addressed now. We cannot wait.

NORTHERN TABLELANDS CHILDCARE SERVICES

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (19:10): If there has been a silver lining to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been the population revival in so many of our rural and regional centres and communities. Tree changers—professionals who are tired of being locked down by restrictions and unable to afford a house in the big city—have brought their skills and their families to our beautiful part of the world in the Northern Tablelands. But along with the economic benefits that these newcomers to our region bring, come the added pressures that they place on local services—in particular, in early childhood education.

Available long day care places in the bush were rare prior to the pandemic. Now there are simply none. It is incredible that unless a parent books their child into care when they first fall pregnant, they are at risk of going onto a year-long waiting list just for a place in a long day care centre. The severity of this childcare shortage has been laid bare in a new report from Victoria University's Mitchell Institute, which has mapped the availability of centre-based day care in 50,000 communities across Australia. The report uses the term "childcare desert" to describe a populated area where there are more than three children per childcare place or less than 0.333 places per child aged under four. Based on that definition, the Northern Tablelands is not just a desert; it is absolutely barren without a skerrick of vegetation in sight.

The figures for the Northern Tableland electorate's main centres from highest access to lowest are as follows: Armidale, which has the best access, has only 0.3785 childcare places per child—which means almost three children are waiting for every single place that is available; Moree is 0.36; Inverell is 0.29; Uralla is 0.11; Glen Innes is 0.16; and the Gwydir shire is absolutely duck's egg—0 childcare places per child. There are no

places within the Gwydir shire for long day care at all—not one single space for children zero to four years of age in a shire with a population of more than 5,000 people. That is not to say there are no services—there are, but there are just no positions available at all.

This recently hit home to me when one of my own staff was affected. In fact, one of my office staff had to resign because of the lack of childcare options in Bingara and Moree. Despite having registered her twins for child care in Moree at 14 weeks into her pregnancy, two years after their birth she gave up. After two years of waiting she gave up, with no spots available at all. This shortage, combined with the Commonwealth Child Care Subsidy, which supports the cost of long day care, is a disincentive to mothers who want to work more than part time. The rate at which child care is subsidised is based on a household's income and the type of care accessed. Mothers from middle- to high-income households who want to increase their days of work beyond three days per week would actually lose money by working full time or working more than three days. It is a huge disincentive and ridiculous.

Over-regulation of family day care also has resulted in the number of providers in that particular area plummeting by approximately 40 per cent, adding to the increasing burden of the non-availability of places. This has been the experience in Warialda and Bingara. I note the effort by Gwydir Shire Council and Mayor John Coulton to put this issue on the table by endorsing "Twiggy" and Nicola Forrest's Minderoo Foundation Thrive by Five campaign. In his motion to council last November, Councillor Coulton summed up perfectly the current funding model for early childhood education:

Although it's an essential service, Federal Government funding has failed to keep pace, leaving families out-of-pocket with expenses and creating unequal access to appropriate, high-quality early learning and childcare.

The mode of childcare delivery is messier than a child's playroom and instead of working on ways to fix it the Federal Government has spat the dummy and run away on this important piece of public policy, which is crucial to my electorate and to other electorates in regional New South Wales, if not Australia.

If it is not going to look at this matter more closely the Federal Government should just bugger off and get out of this space and let the State governments get involved. Why not? New South Wales already funds community preschools, primary schools and high schools. Why do we not control all children's learning from ABC through to HSC? With long day care largely operated by the private sector and subsidised by the Commonwealth, there is a lot of work needed to develop a system that works because one thing is for sure: The current system ain't working. In fact, it is a disaster in my part of the world and I am sure it is in other members' parts of the world. The regional workforce of the future is at stake here. Unless we fix long day care we will not be able to attract people to our regions. We will not be able to educate our youngest and we simply will not have communities of the future in years to come.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GARY WORBOYS RETIREMENT

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (19:15): I acknowledge the service of Mr Gary Worboys, the former New South Wales police deputy commissioner. Retired Deputy Commissioner Worboys was born in Narrabri and grew up in western Sydney. Mr Worboys was four years old when his parents moved with their three boys from Narrabri to Blacktown, where his father worked in railways administration. From high school he completed his training at Redfern Academy in 1982 and was subsequently posted to Blacktown, spending the early part of his career undertaking operational policing duties in Lismore, Walgett and Lightning Ridge. He was promoted to the rank of superintendent in 1999 and has been the commander at Goulburn, Monaro, Wollongong and Liverpool local area commands. In 2013 he was promoted to Assistant Commissioner, Southern Region, where he developed a clear vision for the region with his focus of crime, community and our people. The program emphasised strong community engagement that sees police at field days, schools, local shows and other events.

In 2015 Mr Worboys received the Australian Police Medal, awarded by the then Governor-General, Sir Peter John Cosgrove, for distinguished service by a member of an Australian police force. The official citation noted his strategic approach in the southern region: "crime, community and our people". Over the years Mr Worboys has been awarded the Australian Police Medal [APM], National Police Service Medal, National Medal with second clasp, NSW Police Medal with fourth clasp and the ACT Emergency Medal. A decorated officer, he headed up major investigations such as Operation Herculean, which targeted irresponsible driver behaviour and criminal activity on the Hume Highway, and Operation Unite, a trans-Tasman blitz against alcohol-related crime and violence, linking simultaneous police operations across Australia and New Zealand.

The notion that police could more effectively investigate crime if they connected with community and civic leadership shaped Deputy Commissioner Worboys' approach. During his four-decade career, Mr Worboys expanded the investigation capabilities of rural police, instituted an officer-in-charge model in country New South Wales so that police could work more closely with their community and helped implement a campaign to raise

the Aboriginal flag outside New South Wales police stations and buildings. In May 2017 he was promoted to Deputy Commissioner, Regional NSW Field Operations, focusing his efforts on connecting remote, rural and regional New South Wales to ensure the best possible response to crimes and community problem-solving, with a large part of those responses informed and shaped by the communities themselves.

In 2019 Mr Worboys became a well-known face on our television screens when he was appointed as the State Emergency Operations Controller of the bushfires and COVID response. Based in the NSW Rural Fire Service's operations centre in Homebush, which became a combat agency rolling from one emergency to the next, Mr Worboys coordinated ambulance, Fire and Rescue, Transport, the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, welfare, local government and other government agencies. The 2019 bushfires response and the COVID-19 response are just two admired examples of Mr Worboys' accomplishments during four decades of service. Mr Worboys has said that working with the former Premier was a highlight of his career and he will never forget the opportunities COVID brought to him in understanding how health and other emergency services can link arms, resulting in what he says is "the best response to COVID in the world". In a 2020 article it was reported:

Ferocious bushfires, floods and leading the NSW response to COVID-19 has kept Gary Worboys in the spotlight. Now all he wants is to come home to the lights of Goulburn from Governors Hill.

Deputy Commissioner Worboys marked the final day of his 40-year policing career on Friday 3 December 2021, marching off the parade ground at the Goulburn Police Academy. I thank retired Deputy Commissioner Worboys for his service, dedication, commitment, sacrifice and vision. I welcome Mr Worboys home to Goulburn. I trust he will enjoy some well-earned time with his family, his golfing mates and in his garden. I agree, the lights over Governors Hill never looked so good. Congratulations.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:20): I acknowledge the statement just made by the Minister and member for Goulburn. I had the pleasure of meeting the now retired Deputy Commissioner Worboys on a number of occasions on the Central Coast. His passion and enthusiasm for his 40-year career is like nothing I have ever seen. One of the last occasions I met with Gary Worboys was for the raising of the Aboriginal flag at Gosford Police Station. It was a highlight of his career to see that acknowledgement of our Aboriginal communities right across regional New South Wales. I congratulate Deputy Commissioner Worboys—Australian Police Medal recipient. Gary has done it all over 40 years. He has seen it all, done it all and is a truly exemplary police officer. The people of New South Wales can be very proud and thankful that they had him at the highest levels of the NSW Police Force. It was a delight to have Gary visit the Central Coast on multiple occasions and to spend time with him and listen to his experiences. Congratulations, Gary, on your stellar service. Enjoy your retirement.

EASTERN SUBURBS DEVELOPMENTS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (19:21): One of the most special parts about the Eastern Suburbs is its very deep history and heritage. Its history is contained and protected by the people of the east; by their stories and by the significant landmarks, buildings, parks and villages of the Eastern Suburbs. The Eastern Suburbs has some of the oldest parts of Sydney and is home to Australia's oldest seaside villages. It is also one of the most densely populated parts of Sydney which, as a sidenote, makes this Liberal Government's housing targets completely unrealistic and unsustainable. Time and again we see developers trying to overrule local planning controls and destroy this history, this heritage and the fabric of our beautiful communities. I refer to 194 Oxford Street, the Bronte RSL development, the War Memorial Hospital, the Coogee Bay Hotel, Robin Hood and the Charing Cross village, which are just a few developments that we are fighting at the moment.

These developments are outside the planning controls and well outside the height and density limitations, yet developers put them there for their own benefit. The Robin Hood developers—incredibly arrogantly—submitted a planning proposal that encompassed a far greater number of buildings than their own. They put in a planning proposal not just for their building but also for four other buildings. This planning proposal would have forever changed the fabric of Charing Cross and this wonderful historical conservation area. A spot rezoning is what they were looking for—again, despite the fact that the area is a heritage conservation zone. Thankfully, Waverley Council, the officers and the councillors, unanimously voted against this planning proposal. They voted against it because it lacked strategic merit. It was not aligned to the council-endorsed Our Liveable Places Centres Strategy. It was seen as inappropriate to the Charing Cross heritage conservation area and it was not in line with what the other landowners wanted—a commonsense decision.

However, after six years, and despite council's decision to vote it down, the battle is not over because the Robin Hood developer has put in a submission to the Minister and requested an intervention. That loophole exists only for developers. It does not exist for residential areas. Local environmental plans and development control plans are strategic documents that are developed between councils and communities and should be respected. Yet, time and again, when developers do not get what they want they bypass local planning controls and go to the Minister to get whatever they want for their own financial benefit. My community and I are vehemently opposed

to that. Many times in this place I have spoken against the loophole that exists only for developers. I am completely and utterly opposed to the unsustainable overdevelopment that this Liberal Government is allowing, which ruins beautiful communities, historic areas and buildings. The loophole must end. Labor made a commitment to get rid of it.

It is clear something had to change with our planning system. No-one can argue about that. But the pendulum has swung too far. The time has come for us to review the changes that were put in place—to review planning panels, how they work, how they make decisions and the extent of community consultation that occurs. Time and again I hear from my community that the changes have completely and utterly cut out their voice. The other system was not perfect either. Things needed to change but, as I said, the pendulum has swung too far. The time is now. The new system has been in place for a number of years. We have had enough time to review it and to see how it works. A review must happen now.

SOLAR FARMS AND AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (19:26): We know we need renewable energy, but we also need to eat. While we know that solar energy is important, we must not compromise our ability to feed the nation by using productive agricultural land for so-called solar farms. I say "so-called" because really they are solar factories—ugly blights on the landscape that I am concerned could sterilise our land and environment, rendering it useless for good agricultural production and for our unique wildlife. Agricultural land is precious. The World Bank puts Australia's arable land at less than 5 per cent of land area. A 2021 ANZ report suggests that Australia might have reached peak acreage. Our climate is changing. Winter rainfall has declined over the past 50 years. It is easy to see how farmland that is considered marginal for crop production could become even less suitable. On top of that, recent droughts, fires, floods and international tensions have highlighted the risks to Australia's food security. Despite that, the Federal and New South Wales governments are committed to substantially increasing agricultural production. So they should, and not only for our economy.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that farmers will have to increase food production by 50 per cent to meet the expected 2030 demand. The planet will need to support nearly 10 billion people by 2050. That increases the importance of areas with higher, more regular rainfall for food production. The Wagga Wagga electorate is at the heart of the Riverina—one of Australia's most valuable food production regions. Yet despite the issues that I have described, solar factory proposals for productive agricultural land are popping up. One farm will be up to 600 hectares. The community is worried about land clearing, erosion, a rising watertable and salinity. It is worried about metal toxicity, contamination and the destruction of wildlife habitat.

A recent public consultation on one proposal had fierce opposition from approximately 80 affected people. I am told there has not been as fierce a meeting in my electorate for some time. New South Wales has designated Renewable Energy Zones on suitable land, so why have solar factories on properties in the Riverina—some of the best food-producing land in the country? There has been much discussion of dual use—of sheep sharing space with the solar panels. A few sheep grazing under solar panels might give city folk the impression that these are harmless, happy farms. In fact, it has been put to me that the productive capacity of the land will be reduced by up to 95 per cent. The vegetation under the panels will not be enough to manage dry land salinity and the watertable will rise. A few sheep will not stop the land becoming useless.

These ugly factories also have a real impact on neighbours. The North Wagga development could be within a short distance of the bedroom window of a neighbouring property. Neighbours say another development will impact up to 50 homes—more than 40 of them in a rural lifestyle suburb. In the Eunony Valley, where solar factories have been built already, neighbours are still dealing with issues of glare that are badly affecting their lives. The solar factories could also have an impact on tourism. Who will visit to see rolling hills of solar panels? The Government has announced that the NSW Agriculture Commissioner will conduct a farm renewable energy review and provide a final report later this year. The media release makes it sound like there are few downsides to solar factories. It quotes Minister Kean, who says:

"The review will look at how the renewable energy sector helps to diversify farming income streams and create regional jobs ... "

Solar factories hardly diversify income streams; they replace income streams from the affected land. They create few long-term jobs. The media release refers to "opportunities for landholders", but what about neighbours and communities? It mentions "challenges on housing supply, tourism, and workforce and labour issues" but barely a mention of the key issue—prime and productive agricultural land. The release further quotes Minister Kean, who says:

"... I look forward to smashing barriers so they can continue to thrive in this future-focused sector."

We must make sure that the future is not one of sterile land and blighted communities. It is critical that the review genuinely examines the real negative impact of solar factories on agricultural land and communities, especially when we have alternatives in Renewable Energy Zones.

MASCOT TOWERS STRATA PLAN

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (19:31): Last year I received a poignant email from an owner of a unit in Mascot Towers. It states:

Dear Mr Hoenig,

I am 51 years old single woman and due to stress related to Mascot Towers disaster and imminent bankruptcy, my mental health is suffering greatly. Apart from my mortgage I never had any debts, I always pay my bills on time and now due to not my own fault I am about to lose everything.

The email continues:

On 26 June 2021 I lodged an Application for **Social Housing**.

I would be forever grateful if you could help me find stable, affordable and suitable accommodation in the Mascot area as majority of my work, friends and network of support is here ... I shall be forever grateful for any help.

That email reflects one of the many realities faced by Mascot Towers owner-occupiers. This woman has lost everything and is turning to the taxpayer to put a roof over her head. Others are trying desperately to stave off the prospect of bankruptcy. Earlier this year when I held a mobile office across the road from Mascot Towers, a couple came up to me. Holding his wife's hand, the husband looked at me and said, "It's one thing to lose everything; it's another thing to have to keep paying strata for a home I cannot even go inside to water the plants."

Some owners have begged the Government for a loan—not a hand-out—so they can go on paying debts and fees for homes they cannot enter. So far the Government has refused. Many are facing the possibility of rental support running out, as it is due to end on 31 March. They face the prospect of having to pay full market rent as well as servicing mortgages on homes they cannot live in. As early as 4 February the Mascot Towers strata body requested a meeting with the new Minister for Fair Trading. It forwarded its request directly to the Minister's chief of staff. This too was ignored.

During recent estimates hearings held on 11 March the Minister was asked by the Hon. Courtney Houssos whether she had met with the Mascot Towers representatives. The Minister retorted that the meeting request had "only arrived last week". I find it hard to believe that a chief of staff would withhold such politically sensitive information from her Minister. At the estimates hearing the Minister also refused to extend the accommodation package for Mascot Towers residents. However, the Minister did feel some pressure. On 14 March the Minister agreed to extend the accommodation package until 30 June. On 15 March the Opposition leader, Chris Minns, and the Hon. Courtney Houssos visited the Mascot Towers site. Later that day the Minister's office reached out to the strata committee and finally agreed to meet.

A meeting took place yesterday. The strata committee was relieved to finally obtain a response. However, to their disappointment, the meeting was not with the Minister but with her chief of staff, who had ignored earlier requests for a meeting. The strata committee made four requests of the Minister: one, to extend the accommodation package until the owners receive the proceeds of sale of the site; two, to maintain a dialogue with the Australian Banking Association, who recently committed to providing a resolution for mortgagors; three, access to a low-interest loan to break away from their current strata loan, which attracts an interest rate of 9 per cent; and, four, to contact the Attorney General to possibly expedite the court hearing for the termination of the strata plan, so that the owners are able to receive the proceeds from the sale of the site.

The Minister's office positively responded to two of the requests—agreeing to maintain dialogue with the Australian Banking Association and to reach out to the Attorney General—however, it remained silent on the other two. Today, a day after their meeting, the reason became clear. Mascot Towers residents were told that there would be no further extension of the accommodation package after 30 June 2022. The Minister's chief of staff did not have the common decency to deliver this gut-wrenching news face to face, instead waiting until the following day to deliver it via an email sent from a government department. This cold, harsh response from the Government explains the desperation of Mascot Towers' owner occupiers. Having scrimped and saved to buy a piece of the Australian dream, no doubt paying a fortune in stamp duties along the way, they have been left with nothing, and the New South Wales Government has turned its back on them at their time of need.

MARRICKVILLE INDUSTRIAL LAND

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (19:36): Over the past few weeks of heavy rains, businesses and residents along Carrington Road, Marrickville, were again under water. While the recent flooding has been devastating for local residents and businesses, we know we suffered little compared to the horrors in the Northern

Rivers and other parts of our State. I convey the heartfelt condolences and best wishes of my inner west community to all the communities impacted by this months' deadly flooding. As in those communities, the local flooding in Marrickville has dredged up a conversation we thought was settled—the suitability of high-rise residential development in the industrial precinct tracing the old Gumbramorra swamp.

The Gumbramorra swamp is a wetland estuary that roughly follows the rail line from Sydenham to Tempe along the Cooks River. As a natural formation, the swamp would hold floodwaters from higher up in the Marrickville valley, including from suburbs we now know as Petersham and Newtown, before they slowly drained into the Cooks River. Over generations we have built over the swamp, including an ill-fated venture known as Tramvale in the late 1800s, where families were lured to build homes in a new suburb lauded for its convenience and access to public transport. The fledgling suburb was destroyed, replaced by vast tracts of industrial land that has for generations been pivotal to the New South Wales and local economy. There is now roughly 67 hectares of industrial land in Marrickville. Each square inch is priceless due to its proximity to the airport and the port, and each square inch is at risk of encroachment from high-rise residential development.

The Greater Sydney Commission has to date held a firm line on preserving our urban industrial lands. In 2018 the commission put out a broadly accepted and commonsense position that we must "retain and manage" industrial lands across Sydney. That position recognised that these lands are job creators, are vital for freight and other logistics, are often unsuitable for residential development due to contamination or other factors, and are pivotal to creating services close to communities. Who wants to be forced onto already congested roads to drive to the outskirts of Sydney just to see a mechanic to have their car fixed? Retaining and managing these lands also acknowledges that they are pivotal to innovation and to give new industries and ventures space to grow and often foster fragile industries such as the creative sector.

Despite the sound logic of this retain and manage position, I am concerned that the Greater Sydney Commission is raising the white flag on preserving our precious industrial lands with a review that will see more industrial lands in our suburbs sacrificed for residential development. The argument is that we need to be doing more to increase supply and reduce the pressure on housing affordability. I agree, but there is no evidence that a changed approach here would meaningfully assist with either. The commission conducted "let it rip" modelling, where all rules around preserving industrial lands were junked, showing that even an extreme approach would only contribute a further 7 per cent towards meeting current housing targets. There is nothing I have seen to compel or incentivise developers to use these lands for affordable housing. Certainly, in my electorate we have just seen more and more multimillion-dollar apartments far out of reach of essential workers and those who need housing most.

Unsurprisingly, the property industry is no fan of the existing policy. It is no doubt emboldened by the return of the member for Lane Cove, the Hon. Anthony Roberts, as planning Minister. After all, this is a Government that time and time again has put the interests of developers and the property industry ahead of local communities. My local community effectively fended off proposals for high-rise development encroaching into the suburbs along the Sydney Metro line when Minister Roberts was last in the job, including into heritage conservation areas in Dulwich Hill and Hurlstone Park. They stood firm against plans by Mirvac and others for sky-high residential development along Carrington Road, and they are ready to fight again.

While we certainly need to do more to increase housing supply and drive down housing affordability, the hasty retreat being beaten from the retain and manage approach to industrial lands will likely have minimal impact but will come at an extraordinary cost, imperilling the lands we depend upon to create jobs and make the things we need. I have often said we need to be a State that makes things, whether it is the trams, trains, buses or ferries that we need to get around or the parts we need to run our cars, textiles or goods, or the packaging for the food on our supermarket shelves. We need to ensure we keep making things in Sydney, so we need to protect the places where these things are made. The roughly 67 hectares of industrial land in Marrickville and the industrial lands in our district are vital to our State's economy. The commission's research put the total value of industrial land to our State's economy at \$15.4 billion, creating 123,000 jobs. It is clear that if we let industrial land like that in Carrington Road go to high-rise development, it will not just be residential towers under water, it will be the New South Wales economy as well.

J. J. C. BRADFIELD

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (19:42): The geographic area covered by the Davidson electorate has been home to many influential Australians over the years, perhaps none more so than J. J. C. Bradfield, who lived much of his life in Gordon, where he and his wife, Edith, raised their six children. The Federal electorate of Bradfield, which largely overlaps with my State electorate of Davidson, is named in his honour. Bradfield was a man of extraordinary talent and vision. A man of short stature, with a relatively large head, Premier Jack Lang once described his oversized head as being necessary to carry around all the ideas he had in it.

The Sydney Harbour Bridge may have been his crowning glory, but it is by no means his only legacy. Prior to completing his designs for the bridge, Bradfield helped design Cataract and Burrinjuck dams. His vision for an underground city rail network saw the eventual construction of the City Circle line. The need for a rail line to connect northern Sydney with the city saw him successfully submit plans for either a suspension or a cantilever bridge across the harbour in 1912. Following the controversy of the official—and unofficial—opening of the bridge on 19 March 1922, the bridge was open to traffic at midnight that night. The first day saw 21,000 vehicles, containing 80,000 passengers, cross the bridge. Tolls commenced at sixpence for cars, together with threepence for each adult passenger and a penny for each child. It is said that crafty parents avoided the children's toll by covering them with blankets for the journey across the bridge. The toll collector's lot was not an easy one in the early months as they had no tollbooths. A raised stand in the road was their only protection from either the elements or wayward vehicles. Fortunately, the days of searching for change at the tollbooth have long gone; a beep from one's windscreen now indicates that the toll has been safely extracted.

The vision of John Bradfield for the Sydney Harbour Bridge was a practical one. Sydney needed a harbour crossing from north to south for both vehicles and trains and Bradfield's bridge proved more than adequate to fulfil that task for well over half a century, before the need for a second crossing brought the Harbour Tunnel into existence in 1992. What John Bradfield could not have imagined was the iconic status the bridge has taken on over the years. Who does not look forward to the fireworks lighting the arch and cascading down to the harbour on New Year's Eve? It has enticed countless tourists to visit our shores, and it has paid for itself many times over in tourist dollars. Of course, the Sydney Harbour Bridge is synonymous with the City of Sydney. It is as relevant today as it was 90 years ago, and I can safely say that the Sydney Harbour Bridge is indeed J. J. C. Bradfield's most valuable and enduring legacy.

DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (19:46): I think we all had an expectation that 2022 was going to be a better year—it had to be. After two years of global immobilisation at the hands of a pandemic and off the back of drought, fires and floods, things just had to be better. After years of sadness, sacrifice, segregation and fear, we were all ready for the tides to turn and for life to get easier again. COVID has most certainly not disappeared, but it has stopped dominating the daily headlines. It felt as though we were returning to normal, although an altered kind of normal.

In February Putin invaded Ukraine, and the fear started to bubble up again. The source of the world's instability shifted from a deadly virus back to the almost-forgotten threat of nuclear warfare and a growing awareness that life can be tentative and fleeting—and then came the floods. The floods that have particularly and badly impacted south-east Queensland and the Northern Rivers of New South Wales have been devastating. The loss and the heartbreak felt by communities in the flood zones is profound. The floods came so fast that in some areas people had no time to evacuate. They climbed into roof cavities and onto rooftops. Lives were lost. Homes and lifetimes of memories were lost, washed away, leaving behind heartbreak, despair and the stench of a flood that has left people feeling shattered and their towns forever changed.

The silver lining that emerges from such tragedy is the way in which communities pull together. In the absence of timely government support and adequate boots on the ground to assist, members of the community rise to the challenge. Members will all have seen images of the sculpture in downtown Lismore: a big red heart held up out of the floodwaters by giant hands. The symbolism of that is profound. Lismore and other affected regions have a big heart and they are resilient, but facing a disaster of this magnitude erodes resilience. People are broken, lives are broken and there is so much more to be done to mitigate the effects of climate-induced disasters.

Disaster preparedness is crucial if we are going to have the ability to flourish in the face of adversity, and we will inevitably need to continue dealing with such situations in the future. These events are not unprecedented at all; this is our world now. Those shattered communities have had enough of post-disaster platitudes, and they are losing faith. They are losing hope in State and Federal Coalition governments that seem completely disconnected from the lived experiences of those around them. After the 2019-20 Black Summer fires, how could they not get the response right this time? We have had the inquiries; we have seen the recommendations. What we need now is to create communities that go into the next fire or flood season feeling better prepared. There is no denying that recovery is crucial; however, people need governments that support and fund approaches that are pre-emptive rather than this continual, clumsy mopping-up that takes place post-trauma.

In my own electorate of the Blue Mountains, we are all too familiar with the impacts of adverse climate events on a community—drought, fires and floods over and over again. We are also all too familiar with governments that seem incapable of directing essential funding where needed. For example, after the Black Summer fires, the residents of Bilpin and Mount Tomah applied for a grant to pay for a water pump for the creek, a bore for extra water and storage tanks—to give them the best possible chance for survival next time the worst case scenario unfolds. They were knocked back, but don't worry—funding was awarded to an out-of-area

community group to provide dance lessons in Bilpin, which I imagine will be immensely helpful next time catastrophic fires rip through their community.

Disastrous climate events are not going away; they will get more frequent and more severe. Climate change is real, and if this State and this nation cannot be led by governments that acknowledge that fact and act accordingly then we have no hope. The long-term effects of trauma must never be underestimated. Many in flood-affected areas are furious and frustrated by State and Federal Coalition governments. They are angry about a slow response to help. Recovery has been a citizen-led effort. There are families in New South Wales who feel abandoned; communities still feel abandoned after the Black Summer fires. Members need to remember that trauma, heartbreak and loss do not diminish once the news cameras stop rolling. Finding solutions for the management of those experiences, before, during and after, needs long-term commitment that extends beyond the next election cycle.

I acknowledge my colleague Tamara Smith, MP, and her Ballina community and their struggles. My NSW Labor colleague the member for Lismore, Janelle Saffin, and her team are brave, selfless and compassionate. She has set aside her own losses and stepped up to offer continual, unfaltering support to her community throughout this deeply challenging time. You are loved and you are cherished, Janelle, and we support you. We will see you through this.

BLACKTOWN ELECTORATE EVENTS

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (19:51): I will continue the theme that the member for Blue Mountains talked about: the impacts from floods. I too recognise all the members up on the North Coast who have worked so hard and in particular Janelle Saffin, the member for Lismore. Whilst the floods in the city of Blacktown were nowhere near as bad, some areas did unfortunately get flooded. People suffered some house flooding or were unable to get out of their area, so they were evacuated to a temporary evacuation centre that Blacktown City Council operated in conjunction with Service NSW at Blacktown Leisure Centre Stanhope. The mayor, Tony Bleasdale, and I went out there to visit and give some comfort to those people. Whilst most people were accommodated that night and put into hotels, some people who had pets were unfortunately ringing hotels at the last minute at 10 o'clock at night. The hotels simply said, "No pets are allowed", and people were therefore sleeping on couches in the leisure centre because they would not be separated from their pets overnight. That is one thing that needs to be identified for the Government. In an emergency, as we have seen all across New South Wales, the challenge is that people will not leave their livestock, animals or pets behind.

I give a big shout-out to Barry Wademan, the local SES commander in Blacktown, and the SES team that went around supporting everyone. Imam Kauser and Mirza Sharif from the Ahmadiyya Muslim community rang me on the first day of the floods, essentially as they were hitting, saying, "Do we need any volunteers? Does food need to be served?" When I rang up Barry Wademan, he said what they needed was simply putting sand into sandbags. The difficulty there, as we have heard so often today, is that the SES is not a large service like the RFS. Its members should be allocating their services to helping the people who are vulnerable rather than putting sand into sandbags, so my thanks to the Ahmadiyya Muslim community for all their efforts—and to all the communities that came together.

Tonight the Kurdish or Persian new year celebration was held here in Parliament. Happy Newroz Day. It is also their harvest festival. I thank Jamie Parker, the member for Balmain, who co-hosted the event with me and the Kurdish community. The co-chairs of the Federation of Democratic Kurdish Society of Australia, Ismet Tastan and Gulfer Olan, spoke passionately about the Kurdish plight, as did the co-chairs of the Sydney Kurdish Youth Association, Zeynep Korkmaz and Baran Sogut. It was interesting to hear the speeches and poetry, see the folk dancing and the modern spin that the Kurdish youth put on the dance. We have seen the plight of the stateless Kurdish people overseas, fighting to maintain their heritage, their language, their culture and even their names. That is why it is so important to celebrate Harmony Week this week in Australia. Blacktown is home to people from 188 different cultural backgrounds and New South Wales celebrates about 300 different cultural backgrounds. Harmony Week is so important for the Kurdish people and everyone around the world to be able to celebrate.

I thank the Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency as well as SydWest Multicultural Services and Blacktown City Council for bringing together Harmony Week events. In particular this week, Zohra Aly talked about community support and volunteering. I was touched by her words that it is "a calling" and "a privilege" to serve the community. This is the importance and advantage of multiculturalism when people have come from affected nations. They realise that this is a fresh start in their life. This is the land of opportunity where their children can access education. But we need to do more. As we have seen with the Afghan refugees—a lot of whom are based in hotels across the Blacktown and Hills area—it is one thing to give them refugee status but you also have to provide support for them. The State and Federal governments need to do more for these people who want to be active community members, want jobs and want a future for their family.

NORTHERN DISTRICTS LITTLE ATHLETICS CENTRE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (19:56): It is my pleasure to recognise the Northern Districts Little Athletics Centre's fortieth anniversary achievement. This is an excellent community sporting organisation run by dedicated volunteers. Every time I attend one of their events, it is easy to see why the kids keep coming back year after year. Commencing back in 1981, ten years after Little Athletics NSW was established as a sporting body, the early days of Northern Districts Little Athletics were tribal as the small, distinct athletic groups of Asquith Rugby League Little Athletics Club, Berowra RSL Little Athletics Club, Montview Little Athletics Centre, Mount Kuring-Gai Sports Club and Mount Colah Little Athletics Club came together. Each of those five groups had their own club colours and facilities, some of which were small and not ideal for their activities. These included Mount Colah Public School, Warrina Street Oval in Berowra Heights and Mount Kuring-Gai Oval.

The amalgamation of these five small athletics groups into Northern Districts Little Athletics Centre was an important step in the development of athletics north of Hornsby. After consolidation of the sub-clubs to the one main affiliated club, they all ran under the colours of a royal blue singlet with white trim—the essentials of the uniform today. The conducting of athletics at its current facility, Foxglove Oval at Mount Colah, began after Hornsby Shire Council converted the former Mount Colah tip to form sporting fields. These opened for use in 1983. Syd Gamble was the chairman of Mount Colah Little Athletics Club. He was very involved during the establishment and first few years of the Northern Districts Little Athletics club, which was a difficult period of adjustment for all concerned. Over the next 11 seasons Syd took on a numerous roles to ensure the new club was sustainable and moved forward.

Syd Gamble was honoured with the first life membership of Northern Districts Little Athletics Centre as recognition of his invaluable contribution to the club in those early days. In my career prior to working in Parliament I knew Syd professionally, and he is an outstanding man who has given much to our community. Joining Syd, there is a much-admired small group of Northern Districts Little Athletics Centre life members who have been recognised over the past four decades. These significant figures have been influential in forming the fabric of this family-friendly club. Through their voluntary roles they have all given immense amounts of time, energy and dedication to the club in various ways. The centre's life members are Syd Gamble, Mel Parker, Shane Garde, Wayne Bingham, Cheryl Burnett, Michelle Garde, Michael Halmy and Gail Silver.

Northern Districts Little Athletics Centre prides itself as the family-friendly club. The club has a strong emphasis on encouraging building confidence and comfort in its athletes from a young age. It fosters individual and personal improvement as the utmost measure of success. In a region with several other large Little Athletics centres, Northern Districts Little Athletics Centre has continually produced amazing results both regionally and on State, national and even international levels. Former members who have gone on to achieve impressive international accomplishments include Alysha Burnett, who competed in the 2018 Commonwealth Games heptathlon; Rohan Bright, who competed in the 2018 Commonwealth Games para-athlete swimming; and Nick Frost, the Australian Schoolboys rugby player who signed with Super Rugby team the Crusaders.

I must also mention current president Matt Gleeson, who is the life and soul of the centre today. Parents, volunteers and especially the young club members all love Matt and his gentle, positive and upbeat leadership style. I congratulate Matt and his dedicated group of volunteers and members, both past and present, on achieving 40 years of the Northern Districts Little Athletics Centre. It has never been stronger, which clearly shows to me that this is a great club that has many decades of success in front of it.

Community Recognition Notices

LUCY COLLINGRIDGE – 2022 RM WILLIAMS RAS RURAL ACHIEVER AWARD

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Lucy Collingridge for her exemplary commitment to improve biodiversity and exploring sustainable outcomes for rural producers which has put her in the final selection for the 2022 R. M. Williams RAS Rural Achiever Award. Lucy has experienced different roles in the agricultural industry after achieving a university degree in agriculture and completing a Graduate Certificate in Animal Science. To be placed in the finals for this award Lucy demonstrated achievements in her professional career, advocacy in rural health, education, agricultural shows and in rural life generally. I congratulate Lucy on her selection as a finalist in the 2022 R. M. Williams RAS Achiever Award which is a great achievement on its own. I commend Lucy on her dedication to her career and fostering innovation and excellence within her rural community.

WYATT SPITERI-ROBERTS

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Moree's Wyatt Spiteri-Roberts for his love and passion for AFL and all things sport. Wyatt has participated in AFL with the Moree Suns, in rugby union

with the Moree Bulls and in cricket where he was selected to join the Moree representative team for three years. As Captain of the Vikings, Wyatt has gained the team's respect by leading by example. Further, whatever sport he plays, he not only gives his all but goes on to encourage and inspire the other players. Wyatt started playing AFL with the Moree Suns as a junior. He has gone on to win seasonal awards boosting the Suns' potential. Wyatt volunteered to play fullback for the Bulls and even played soccer with the local team. Wyatt joined the Boomerangs family when he moved to Moree and has been a stunning addition to their successes. Wyatt Roberts excels as a player but a complete sportsman demonstrates integrity and consideration. I congratulate Wyatt on being awarded the Moree Plains Sportsperson of the Year. I commend Wyatt as a great team member and role model for the Moree community.

ARMIDALE & NEW ENGLAND SHOW SOCIETY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the now named Armidale & New England Show Society, originally the Pastoral and Agricultural Society of New England, as the first Show organisation on the Northern Tablelands held in March 1865. After 150 some years of showcasing the District's agricultural goods around sites in Armidale, the Show settled on Dumaresq Street with major structures including the twin grandstands, pavilions, and a host of amenities. The Show Society conducts other events, training, workshops, networking, and social events throughout the year. But it is in the promotion of the District's agricultural produce celebrating the traditional character of the bush that makes the annual Show a highlight on the community calendar. I congratulate the 2021/22 Committee Members President, Jessica Tadman; Vice President, Hannah McRae, Secretary, Kelson Looker; Treasurer, Natalie Herd; Executive Committee, Merryn Twenlow, Adam Tadman, Tim Light; and Patrons John de Veau and Esma McRae for their planning efforts in the 4-5 March 2022 Armidale & New England Agricultural Show. I commend the Executive, Chief Stewards and General Committee for their contribution throughout the year in making this popular venue available to the community.

MOURNERS FAREWELL BRUCE NEAL

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I wish to acknowledge World War II Veteran Bruce Neal of Mulwala who passed away on February 8th at the age of 96 years. In 1943 Bruce enlisted with the Royal Australian Air Force where he was employed as a gunner; later he became a flight sergeant in 1945. Back in civilian life, Mr Neal especially enjoyed educating students about Anzac Day and I believe the students learnt so much from the veteran. He was a generous man who fought for many causes. Bruce and his wife Joy moved to Mulwala 35 years ago, where he quickly became involved with the men's Probus and local Mulwala/Yarrowonga RSL clubs which went on to award him life membership. I extend my condolences to Mr Neal's family and friends.

NSW WOMAN OF THE YEAR 2022 - ALBURY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Albury electorate's NSW Woman of the Year 2022: Desiree Georgiou. The award has been given to recognise Ms Georgiou's dedication to the community. Desiree resides in Albury and is the owner and manager of Fashion Fingers. She is also the co-founder of 'Mode' Skin & Body (a newly released skin and body range) and is supported by her husband and two younger daughters. In April 2019 her community collaboration saw her become involved with the organisation Business Women Albury Wodonga [BWA]. It all began when she attended one of their meet and greet sessions, and saw the love and compassion members had, and wanted to be part of the women's network. An opportunity arose to be part of the core committee and within 6 months she was promoted to Deputy Chair in November 2019 followed by becoming chair in November 2020. Desiree has also been active in fundraising and, as an example, helped raise the sum of \$20,000 for the Cancer Council when participating in Stars of the Border. I thank Desiree for her contribution to the Albury business sector and for her dedication to her community.

ICARIA HEALTH ALBURY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Albury's Icaria Health which has been recognised with the 2021 Local Business Awards in the category For Outstanding Medium/Large Business. Icaria opened its doors last year in June as a custom-built facility providing industry-leading equipment, services and spaces to the Albury/ Wodonga region. The name 'Icaria' stems from a small Greek Island which provides exceptional health and long life expectancy, living better for longer. Icaria Health is an allied health group, working with the elderly and those with impending disabilities, to optimise their health as well as their wellbeing. The Albury team consists of Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapist, who are all passionate about helping people achieve their goals. I thank the team at Icaria Health Albury who consistently demonstrate their core values and work to provide equality of opportunities to all.

HSC ACHIEVERS IN ST. GEORGE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Congratulations to recent HSC graduate Corina Choy from Bethany College. Corina fielded an entry last year to HSC SHAPE, which showcases major projects from students that undertook Design and Technology, Industrial Technology and Textiles and Design. I am told her entry 'Timber Creativity' is modelled after a puzzle board game and aims to assist teenagers in breaking away from their electronic devices. It brings two players together to compete and unlock their device from a sealed compartment. Her achievements are not limited to the creative spaces – I understand she had the distinction of topping New South Wales in Mathematics Standard 1. I take this opportunity to wish Corina, along with all HSC graduates from the class of 2021 success in their future opportunities.

FIX-IT SISTERS SHED

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—I take this opportunity to commend the volunteers at Fix It Sisters Shed in Kyeemagh. I had the pleasure of visiting the Shed last year to learn about how their workshop and projects are empowering women within our community with practical and creative DIY skills. Established in 2018, their aim is to be build a social connection with a diverse range of women and girls from 12 years old. Their focus is on supporting new migrants, refugees, older women and domestic violence victims. Their most recent project will see the Shed create up to 30 penguin burrows by the end of March, in an effort to protect the vulnerable penguin population on the NSW south coast. I extend my congratulations to Linda Price and Lynn Kristensen co-founders of the Shed and thank them for empowering and supporting Women in the St. George community.

ROCKDALE CITY SUNS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—I extend my best wishes to the Rockdale City Suns who have recently commenced their 2022 National Premier Leagues season. The Suns play at the nearby Illinden Sports Centre in Rockdale and their games attract loyal fans from right around Sydney. Their first Under 20s game for the season will also mark the official launch of a commemorative photo wall inside their club house. I am told it will pay a wonderful tribute to former players, past coaches and committee members stretching back to the club's inception in 1969. I take this opportunity to commend Captain Daniel Petrovski, Club President Dennis Loether, Louie Belevski, General Manager, coach Steve Zoric, along with all the players in each grade. Best of luck for the season ahead!

ARAB AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION INC.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I recognise the Arab Australian Federation Inc. [AAF]. This is an organisation that was established in 2020 with inaugural President, Eddie Zananiri and inaugural Secretary, Hassan Moussa. Among other objectives, it aims to advocate on behalf of the Arab Australian community on social justice issues including racial discrimination and to advance and advocate for the rights of Palestinian people in Palestine and in the diaspora. In September last year they released a document entitled 'The Sydney Statement on Anti-Palestinianism'. The Sydney Statement points to a rising tide of anti-Palestinianism, which refers to language, and practices that direct discrimination, racism, hatred or violence against the Palestinian people. The AAF is doing important work. Its Statement on anti-Palestinianism is a thoughtful document that makes important points.

SANDRA GREAVES

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—The committees of our school and P&Cs do a tremendous job advocating and raising funds for their community. Whether it's pushing for a school crossing or holding a fete, nothing would occur unless there was a large amount of good will on behalf of the P&C. While they all are incredible, I would like to specifically acknowledge the president of Ambarvale Public School's P&C, Sandra Greaves. I have had many interactions with Sandra during her time on the school's P&C. She – along with the rest of committee – have worked tirelessly to help secure funds for vital projects at the school. Sandra's generosity knows no bounds and that was again evident when she shaved her head recently to raise money for Ronald MacDonald House. She raised more than \$12,300 in doing so. The timing also needs to be recognised as the shave occurred on her 40th birthday. On a day when Sandra should have been showered in presents, she was still thinking of others. It is a wonderful effort from a remarkable person. Congratulations on a wonderful effort Sandra and on behalf of our community, thank you for all that you have done and continue to do.

NSW SES FAIRFIELD UNIT

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—On behalf of the Fairfield Electorate and South Western Sydney community I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the NSW SES Fairfield unit during the recent March 2022 wet weather event. The unit attended to over 300 requests for help over the two week period which included assisting residents with leaking roofs, flood rescues, fallen trees, landslides and ceiling collapses. Despite the

Fairfield Unit being extremely busy with callouts, it did an exemplary job in informing the community of the latest updates through their social media platforms. Local residents were kept up-to-date with the latest: severe weather warnings; flood warnings; evacuation centre information; local road closures and openings; traffic information; evacuation orders and alerts. I especially commend the Cabramatta United Pathfinders and the Bushido Judo Club Canley Vale for assisting in the preparation and filling of over 500 sandbags. Thank you to NSW SES Fairfield Unit Commander Mr Les Milne and volunteers for your ongoing service to the community during March 2022 wet weather event.

MERMEC "INNOVATIONS IN RAIL ASSETS"

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—It was a privilege to represent the NSW Labor Opposition Tuesday 28th February 2022 at the Mermec "Innovations in Rail Assets Management and Digitalisation" dinner hosted by the Italian Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Office of the Consul General of Italy in Sydney. Mermec is an Italian multinational company founded in 1970. Its headquarters are based in Monopli (Italy) with offices across the world. The company provides advanced technologies for rail transport safety and digitalisation - this includes signalling, measuring trains, predictive maintenance software, electric traction and telecommunications. Special thanks to Mermec Head of marketing Mr Pietro Stama and Vice President of International Sales Mr Angelo Petrosillo for their warm welcome and kind hospitality. As always it is great to be in the company of ICCI CEO Ms Rachele Grassi and Board members Mr Fabio Grassia; former Deputy Premier of NSW Mr John Barilaro and Consul General Dr Andrea De Filip. Mermec is leading the way in rail asset technology around the globe, I wish them well in their endeavour to keep rail commuters and staff safe on local railways.

FAIRFIELD EMERGENCY EVACUATION CENTRE AT CABRA-VALE DIGGERS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—During the March 2022 rare weather event Cabra-Vale Diggers opened up its doors to the community to provide refuge to residents who had been evacuated as a result of the severe weather and local flooding. On behalf of the Fairfield Electorate and residents of South Western Sydney I congratulate Cabra-Vale Diggers for providing a safe environment to evacuated residents. I thank CEO Mr Boris Belevski, General Manager Michael Foulkes, Club President Mr Les Eldridge, Board of Directors, Club Management and Staff for assisting the community during the wet weather event. I acknowledge the following organisations that assisted in the smooth running of the Evacuation Centre and for providing residents with the necessary support services: South Western Sydney Local Health District; Anglicare NSW South, NSW West & ACT; Fairfield City Police Area Command; Liverpool City Police Area Command; South West Metropolitan Region - NSW Police Force; Dept. Family and Community Services - Housing A special thanks goes out to the NSW SES Fairfield Unit for their efforts in assisting with the safe evacuation of residents.

KERRIN RUMORE

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—I congratulate Kerrin Rumore who has been named Lake Macquarie's 2022 Local Woman of the Year. I have known Kerrin for many years and she is a truly wonderful person. For the past 35 years she has tirelessly volunteered in the local community. Her selfless efforts have made a real difference to many lives. Kerrin was instrumental in raising funds and supplies for struggling farmers through the Bay a Bale and Rural Aid programs in 2018. She set up a drop-in centre at Morisset Showground where people could donate money and goods, and also organised a Bake Sale which raised \$30,000 for feed and water, and another \$30,000 in cash. During the 2019 New Year's Eve fires Kerrin offered her home as shelter for people in need, and in that same year donated the services of her business, Iona Pony Hire, to help a young boy suffering Jordan's Syndrome. Kerrin also volunteers at charity stores and is the driving force behind the Morisset-Lake Macquarie Agricultural Show where she is a lifetime Show Committee member. Kerrin is a true asset to our community and I congratulate her on attaining this honour.

AVONDALE SCHOOL CHALLENGE STUDENTS

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—We have all been saddened to see the devastating impacts the recent floods have had on communities in our State's north. I acknowledge the thoughtfulness and efforts of a group of Avondale School students and teachers to help people living in Lismore. Year 9 students involved in the school's Challenge and Wellbeing program, along with teachers Donna Nevell and Christie Venegas, decided to do something practical to help families affected by the floods. A classroom discussion gave birth to the idea of putting together flood care packages, containing everything from basic hygiene products through to children's books, and delivering these packages to those in need. Students spent their own money and many hours sourcing donations from the Lake Macquarie community to ensure they had enough items to fill many hundreds of hampers. The hampers also included personal notes to flood victims, offering messages of hope and support. Challenge students said they were motivated by a desire to serve a community outside of their own, and to make a difference to people's lives. I thank them for their efforts and encourage them to keep up the great work.

2022 HEATHCOTE WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It is with great pleasure that today I congratulate the extremely deserving 2022 Heathcote Woman of the Year, Marcia McNerney. Marcia has been a volunteer at Engadine RSL Sub-Branch for 15 years and is a well-respected member of our community. She has assisted the Sub-Branch by visiting veterans suffering illness and provided support and companionship, transported veterans to medical appointments, communicated with veteran's widows and assisted family with veteran funerals. Marcia, alongside her husband Brian, has also assisted the Sub-Branches fundraising efforts personally raising approximately \$15,000 per annum as head seller of merchandise. I again congratulate Marcia as the 2022 Heathcote Woman of the Year and commend her outstanding commitment to the Engadine RSL Sub-Branch.

CONGRATULATIONS MALCOLM WEIR OAM

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—I would like to acknowledge and congratulate Mr Malcolm Weir OAM who is this month celebrating 60 years of dedicated service to Gerringong Rural Fire Brigade. Well known and respected locally, Malcolm first joined the Gerringong Bush Fire Brigade in 1962. His great passion for the local community saw Malcolm serving as Brigade Captain from 1969 – 1994 and he remains the longest serving Captain of the Brigade. During his 60 years as a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service, Malcolm has attended a range of incidents including the 1968 Foxground wildfires, the 1982 Gerroa/Shoalhaven Heads bushfires and too many car accidents to recall. On St Florian's (the Patron Saint of Firefighters) Day in 2013 he was awarded a Commissioner's Commendation for Service honouring his outstanding achievements and dedication. In that same year he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM], for service to the community of Gerringong. Malcolm did all this while managing Buena Vista Farm in Gerringong. He is a life member and continues to attend Brigade events whilst showing support to old and new members. Well done and thank you Malcolm Weir OAM.

HELEN MCDERMOTT LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—I congratulate Gerringong's Helen McDermott who I was extremely pleased to recently announce as the 2022 Kiama Electorate Local Woman of the Year. Helen is well known and respected in our local community, particularly for her hard work and dedication as President of the Gerringong and District Historical Society over many years. Helen is an example of one of the many inspirational women that we have in our local community and I hope this award doesn't just highlight her achievement but encourages others to make a similar contribution as Helen. The Woman of the Year Awards are an annual award and Helen's recognition follows on the heels of other great community champions that have been recognised through this auspicious award. I want to sincerely thank her for her outstanding and ongoing contribution to our local community. Well done and thank you Helen McDermott.

MOAMA ANGLICAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I congratulate the following distinguished achievers of the 2021 Year 12 cohort at Moama Anglican Grammar School for outstanding results in their HSC - Abbey Champion, Alex Smith, Andrew Martin, Ashah Downie, Emily Zweck, Faith Butt, Jenna Park, Lily Charnas, and Lucy Nelson. The disruptions of last year presented many challenges that, together, these students worked to overcome. From home-schooling to multiple exam date changes they have shown real resilience in the face of adversity, and demonstrated that hard-work and determination really do pay off. They are role models to their school community and their success during such a disruptive period in our history makes their achievements even more commendable. I congratulate Abbey, Alex, Andrew, Ashah, Emily, Faith, Jenna, Lily, and Lucy on this fantastic accomplishment.

MARIAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I congratulate the following distinguished achievers of the 2021 Year 12 cohort at Marian Catholic College Griffith for outstanding results in their HSC - Analiesa Belfiore, Brooke Aloisi, Connor Sully, Giorgia Ceccato, Imreet Singh, Isabella Salmon, Jasleen Kaur, Jemimah Brooker, Lilly Rose Harris, Martianne Javier, Tegan Aloisi and Zara Heiland. The disruptions of last year presented many challenges that, together, these students worked to overcome. From home-schooling to multiple exam date changes they have shown real resilience in the face of adversity, and demonstrated that hard-work and determination really do pay off. They are role models to their school community and their success during such a disruptive period in our history makes their achievements even more commendable. I congratulate Analiesa, Brooke, Connor, Giorgia, Imreet, Isabella, Jasleen, Jemimah, Lilly, Martianne, Tegan and Zara on this fantastic accomplishment.

ARIBA OMAR

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I wish to congratulate Wagga Wagga's Ariba Omar, who was one of the 2022 finalists in the One to Watch category of the NSW Women of the Year Awards. Ariba, 12, started volunteering for Cancer Council and other organisations at the age of four and has remained a regular since. Her favourite events are Daffodil Day, Red Nose Day and Pink Ribbon Day. She has shared her stories with friends and family to encourage more children to volunteer for charitable organisations. By selling fundraising merchandise and raffle tickets in recent years, Ariba has become a well-known face in the community. For her commitment and passion, she was named as a finalist in 2019 Cancer Council NSW Support Awards in the "Young Hero of the Year" category. In 2019-20, Ariba raised funds for Red Nose Day, MS Readathon and donated her hair to the "Variety-Hair with Heart" charity. Last year she took part in Relay for Life, organised a mufti day at school and raised funds for the Cancer Council. Ariba was also a finalist in 2019 Junior Miss Wagga Wagga contest and has raised \$500 for the adolescent and paediatric ward of Wagga Wagga Base Hospital.

LEONIE WHITE

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I was delighted to announce Leonie White as the 2022 Wagga Wagga Local Woman of the Year. It was a pleasure to recognise Mrs White's long history of service to her community. It is during the hardest times, whether for individuals or the community, that her compassion shines. An ordained Anglican deacon, Mrs White has worked in pastoral care at Wagga Wagga Base Hospital for more than 20 years, initially as a volunteer, then as assistant to the coordinator of pastoral care before she was ultimately appointed as co-ordinator. She is dedicated to helping patients, and their families and hospital staff, and to the wider community. Recently, Mrs White has been confronted with the challenge of providing pastoral care during the COVID-19 lockdowns, which prevented many volunteers from being able to visit the hospital. Her dedication at this time was very much appreciated. Mrs White also serves as Anglican chaplain at Wagga Wagga's Calvary Hospital. She also volunteered her time during the Black Summer Bushfires, as part of the Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network. I thank Mrs White for her care and compassion for our community and her inspirational role as a woman leader.

KARIN REZKALLA

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I wish to congratulate Wagga Wagga's Karin Rezkalla, who was one of the 2022 finalists in the One to Watch category of the NSW Women of the Year Awards. Karin, a 15-year-old student from The Riverina Anglican College, created PhenomeWomen as a community platform to give young women, aged 13 to 18, from around the world an opportunity to talk about issues that affect them, their communities and greater society. Her desire to forge new connections came in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many of us were looking for new ways to connect with others. Within one month of launch, PhenomeWomen received a number of partnership offers with other youth-led organisations, as well as sponsorship and partnership with the Crimson Youth Fund. In that same month, hundreds of young women from over 25 different countries visited the website. PhenomeWomen offers many opportunities for young women, including a blog where important issues and keys to change are discussed, an up-and-coming Youtube channel, a podcast where young women are invited to discuss issues and solutions, and expert webinars from women who are creating positive change in their communities. I congratulate Karin on her work and initiative.

2022 DAVIDSON LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—I am pleased to recognise the Davidson Local Woman of the Year for 2022, Human Rights Lawyer Alison Battisson. Alison has spent years advocating for the rights of refugees and displaced persons in Australia and internationally. The 2021 crisis in Afghanistan following the overthrow of the government and the mass evacuation from Kabul saw Alison team with a number of other human rights advocates across the globe to assist in the evacuation of a group of Afghan sportswomen and their families. During the course of the evacuation, Alison was alerted to a family of five: a husband and wife with three young children. The wife, a karate champion was at high risk from the new regime as she was running a women's gym. Alison made contact with them and after a number of failed attempts and almost ten days of constant contact with the family she was able to secure passage on an aircraft bound for Australia, where they have now settled with direct assistance from Government. Alison continues to advocate for the rights of asylum seekers and is a worthy recipient of the Davidson Local Woman of the Year Award.

MENTAL HEALTH FOR SPORTSPEOPLE

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—A positive outcome of the COVID pandemic is the initiative taken by the Northern Suburbs Football Association [NSFA], which includes clubs in my electorate of Davidson, to introduce Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid courses into all its member clubs. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the ABS respectively, 26 per cent of Australians aged between

16 and 24 and 15 per cent of all Australians between 16 and 85 years, suffered mental illness symptoms in 2020-2021. To combat this, the NSFA has introduced trained Wellbeing Officers into their clubs. Part of this program, which commenced in late 2021 is for the Wellbeing Officers to share and combine their knowledge with each other to improve experiences, for all participating in the program. At a time when mental health has been tested to the extreme, including from the many obstacles placed on our community by the Covid-19 pandemic, and recent catastrophic weather events suffered across the state and country, the NSFA is focussed on caring for both the physical and mental health of its members. I commend the Northern Suburbs Football Association on its initiative in introducing these critically important programs to its member clubs.

EXTREME WEATHER IN SYDNEY

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—The recent rains in Sydney were of minimal consequence compared to the impacts of the devastating floods across the northern rivers of NSW. However much of Sydney was inundated by rain, including in my electorate of Davidson. The East Coast Low, which caused the drenching across Sydney on 8 March, saw particularly heavy rainfall. The North Shore and the Northern Beaches received more rain in a matter of hours than they would normally receive in several months, flooding roads and buildings. Cars literally floated across Roseville Bridge, creeks became rivers and low lying areas, especially around the Narrabeen Lagoon, were evacuated as waters rose. There were hundreds of calls for assistance to the SES, for roadside assistance for broken down vehicles and to the two local councils in my electorate. They generally acted swiftly to close flooded roads and clear fallen trees. All these services then coordinated and helped to implement evacuation orders when overflowing water catchments threatened nearby homes. As a result of the fast and well conducted response, those in danger were kept safe. I commend all involved for their actions, which certainly reduced the effects of this extreme weather.

MONTE INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I recognise students at Monte for their participation in Industry Partnership Programs. More than 230 students across all years in the senior school took part in six programs that were offered. 10 out of 33 start-ups that were created by students through the 'Entrepreneur' Program made it through to the Inaugural Entrepreneur Showcase. Students delivered their pitches and participated in a Q&A session with a panel of guest speakers. These start-ups were not just simulations either, they were real with some generating income and picking up clients. I want to congratulate all of the students who presented at the showcase: Elizabeth Mulcahy, Porscha Paredes, Maggie Delaney, Zoe Campbell, Sophia Stanton, Eleanor Brungs, Athina Tsakalos, Ashley Schmidt, Ashleigh Barton, Emilie Morris, Mia Donaldson, Giovanna Lee, Alison Law, Jessica De Kock, Layla Doyle, Esme Livingston, and Ella Fenech. Each of you should be so proud of your achievement and start-up success. It is inspiring to see empowered young women in the local community design such creative and innovative business models. Thank you to Monte Principal Nicole Christensen, Director of Innovation and Technology, Tom Lee, and all who helped bring this great event to fruition.

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY 2022

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I want to recognise the North Shore community for rolling up their sleeves and participating in Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday 6 March. My electorate is bordered by a long stretch of waterfront and beautiful headlands. Sadly, the COVID-19 pandemic has seen a large influx in litter, particularly with disposable face masks, takeaway coffee cups, and singly use plastics, which have been making their way into our waters and parks. Despite the bad weather we have been experiencing, many still went out to help keep our community clean. I would like to thank the Mayor of Mosman Council, Carolyn Corrigan, and her team for officially registering with the Clean Up Australia organisation and participating. I want to thank the Mosman Rowers, who are led by President Kathrina Doran, for their clean-up campaign. For every bag of rubbish brought to them they were offering complimentary bacon and egg rolls and coffee. It was amazing to see the broader community come together through Facebook community groups and events. I extend my thanks to every single person in North Shore who helped clean up our community.

MIDDLE HARBOUR YACHT CLUB HOSTS THE SYDNEY HARBOUR REGATTA

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I want to recognise the Middle Harbour Yacht Club [MHYC] who recently hosted the Sydney Harbour Regatta on the 5th and 6th of March. This year was the 17th anniversary of the Sydney harbour Regatta which is one of the largest competitive keelboat races in the entire country. 190 keelboats raced across 19 different divisions. Congratulations to MHYC on hosting this event successfully. Despite terrible weather conditions and having to change some of the race locations, you were still able to make the regatta go ahead. I want to congratulate all of the MHYC crews and other participants across all regatta divisions. I want to thank the entire MHYC board and team, led by Commodore Peter Lewis, for hosting this huge event. It is such a great achievement for a local club to host a nationally renowned sailing event. I extend my thanks to all of the clubs, partners, and sponsors who also assisted in making the regatta go ahead this year. I also

want to acknowledge the MHYC for all of the sailing opportunities it provides for the community, not just at a competitive level.

BLACK DOG RIDE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—The annual Black Dog Ride roared into action on Sunday 20th March with an estimated 120 riders taking to the streets to raise awareness about men's mental health. Now in its fourth year, the Black Dog Ride aims to open a dialogue on mental illness in men and to encourage them to speak openly about their struggles in an inclusive and friendly environment. Ride Coordinator Josh Salter and his team organised \$7,000 worth of raffles in a mammoth campaign to raise vital funds for the Black Dog Institute. However, while it is acknowledged that fundraising is important it is but a secondary goal. Bike enthusiasts participated in a 150 kilometre ride from Port Macquarie down the beautiful coast along Ocean Drive, in a round trip that went as far west as Kew before finishing up in the hinterland village of Beechwood. I congratulate Josh and all the participants for coordinating the Black Dog Ride and commend for their united efforts to start a national conversation about depression and suicide prevention.

LAKE CATHIE LITTLE LEARNERS – MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I acknowledge Lake Cathie Little Learners for the provision of childcare services in the Camden Haven and for recently being recognised by the Master Builders Association at their Awards night held at the Star Casino in Sydney. Hayes Construction Company were the winners in the Childcare Centre up to \$5 million category for the standout design of Lake Cathie Little Learners complex. The Stevens Family are the founders of Little Learners with each member playing their part with son Josh identifying the appropriate site and overseeing the project, father John coordinating design features and mother Elaine meticulously planning the interior design and playroom layouts. Since opening in 2021, Little Learners has literally revolutionised childcare services on the Mid North Coast incorporating state-of-the-art technology and innovation including a science lab, art room, music room, outdoor education facility, commercial kitchen and performing arts room. Credit also goes to architects Collins W Collins from Port Macquarie for their role in designing the centre that now cares for 125 children. Congratulations to everyone involved.

THE REPLACEMENT BY JAKK BAKER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I commend the publication of first-time author Jakk Baker from Port Macquarie who shares his struggles with learning to live with grief and dyslexia. Jakk is an inspiration in the way he communicates his life experiences through the filming of YouTube videos and telling stories. At the age of eight, Jakk was diagnosed with dyslexia and found it difficult to absorb learning material through school. In Year 9 Jakk made the difficult decision to leave and focus his talents on storytelling. Motivated by the sad passing of his mother when he was 16, Jakk began to create low-budget, short-story films through YouTube about grief and managing loss until one day he came to the realisation that his passion for storytelling could invariably help others like him heal. Now at the age of 19 and with the help of digital tools as well as his loving sister, Jakk proudly launched 'The Replacement' - a novel that delves into the life of a young boy living in an abusive household. Jakk uses the novel to capture themes of grief, mental health and overcoming adversity. I congratulate Jakk on his publication and wish him every success.

AUSTRALIAN REPTILE PARK: NSW BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to congratulate the Central Coast's own Australian Reptile Park who in November were named Business NSW's 2021 NSW Business of the Year. I would also like to acknowledge The Glen who were recognised as NSW's Outstanding Community Organisation. The Central Coast were represented at the State awards by nine local businesses, with over 1000 businesses across NSW contending the 11 prestigious award categories. It is a great honour for the Australian Reptile Park to be recognised with NSW Excellence in Business award which reflects their incredible work. Tim Faulkner and the team operated and engaged with the local community and adapted to the challenges of 2021 by partnering with accommodation providers and other local businesses to create visitor experience packages and boosting visitors to a range of Central Coast businesses. I am proud that the Central Coast boasts such fantastic small businesses and look forward to working with the business community throughout 2022.

CFTC OUTSTANDING LEADER

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to congratulate Jenny Martin who was recognised as Central Coast Local Health District's 2021 Outstanding Leader. The award was part of the Caring for the Coast Awards which celebrated the hard work and dedication of team members in a tough year for healthcare workers.

Jenny joined CCLHD as the Director of Allied Health in 2019 and has since been a collaborative, adaptive and inclusive leader. A notable contribution is sponsoring and participating in an inter-professional mentoring

program and contribution to the creation the national guidelines and Allied Health Awards being adopted by NSW Health. I would also like to acknowledge the work of Kara Pollard who is the District Health Information Manager who has reduced the medical record scanning backlog and Dr Cameron Hunter, Head of Department for General Medicine at Wyong Hospital who worked to maintain COVID safety at the hospital and has been involved in the hospital's redevelopment. Congratulations Jenny on this fantastic recognition for your ongoing hard work and diligence.

DISABLED SURF ASSOCIATION

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast)—I would like to acknowledge the efforts, support and contributions made by the Disabled Surfers Association and all volunteers involved, on Saturday February 26, 2022 the Disabled Surfers Association held there South Coast event at Mollymook Beach. The DSA is a group of members who help those with disabilities who love the ocean and surfing get back out there and enjoy a day of fun and appreciate what used to not be possible for some. Even with all the crazy weather the South Coast experienced, the event still went ahead. On Friday it was pouring rain but fortunately enough Saturday cleared up for the DSA to hold a wonderful event that many have been looking forward too. With 35 participants supported by 75 volunteers on Saturday they all had the chance to get out there and enjoy what most would take for granted. The 2022 South Coast event was a success finally after COVID cancelling their events in the past. President of the association Ian Picton said the South Coast event was a great day and for those that missed out are told not to worry as they will be back mid to late November this year.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It was a pleasure to recently join the Sutherland Shire Football Association for the launch of their 2022 season. It was a very successful launch, I was encouraged by the participation of more young women and their ambitions for a professional career within the sport. After the disruptions experienced due to COVID, I join all local football clubs in looking forward to a great season and wish all participants every success in their competitions.

KURNELL STINGRAYS JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate Kurnell Stingrays Junior Rugby League Football Club on celebrating its 30th anniversary. After months of postponement because of COVID-19, past and present Stingrays players, families and supporters came together earlier this month for an anniversary dinner to mark this significant milestone. The Stingrays have grown to field more than 25 teams in 2022, including tackle sides, girls' league tag and over 35s mens' tag. I acknowledge all of the club's volunteers who contribute so much through arranging the gear, grounds, the canteen, barbeques and all of the jobs that get done to make sure the players enjoy the game. I particularly acknowledge the club's hardworking committee led by President Tim McKay, Vice Presidents Reece Jordan and Ben Tickle, Secretary Danni Edwards, Assistant Secretary Lisa McKay and Treasurer Fenessa Brown. The Kurnell Stingrays Junior Rugby League Football Club has been part of making the tight-knit Kurnell community what it is today. I wish all of the players an enjoyable and successful season in 2022.

ATHERFIELD MEDICAL SERVICE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I formally recognise the contribution of Atherfield Medical Service to the community. The COVID-19 pandemic presented many challenges that we as a community have not only faced - but risen to. Without the tremendous effort from Atherfield Medical Service throughout this pandemic, particularly for their contribution in the momentous vaccination effort - we would not be in the position that we are today. Mr Speaker, I also wish to publicly acknowledge, thank and praise Atherfield Medical Service for their actions. The sheer dedication and hard work of each and every person - Doctor, Nurse, Pharmacist, Health Administrator and Staff or Volunteer - who supported our community in a medical capacity is indefinably appreciated. Thank you for your service.

BLOOMS MARKETPLACE GOULBURN

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I formally recognise the contribution of Blooms Marketplace Goulburn to the community. The COVID-19 pandemic presented many challenges that we as a community have not only faced - but risen to. Without the tremendous effort from Blooms Marketplace Goulburn throughout this pandemic, particularly for their contribution in the momentous vaccination effort - we would not be in the position that we are today. Mr Speaker, I also wish to publicly acknowledge, thank and praise Blooms Marketplace Goulburn for their actions. The sheer dedication and hard work of each and every person - Doctor, Nurse, Pharmacist, Health Administrator and Staff or Volunteer - who supported our community in a medical capacity is indefinably appreciated. Thank you for your service.

BALLINA SHIRE AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD RECIPIENTS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I acknowledge the deserving winners of Ballina Shire's Australia Day Awards. Citizen of the Year is Maria Matthes, for her dedication to the survival of koalas. Joint winners of the Sporting Achievement Award were Tyler Dogan and Veronica Silver. Tyler became the National Under 15s 2000-metre Steeplechase Champion in 2021, aged 13. Veronica is in her 20th year as secretary of the Alstonville Water Polo Club. Joint winners of the Arts/Cultural Award were the Ballina & District Historical Society, who opened a District Museum in 2021, and Sue Belsham, a significant contributor to the Arts. Senior Citizen of the Year is Barry Fiedler, whose long history of community service includes a 60-year association with Pearces Creek Hall. Volunteer of the Year is Jo Parker, who heads the Northern Rivers Animal Service. The Community Event of the Year Award went jointly to the COVID Crisis Meal Centre and the Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance. The Environmental Award winner was Ballina Shire Kerbside Garbage Collectors. Young Citizen was Eli Carr of Lennox Head, who ran 200km in a month to raise \$8000 for the Healthy Minds Club.

ELLA ABDUL MASSIH

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—A big congratulations to Ella Abdul Massih as she embarks on a new journey in her soccer career with the Western Sydney Wanderers. A St Clair local and only 15 years old, Ella has been a part of junior National Team Squad lists over the last 5 years. For the past season and a half she has been a train-on with the Wanderers Liberty A-League side and has now been promoted after Western Sydney Wanderers FC confirmed the signing of this young talented football star. Ella has said that she is eager to repay back to the club for the faith they have put in her in giving her the opportunity to go to new heights in her career. Over this next season she will be doing everything she can to prove that she deserves to be on the side and she can't wait to get on the field and debut for the Red and Black. It is clear the Ella will do amazingly and I wish her all the best this season.

MELITA STIRLING

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Melita Stirling is a new resident of my electorate and she has come up with a brilliant way to introduce herself and make friends in this new community of hers. If you are an avid book reader and would like to join a book club, well Melita has begun to organize one in an attempt to bring the community together and share a book with. Melita believes that a book club is a great way to meet new people, read books and drink wine. Melita has previously been a part of book clubs and says they are fantastic as you get the opportunity open your mind, experience new ideas and read books you probably wouldn't end up reading on a normal occasion. Melita is currently consulting with local libraries for a choice of books and this will be followed by a Facebook group to discuss how the book club should be run.

LUKE PRIDDIS FOUNDATION

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Many of us would know someone who lives with Autism in our communities and there are many people out there that want to make a difference in the lives of those who do live with it. It is with pride that I am able to recognise today that the Luke Priddis Foundation was back to host its annual Golf Day this month at Twin Creeks Golf and Country Club to raise awareness and funds to improve the lives of children living with Autism. It is a day where the community can come together for a day of healthy competition whilst also doing their bit to contribute to the cause. The money raised by the annual Golf Day will go towards helping the Foundation maintain and grow initiatives to keep up with the growing area. Well done to all those who participate and support the Luke Priddis Foundation.

GRIND ESPRESSO CRONULLA

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate Grind Espresso owners Richard and Donna Calabro and their team for winning the Cronulla Chamber of Commerce's Local Hero Award. Grind is a local coffee institution in Cronulla and for the last eight years the café has opened for an hour on Christmas Day with staff working for free to raise money for local charities. Christmas Day 2021 saw the Grind crew raise \$3,000 for the Dandelion Support Network, which does wonderful work supporting children and families in need. This follows on from last year when they raised a similar amount for the Steve Waugh Foundation. The annual Local Hero award was established to recognise Cronulla businesses who support the local community and the Grind team are well deserved winners.

RILEY AYRE – NSW BLUES SHEFFIELD SHIELD DEBUTANT

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter)—Congratulations to Denman-born Riley Ayre on his first appearance in the Sheffield Shield as a member of the New South Wales cricket team. Riley made his first class cricket debut after a call-up to substitute for injured fellow bowler Tanveer Sangha on day two of the match against Western Australia. Even though last week's match at Bankstown Oval ended in a draw, NSW Blues cap number

759, finished his initial top grade interstate appearance with bowling figures of 1-for-9 off four overs. Batting down the order, Riley scored a single in the Blues first innings to be not out after facing nine balls. Riley Ayre's rise to first class cricket is testament of the dedication to his sport which included making a 500 kilometre return road trip from Denman to southern Sydney to play first grade with Sutherland in the Sydney Grade competition. The left-arm spin bowler has an impressive record of cricket achievements which includes being selected in the Australian Under-19 squad and the one day Cricket Australia XI. I wish Riley all the best for the future of his cricket career including further Sheffield Shield appearances with the Blues.

TRACEY LOWREY - 2022 UPPER HUNTER WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter)—Congratulations to Tracey Lowrey on being named the 2022 Upper Hunter Local Woman of the Year. Tracey received the award in recognition of her significant contribution to the Dungog community. It has included involvement with organisations such as Dungog Daycare, the Dungog Adult Education Committee, Dungog Cubs, Dungog Netball, Clarence Town Rugby League, Dungog Film Festival and Meals on Wheels. It was an honour to attend the NSW Women of the Year Awards at the International Convention Centre, Sydney with Tracey and also spend time with One to Watch Award finalist Joss Davies of Singleton. Joss is a resilient young woman who lives above her degenerative genetic condition, volunteering at Singleton PCYC and is now in the process of setting up her own design and print business 'Joss's Can Do Creations'. Upper Hunter Electorate women shone through during NSW Women's Week. Scone-based charter pilot and flight instructor Elle Purvis was selected to participate in the Future Women Rural Scholarship Program. Additionally, Aberdeen professional dog trainer Erin Williams was named as a finalist for the 2022 NSW/ACT AgriFutures™ Rural Women's Award with the winner announced in April.

MITTAGONG MEN'S SHED

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—Members of Mittagong Men's Shed are excited to have moved to a new location, in a beautiful rural setting, just off Old South Rd. They are leasing land from the Marist Brothers, and have been very busy over the last few months converting old milking sheds into a functioning space where they can have their bi-weekly meetings. The members have done the renovations themselves, using money raised from their weekly Bunnings bbq's. With refurbishments now nearly complete, the group is relieved to have found a more permanent home after having a number of meetings in members' own personal sheds for the last few years. Now, more than ever, Men's Sheds offer men a critical avenue for social support and engagement. The Mittagong Shed, in particular, is a friendly and welcoming place where men can come together, have a chat and a cuppa, do some activities, or simply share time and stories. They are always looking for new members and I would encourage any local men to reach out if you could benefit from this wonderful community initiative. I look forward to seeing their new digs in the near future.

BOWRAL AUTUMN MUSIC FESTIVAL

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—The Bowral Autumn Music Festival is back this year, with an incredible line up of world-class musicians ready to thrill and move audiences over the four day program starting on 24 March. The festival will be held at St Jude's Church in Bowral and will include two days of educational workshops followed by eight concerts featuring a wide variety of styles, instruments, and ensembles. Among the many talented groups included in the program are the Australian Brass Quintet, the Acacia Quartet, Ensemble Offspring, and members of local Highlands Music Collective. As the festival was unable to proceed last year, I am sure this year's event will be met with enthusiasm as music lovers experience this terrific display of both contemporary and classical music, in the scenic autumn colours of the Southern Highlands. I hope the festival, which is a highlight of the Highlander's annual calendar, will be enjoyed by as many people as possible this year and I wish them a very successful event.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—On Friday 4 March Christians gathered, in communities and in spirit, for the World Day of Prayer. This global movement has a powerful motto, Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action, and participants affirm their belief that both prayer and action have a real impact in our world. It is a belief that I share. My local church community held their own prayer service at St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Bowral, praying for our suffering community as well as those suffering around the world. And what a lot there is to pray for! Locally, we have once again seen the damaging effects of heavy rain and floods, destroying roads and property. A little further north in Lismore, we watched our NSW neighbours lose their homes, animals, businesses, and tragically even lives. People all over Australia are still very much affected by the lockdowns of COVID-19, closing businesses and mourning lost moments like wedding, funerals, births and deaths. And of course, we are very aware of our brothers and sisters in the Ukraine. I want to thank St Thomas Aquinas parishioners for their faith and prayers. May God bless our country, and our suffering world.

2022 MAX PLAYER SUZANNE STANTON

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage)—I wish to acknowledge the incredible hard work and dedication of the former lessees of the Quarantine Station at Manly. Max Player and Suzanne Stanton took over the Q-Station some 16 years ago. During the years the site has been under their care, the Q-Station has been transformed from a series of dilapidated buildings to a world class venue for conferences, weddings and accommodation and has become a much loved part of our local community. I join the Manly community in thanking Max and Suzanne on a job well done and wish them all the very best in the future.

BEN TUDHOPE

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage)—I wish to acknowledge Manly's Winter Paralympic star and Team Captain Ben Tudhope. It is a true joy to see a young man raised by the sand be so at home in the snow. Ben represented Australia in the recent Winter Paralympic Games in Beijing and won Bronze in the Men's Snowboard cross SB-LL2. Ben's dedication to his sport and years of hard work have seen him rise to join the ranks of the many sporting heroes from the Manly area. We all watched on proudly as Ben carried the Australian flag during the closing ceremony and I congratulate Ben on a truly magnificent accomplishment.

WESLEY EDWARD EAGER

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney Electorate I congratulate Wesley Mission on the refurbishment and reopening of the Wesley Edward Eager crisis accommodation in Surry Hills. Since 1979, Edward Eager Lodge has been providing short-term emergency accommodation to people experiencing homelessness, operating from their 1874 heritage-listed sandstone building that was originally a church. The much-needed upgrade include new rooms with private bathrooms, kitchenettes and laundry facilities, improved space for counselling, and a public café where clients and the community can meet and connect. This refurbishment helps give clients dignity and will help Wesley Mission provide vulnerable members of our community with the support they need to get back on their feet and a home. The project was supported by a \$1 million grant from the City of Sydney as part of the council's action on homelessness, and I was pleased to attend the official opening with Lord Mayor Clover Moore to see the new facilities. I thank Wesley Mission the Edward Eager Centre for this significant boost to making sure people experiencing homelessness get wraparound individual support and a dignified home during their transition from homelessness.

BLADE MATE LAWN CARE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—Blade Mate Lawn Care is a family owned business run by two Australian Army veterans and is located in Thornton. Blade Mate Sean has gained some notoriety as the 'lawn mowing YouTuber'. Blade Mate boast over 87 600 subscribers and total views of just under 16 000 000 of their collection of 108 videos. This was all achieved in just over 16 months of posting. I want to acknowledge Blade Mate not only for starting their venture and moving it forward, but for the contributions they make to our community. One of the Blade Mates, Sean Duncan, promotes a personal value of contributing: that if you see something that needs doing, and you have the ability to do it, then step up and offer to lend a hand. Walking the talk, Blade Mate Lawn Care undertake pro-bono yard clean-ups for those in need but without the resources as part of their ethos of giving where you are able and giving to your community. I congratulate Blade Mate Lawn Care for their tenacity, their successful embracing of new media, and their community spirit.

JUDITH DUMA - LYMPHOEDEMA AWARENESS MONTH

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—March is Lymphoedema Awareness Month, and 6 March is World Lymphoedema Day. Lymphoedema is due to a failure of the lymphatic system and occurs when the demand for lymphatic drainage exceeds the capacity of the lymphatic circulation. Risk factors for lymphoedema include surgery (particularly after breast cancer), removal of lymph nodes, radiation and profession of disease. Lymphoedema mainly affects the limbs but can also involve the trunk, breast, head and neck or genital area. Early diagnosis is critical as it provides more options for treatment and can limit the progression of swelling and prevent skin changes. Early signs and symptoms to look out for are: swelling, especially if aggravated by heat, overuse, recurrent cellulitis, feelings of aching, heaviness, stiffness in the affected body part, decreased range of movement, or tightness of clothing, jewellery or shoes. Judith Duma of the Hunter/Maitland Lymphoedema Support Group has been a tireless worker seeking equitable access to excellent quality lymphoedema services as well as equitable and sustainable access to affordable lymphoedema compression garments. I congratulate Judith on her hard work for our community.

CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—On March 1 I had the pleasure of meeting with Wally Mehanna, CEO of the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce [CBCC]. Wally and the CBCC are an indelible part of the community, advancing the cause of businesses and the livelihoods of countless members of Canterbury-Bankstown. In every meeting we have he can speak specifically to the needs of small businesses that prop up our community and make it what it is. I thank him for his candour and his advocacy. One such example was an event he kindly invited me to that I was unable to attend. This was the 2022 Women in Leadership Event. The CBCC put on this event to celebrate women in leadership roles. It plat formed guest speakers with inspiring stories so that the community could learn how together we can make change happen that empowers all. The event acknowledges that women have unique challenges. By hosting this event, the CBCC is paving the way to a more equitable future. My relationship with the CBCC is longstanding. As we work side-by-side to improve the lives of the community I look forward to continuing this work with them.

ELENI MAVRIDIS-KONTAKOS

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—I would like to acknowledge and congratulate Eleni Kontakos for receiving a Citizen of the Year nomination. Eleni has been doing immense and superb work supporting her local school community in Punchbowl. The incredible work involves enhancing social wellbeing, working with internal and external agencies to support students and families with early intervention, disabilities and special needs. Eleni Kontakos' parents, John and Soula Mavridis, as teenagers, emigrated from Greece to Australia in the 1960s and settled in Punchbowl. Eleni was born and raised in Punchbowl and is now a successful Deputy Principal at Punchbowl Primary Public School where she has been a staff member since 2014. Eleni is a well-respected member of the school and wider community. Eleni has successfully established relationships between cultures by building bridges between different ethnic communities. She adopted a grassroots approach at the school and built strong community relationships from the ground up. Eleni Mavridis-Kontakos has played an instrumental role in the students' increased level of wellbeing and improved school performance. Eleni is an exceptional mentor to others and will be an inspiration for many generations to come.

THE SMITH FAMILY

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—I am very proud to acknowledge The Smith Family, which will be launching their Centenary Celebration this year. 2022 marks 100 years of charity delivered by The Smith Family. Five businessmen provided toy and sweets to children in a Sydney orphanage on Christmas Eve 1922. Over decades, through the Great Depression, Cyclone Tracy, drought and floods, The Smith Family has assisted vulnerable children with shelter, food, toys, Christmas hampers and much more. Supporting families from low socioeconomic background is a long-term strategy and to meet these challenges The Smith Family have expanded their efforts into supporting students through lifelong learning. Education is one of the best ways to facilitate upward mobility into a working society and thus giving children hope for the future. The Smith Family has supporting more than 58,000 students on its flagship learning for life program helping to break the cycle of poverty. I offer my deepest thanks to the hard work of volunteers and staff at The Smith Family for the last 100 years and join them in celebrating their centenary.

SCHOOL LEADERS AUSTINMER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira)—Today I acknowledge Griffin Carey, Lachlan Ewington, Lucy Hoskins and grace Heffernan, who have been named as the 2022 Austinmer Public School leadership team. Being named as a school leader after being elected by their peers is a testament to their dedication, hard work and demonstrated ability to be a leader. Each of these students works exceptionally hard and have been highly involved within their school community throughout their time at the school. I am confident that they always strive to do their best with their studies and extra curricula activities. Each of them will spend 2022 acting as role models for their peers. These students have thrived even though they have faced a number of hurdles during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have no doubt that they will carry out their new leadership roles with great pride. I congratulate Griffin Carey, Lachlan Ewington, Lucy Hoskins and grace Heffernan on their achievement and wish them all the best for the year.

SCHOOL LEADERS BELLAMBI PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira)—Today I acknowledge Indie Shepstone, Lilana Farrington-Court, Charlie Yeo and Junior Ioane who have been named as the 2022 Bellambi Public School leadership team. Being named as a school leader after being elected by their peers is a testament to their dedication, hard work and demonstrated ability to be a leader. Each of these students works exceptionally hard and have been highly involved within their school community throughout their time at the school. I am confident that they always strive to do their best with their studies and extra curricula activities. Each of them will spend 2022 acting as role models for their peers.

These students have thrived even though they have faced a number of hurdles during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have no doubt that they will carry out their new leadership roles with great pride. I congratulate Indie Shepstone, Lilana Farrington-Court, Charlie Yeo and Junior Ioane on their achievement and wish them all the best for the year.

SCHOOL LEADERS BULLI HIGH SCHOOL

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira)—Today I acknowledge Bethany Hopkins, Victor Strange, Maeve Hesse, Noah Shipp, Phoebe Hammersley and Thomas Fraser who have been named as the 2022 Bulli High School leadership team. Being named as a school leader after being elected by their peers is a testament to their dedication, hard work and demonstrated ability to be a leader. Each of these students works exceptionally hard and have been highly involved within their school community throughout their time at the school. I am confident that they always strive to do their best with their studies and extra curricula activities. Each of them will spend 2022 acting as role models for their peers. These students have thrived even though they have faced a number of hurdles during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have no doubt that they will carry out their new leadership roles with great pride. I congratulate Bethany Hopkins, Victor Strange, Maeve Hesse, Noah Shipp, Phoebe Hammersley and Thomas Fraser on their achievement and wish them all the best for their final year of high school

CABRAMATTA HIGH SCHOOL

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta)—The past few years have been tough on school students in NSW who had to complete their studies at home through online learning. Schools had to shift their curriculum online, teachers had to quickly learn how to conduct classes from home and families and students were made to adjust to a whole new way of learning. This led to many NSW students investing a lot of time and effort into their studies throughout lockdown, which was inspiring to see. One example being the students at Cabramatta High School. Cabramatta High School's accomplishments led to the school being included in the state government's Ambassador Schools program as one of the final four schools. The program selects high-achieving schools with the aim of finding out their secrets to success and passing them on to other schools. I would like to congratulate Cabramatta High School on their wonderful achievement. It is clear to see that the principal, Lachlan Erskine, the staff and the students have put in a lot of work to improve their school and their studies. This outcome shines a positive light not only on the Cabramatta Electorate, but all of South-West Sydney.

FARMER'S BAKEHOUSE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I want to recognise Dubbo's Farmer's Bakehouse, which has been named Australian Good Food Guide 2022 Central NSW Reader's Choice best bakery. The Farmer's Bakehouse name comes from owner Bart Shanks' own family background. His Great Grandfather Robert Shanks moved to Dubbo in 1914 and ever since the family has been farming and doing business in the Dubbo community. Four generations later they are still a family of farmers, proud of producing quality products and contributing to the local community. Bart had no experience in baking prior to purchasing the business, but has learnt from other bakers to help create the bakery's diverse range. The three main product lines Farmer's Bakehouse specialises in are sourdough (which they produce nine varieties of), French pastries, and pies. As a business, they are conscious of how they are involved in the community, and contribute where they can. Recently, they have started looking at this in a broader sense, focusing their attention on reducing their carbon and waste footprint, as they feel they have an obligation to significantly reduce the environmental impact of their business. Congratulations Bart and the team on the fantastic achievements!

WIRADJURI WORKBOOK

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I want to commend two proud Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi women from Dubbo and Moree, who have created a series of Wiradjuri language workbooks to help the next generation better connect with their culture. Associate Professor Lynette Riley and her sister Diane Riley-McNaboe began developing Wiradjuri Workbooks during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many families were unable to spend time together, and maintain cultural and Kinship connections with children. Through her work with caseworkers in Dubbo and around NSW, Associate Professor Riley realised many families didn't have access to Zoom, and decided to do something about it. Initially Diane, a Wiradjuri language teacher in Dubbo, was sceptical about how one would fit an entire language into one book! So there'll be 7 in total, with lessons and activities on Wiradjuri sounds and words; greetings; Acknowledging Country; numbers, symbols and tracks; family terms; and body parts and colours. Language is a vital part of culture, and I acknowledge the damage caused by government policies over the centuries. I commend Lynette and Diane on this initiative to both preserve and celebrate their culture, and provide a cultural bridge to disconnected children.

SIERRA ESCAPE BELLE BOIS BANDALONG COTTAGES TOURISM AWARDS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—The Dubbo electorate is home to a lot of fantastic tourism attractions – not just Taronga Western Plains Zoo! In fact at the recent NSW Tourism Awards, the Mudgee region punched well above its weight. Sierra Escape Mudgee was awarded Gold for the Unique Accommodation category, entering the Hall of Fame thanks to three consecutive years of Gold wins in this category. Congratulations to owners Cam and Natascha D'Arcy, Dell and Will Tomlinson who have helped keep the business alive over the past couple of years, and the rest of the team: Suanne, Emily and Megan! Silver was awarded to Belle Bois in Capertee Valley for Hosted Accommodation. Finally, The Bandalong Cottages were awarded Bronze in the Self-Contained Accommodation category, rounding out the night with a lot to celebrate. Congratulations to all the teams at Sierra Escape, Belle Bois and Bandalong Cottages – and keep up the amazing work!

PROFESSOR JULIE BYLES AO

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Professor Julie Byles, who has been named an Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to medical research, gerontology, and professional scientific organisations. Professor Byles' career has seen her work with, among others, the World Health Organisation, the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Science, the Australian Association of Gerontology and the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics. Notably, Professor Byles has directed the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health since 1996. The study has involved almost 60,000 women, examining health over their lifespans. Professor Byles' research has had long-reaching impacts, and no doubt already, and will continue, to improve health outcomes for women far into the future.

EMERITUS PROFESSOR TIMOTHY ROBERTS AM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Emeritus Professor Timothy Roberts, who has been named a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to environmental and life sciences, and tertiary education. Emeritus Professor Roberts' work is well-known across the Hunter, particularly as the founder of the hands-on Supernova science exhibition that is currently part of Newcastle Museum. A little further afield, he was pivotal in setting up the Singapore Campus of the University of Newcastle and has been working on rehabilitating habitat in the Indonesian Borneo for the proboscis monkey. He has been recognised globally, receiving Churchill, German Academic Exchange and CSIRO Postdoctoral fellowships among many more, and has also had his service recognised by the University of Newcastle and Flinders University. Congratulations, Emeritus Professor Roberts. This is a well-deserved honour.

DR ANOUSHA VICTOIRE

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—With 20 years' experience as a GP and the medical lead for the Newcastle Sexual Assault Service, Dr Anousha Victoire has made an incredible contribution to the Newcastle community. In her role with the Sexual Assault Service Dr Victoire oversees a team of medical examiners assisting victims of sexual assault, and also provides sexual harassment and assault education. Additionally, Dr Victoire contributes to the Hunter New England Sexual Health Clinic, is Conjoint Fellow at the University of Newcastle School of Medicine and Public Health, coordinates a group local doctors to support recently arrived refugees from Afghanistan, and still finds the time to perform in local musical productions and dance groups. Thank you for your tireless work in the Newcastle community.

RISE & SHINE KINDERGARTEN SYLVANIA

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)—I acknowledge Rise & Shine Kindergarten ("Rise & Shine") in Sylvania, who were named Early Childhood Centre of the Year at the Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards 2021. Rise & Shine is a family-owned and operated business who provide exceptional care to our littlest learners. Led by a team of qualified and experienced educators, Rise & Shine have developed their own unique curriculum that is tailored to each child's individual needs and interests, ensuring they are on the correct path for a brighter future. Of course none of this would be possible without the hard-working and dedicated team at Rise & Shine Kindergarten. I recognise Edward and Marianne Zaki, Jennifer Weston, Vanessa Gill, Jackie Tannos, Elisha Milonas, Cristina Gimeno Fernandez, Eloise Crawford, Rachel Hunter, Lufta Jahan, Lauren Salis, Julie Nguyen, Stefano Odeesho, Christina Cerqueira, Estelle Gebran, Georgia Wild, Shelley Burgess, Anita Clenuar, Jolin Li, Chelsea O'Reilly, Breannan Grady, Elizabeth Wigan, Amelia Todoroski, Puja Sharma, Yi Jium Cheing, Aluet Irwin, Raijieli Tanuku, Koby Maber, Linda Sellitto, Veronique Creighton, Sabrina De Carvalho, Jenny Tziolas, Rachell Hogg, Jordan Brian and Margaret McInnes. I congratulate Rise & Shine Kindergarten on their success at the Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards.

TAREN POINT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)— I congratulate the newly elected leadership team of Taren Point Public School on their appointment. Taren Point Public School is a wonderful community of bright and talented students. Led by Principal James Nobbs, the incredible students are always keen to learn new skills and embrace new experiences. Term 1 has been busy for the leadership team who have launched themselves into many exciting initiatives. The Student Representative Council hosted 'Clean Up Australia Day' with their peers, and the leadership team represented their school at the National Young Leaders Day conference. The 2022 leadership team truly embody the values that make Taren Point Public School such a wonderful place to learn and grow. I congratulate School Captains Kylan Jenkins and Belle Aitken along with Vice Captains Rory Swinton and Jaida Wynen on their successful appointment. To be elected by your peers is an incredible achievement of which these students should be proud, and I look forward to seeing the opportunities they embrace throughout the year. I commend the student leaders from Taren Point Public School on their success, and extend my best wishes for the 2022 school year.

KIRRAWEE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)— I congratulate the newly elected leadership team of Kirrawee Public School on their appointment. Kirrawee Public School is home to a tight knit community of diligent and caring students. Led by Principal Selwyn Williams, the teaching and support staff work hard to create informed citizens through diverse learning opportunities. During Term 1, students studied the concepts of "Growing Older and Wiser" and "Identity", helping them to become robust thinkers. The school community also cheered on their peers at their swimming carnival, and later banded together to raise awareness on Rare Disease Day. Behind many of these initiatives is the 2022 leadership team, who truly embody the values that make Kirrawee Public School such a wonderful place to learn and grow. I congratulate School Captains Misheel Enkhzaya and Matthew Davey along with Prefects Charlotte Thorn, Bentley Maclean, Lada Pavlenko and Max Hartas on their successful appointment. To be elected by your peers is an incredible achievement of which these students should be proud, and I look forward to seeing the opportunities they embrace throughout the year. I commend the student leaders from Kirrawee Public School on their success, and extend my best wishes for the 2022 school year.

BLACKTOWN LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Monday 14 March 2022, the Blacktown City Council Local Business Awards were held at the Blacktown Workers Club. Unfortunately, I missed presenting at the event due to assisting the flood recovery efforts in Lismore. However, I still wish to congratulate the outstanding local businesses and their people who have gone above and beyond to provide outstanding service to our community. The Local Business Awards celebrated local businesses from a large array of industries, ranging from hospitality, retail, manufacturing and professional. Awards such as the Youth Award, Specialised Retail Business Award and the Environmental Sustainability Award were presented by Mayor Tony Bleasdale, Blacktown City Council. Awards were also presented by Westpoint Blacktown, NOVA Employment, Western Sydney Business Access, Blacktown Workers Club, White Key Marketing, Greater Blacktown Business Chamber and the Rotary Club of Blacktown City. Local businesses in our Blacktown community have overcome an array of challenges in the last two years. COVID-19 restrictions and the recent weather events have created significant difficulties for businesses owners. However, our local business community has stepped up to the challenge and continued to support our community. Local business owners and employees deserved to be commended for their efforts.

ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE ANNUAL GALA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Saturday 19 February 2022, it was a pleasure to attend the Armenian National Committee Annual Gala at the Museum of Contemporary Art Foundational Hall, The Rocks. The Annual Gala is a fantastic opportunity for the organisation to report on their collective achievements throughout the year. It is also a time for the Armenian-Australian community to show their appreciation of the efforts of people promoting Armenian issues in Australian Public Life. The event had an impressive turn out which included Federal Ministers, Senators, NSW Parliamentarians and Local Government Councillors, from all sides of politics. The Freedom Award, the Armenian Community Friend of the Year Award and the Ben Bagdikian Award were also presented. The Annual Gala opened with a traditional Welcome to Country, conducted by Craig Madden of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Council, followed by an address from Haig Kayserian, Executive Director. The Annual Gala raised \$170,000 to advance Armenian-Australian issues in public affairs. This is wonderful news and will provide much needed funds for the Armenian National Committees' grassroots advocacy efforts. Thank you to members of the Armenian National Committee for your continued efforts in providing awareness and advocating for our Armenian-Australian community.

KIDS ON WHEELS ALLIANCE PAKISTAN

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Monday 21 February, it was great to attend a fundraising event for the children of Pakistan, organised by the Kids on Wheels Alliance, the Pakistani Australian community and my NSW Labor colleague Shaoquett Moselmane MLC. Hosted at the Himalaya Restaurant in Granville, this fundraising dinner was used to raise vital funds and provide wheelchairs for disabled children in Pakistan. Wheelchairs that are purchased through the charity will be shared amongst three major Pakistani charities including The Edhi Foundation, Shaikat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Al Khidmat. I would like to thank members of Kids on Wheels Alliance who are doing great work reaching out and helping disabled children. Millions of disabled children worldwide cannot get access to adequate service, let alone a wheelchair. Wheelchairs are crucial in providing important health, developmental and social benefits for a disabled child and their entire family. Additionally, Kids on Wheels Alliance have expanded their efforts to provide much needed support for children living with disabilities in Nepal and Bangladesh. Thank you to both the Kids on Wheels Alliance and the Pakistani Australian community for their efforts in supporting Pakistani children in need.

PAUL SMITH

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate Paul Smith of Greenhills Beach for his years of service to the Sutherland Sharks Football Club and football generally in the Sutherland Shire. Paul recently stepped down as President of the Sharks after 17 years in the role, following on from decades of involvement with football and the club as a player, coach and administrator. He was awarded Football NSW's most prestigious award, the Charles Valentine Medal, for more than half a century of service to football in 2017 and as a school teacher was awarded the Sydney East PSSA's inaugural Service to Football Award after coaching their representative side for 30 years. Paul has been described as a 'living legend' of the Sharks club and I acknowledge his dedicated contribution to football and commitment to developing young players in the Sutherland Shire.

ABIGAIL KELLY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Surf lifesavers are a welcome sight at beaches across Australia—they are an iconic part of coastal life, the men and women who keep us safe when we go for a swim at the beach. They often get their start at Nippers, and it was my pleasure to attend the Redhead Surf Live Saving Club's Nippers presentation day on Sunday 13 March. Redhead Nippers has 300 registered members from Under 6's to Under 14's, and I was honoured to present the Nigel Grey Beach Encouragement Award to Abigail Kelly of the Under 10's. It runs in the family, too—Abigail's older sister, Lilah, was named club co-captain at the same event! Unfortunately, wild weather led to the cancellation of the last Nippers day of the 2021-2022 season—but the club had another fantastic season, and I want to wish them all the best for the 2022-2023 season, which kicks off in September. My thanks to the club for inviting to the presentation. Here's to our talented up and coming surf lifesavers!

EDIE HALL

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—When a close family friend was diagnosed with Burkitts non-Hodgkin lymphoma, 11-year-old local Edie Hall was inspired to shave her head to raise funds for the Leukaemia Foundation. She did an outstanding job raising awareness and funds, contributing more than \$15,000 in donations to the Foundation. Edie was just 10 years old at the time and for a young woman to do something as radical as shaving her head for a fundraising effort is truly inspiring. She obviously has an amazing heart and a very clever mind, and in recognition of her achievement, Edie was announced as one of only ten finalists in the "One to Watch" category in this year's NSW Women of the Year Awards. The One to Watch award recognises girls and young women aged 7-17 who demonstrate acts of courage, strength, determination and kindness, and is supported by the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People. I think we can all agree that Edie has demonstrated truly extraordinary generosity and spirit—and her nomination was very well-deserved. My congratulations to Edie on her work, and my thanks for her efforts. I expect we will see lots more from Edie as she grows.

ROSALYND O'SHANNASSY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—When Charlestown's Rosalynd O'Shannassy experienced an aneurysm seven years ago, her swift transportation from John Hunter Hospital to Royal North Shore on board a Westpac Rescue Helicopter was key to saving her life. Since her recovery, Rosalynd has shown her gratitude to the service by helping to raise funds for its operations. She creates silk flower angels to sell, which are individually time consuming and complicated to make. Each one is a labour of love. Rosalynd has chosen to take what was potentially a terrible experience for her and turn it into something positive. Westpac Rescue Helicopter has touched the lives of so many people in times of need, and it is heartening to see Rosalynd, a beneficiary of their essential assistance, giving back in this way—and that's why I was proud to nominate her for Charlestown's 2022

Local Woman of the Year. Her actions to give something back to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter shows what kind of woman she is, and that she more than deserved recognition for her efforts. Congratulations to Rosalynd!

NEWROZ

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House the Kurdish community who celebrate Newroz, the Kurdish New Year, at this time of year. This evening I will have the honour of co-hosting the Newroz celebrations here at NSW Parliament. Newroz translates as New Day and celebrates the spring equinox, and it is one of the most important festivals in Kurdish culture. Kurdish communities around the world mark the start of northern spring with traditional clothing, food, songs, dancing, fireworks and poetry. I particularly want to acknowledge the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre's co-chairs, Gulfer Olan and Roy Brian, and the co-chairs of the Federation of Democratic Kurdish Society Australia, Cigdem Aslan and Ismet Tastan, who organised the event. I consider the celebration of the diverse traditions and cultures of our community as one of the greatest privileges of representing the Balmain Electorate. I know I speak on behalf of everyone in the Balmain Electorate when I thank the Kurdish community for all they contribute to the vibrant life of our local community.

FULL STOP AUSTRALIA

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I bring the attention of the House to the Full Stop Australia organisation, which aims to put a full stop to sexual, domestic and family violence through support, education and advocacy. Full Stop engages in crucial work for the community with one of their most valuable contributions running the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline. The Helpline is an absolutely essential, frontline service that provides an around-the-clock trauma specialist counselling service for people impacted by violence and abuse, as well as their friends, colleagues and family members. Full Stop plays a critical role in supporting survivors and also encourages governments, businesses, and communities to make changes to laws, policies, and practices to better prevent and respond to sexual, domestic and family violence. The work of Full Stop Australia in this space is critical and I thank them for the invaluable work they continue to do.

FAIR DAY 2022

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown electorate, I would like to congratulate and acknowledge the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras on the 2022 Fair Day held at Victoria Park on 20 February 2022. After such a long period of being isolated and needing to stay distanced, it was so very welcome to be back together and surrounded by rainbow flags. Fair Day is always full of fun, information, education and entertainment - and this year was bigger and better than ever - putting a spotlight on LGBTQI+ communities and hosting amazing artists, musicians and acts. The fete stalls filled the park with organisations, groups and businesses who are a part of the rainbow family. At a time when there are rising transphobic, homophobic and conservative attacks on our communities it is critical that we come together - to connect and celebrate. I thank the enormous amount of volunteers who made Fair Day possible - and acknowledge the team at Mardi Gras who made the event such a success.

'EASY TIGER' EXHIBITION

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown electorate, I would like to congratulate and acknowledge artist Gabby Malpas on her 'Easy Tiger' exhibition which opened on 2 February 2021. Hosted at the Darling Square Community Bank by the ArtShine team, the opening night was a wonderful community gathering after such a long period of isolation. Gabby's works are an amazing expression of the ups and downs of the past two years of uncertainty for the Sydney community, particularly those in the Chinese and Asian communities. The exhibition celebrated Lunar New Year and showcased the sculptures, ceramics and live performance art of Gabby Malpas. As well as being an incredibly talented artist, Gabby is a Chinese adoptee who was raised in New Zealand, and who is actively involved in the adoption community. Gabby first connected with me online following the 'Stop Asian Hate' vigil in 2021. Her art recognises and amplifies the voices of marginalised communities. I thank the wonderful Gabby Malpas and all those who were involved in putting on this exhibition to showcase these gorgeous, intricate and surprising artworks.

ABOVE ALL METAL ROOFING FASCIA AND GUTTER

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I am proud to recognise Above all Metal Roofing Fascia and Gutter Company from Camden for their assistance to our community, in what was one of the worst floods Camden has seen in decades. The company cancelled all scheduled jobs to offer our community assistance in roof/drainage leaks and repair work as well as aid in evacuation or tidying up to those affected. We are blessed to have so many dedicated and selfless businesses operating in Camden who are willing to help our community in a time of need. Thank you to the Above all Metal Roofing Fascia and Gutter team for your continued support to our community.

MARY ALLEN'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—Congratulations to Mary Allen who celebrated her 100th birthday earlier this month on the 3rd of March with her son Bruce, daughter-in-law Wendy, friends and staff of Carrington Care. Mary was born in Nairn, Scotland in 1922 and migrated to Australia at five years old. Mary met her late husband Ivor Allen at a dance and soon married on June 15, 1946. Mary and Ivor had two children, their late daughter Susan and son Bruce. After living all over Australia, Mary and Ivor decided to move close to their family. After many years in Harrington Park, in 2015 Mary and Ivor moved to Carrington Care. In 2017 Ivor sadly passed away. Mary still enjoys old movies, listening to music and spending time with staff. Happy belated birthday Mary.

BLAKE WALES AND MOE HASSAN

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I acknowledge and most importantly thank the selfless acts of Blake Wales and Moe Hassan, the local duo of Camden who assisted the NSW SES crews to retrieve and rescue live stock. Stranded in the river, a herd of cattle from local Camden farms were left helpless in flood waters. The duo saw the call for help, grabbed their jet skis and assisted in safely moving 17 cows and bulls to dry land. In Camden we are blessed to have so many community minded and animal friendly people. Once again, I thank Blake and Moe on their selfless acts and their assistance to Camden.

ELLIE COLE

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy)—I would like to recognise Hornsby resident and four-time Paralympian, Ellie Cole. Ellie has competed four Olympic Games, two Commonwealth Games and many World Championships. Following the most recent Tokyo Games, Ellie Cole became the Country's most decorated Paralympian in our history. At just three years of age Ellie's right leg was amputated to treat cancerous sarcoma. She started swimming just eight weeks later as a form of rehabilitation and the rest is history. Ellie Cole's determination, dedication and hard work has made her one of Australia's greatest success stories. The 30-year-old picked up 3 medals in Beijing in 2008, 4 gold medals at the London Olympics and won medals in all six events in Rio. Ellie is an inspiration to other athletes, as well as anyone living with a disability.

PENNANT HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy)—I would like to recognise the school community of Pennant Hills Public School. On 4th March, students braved the rain to participate in their Clean Up Australia Day event. This was during the period of continuous storms. However, this did not dampened the students' enthusiasm as they donned their raincoats and braved the conditions.

Pupils from Kindergarten to Year 6 were allocated an area around the school to search for rubbish. Once collected it was sorted through for soft plastics, recyclables and general waste to dispose appropriately. Later in the month, the school was contacted about collecting food and toiletries for flood affected residents on the Hawkesbury River. Within a few days the school community had collected an enormous load of goods. These donations were squeezed into two car loads and a full trailer load, to be transported to Wisemans Ferry. These donated goods were distributed to grateful residents who were stranded in their homes because of high flood waters and landslides. The Pennant Hills Public School community should be extremely proud of their continued contribution to their local community and to those in need outside their direct community.

ST JUDE'S ROOF TOP DEDICATION

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—It was wonderful to recently join the community of St Jude's Anglican Church in Randwick for the dedication their new slate roof. It was a great opportunity to meet with Archbishop Kanisha Raffel as well as the Reverend Andrew Schmidt and discuss how the church community had stayed connected during the COVID period and how their COVID safe services are allowing community members to once again congregate. The new slate roof is a perfect fit for the historic St Jude's church and adds to the beauty of the church and its surrounds. Best wishes to the St Jude's community for the year ahead.

THE SPOT FESTIVAL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—It was wonderful to recently attend The Spot Festival in Randwick and help celebrate all the wonderful things that this hidden gem has to offer. The Spot Festival has grown to become a favourite on the Eastern Suburbs event calendar and is Randwick City Council's biggest free outdoor festival, held in March each year at the corner of St Pauls Street and Perouse Road in Randwick. It was a fantastically rich and diverse celebration of culture, food and live music and it was wonderful to see the huge community turn out to support their local, small businesses and emerging artists and performers. Events like this are so important in order to reforge the community connections that may have been impacted throughout the

lockdown periods and also to make sure we know what fantastic things our local streets have to offer. Congratulations to Mayor Dylan Parker and Randwick City Council for a very successful event.

BULLDOGS 2022 SEASON LAUNCH

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs on their Season pre-launch event. The Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs is one impressive team. The Bulldogs entered their first National Rugby League [NRL] competition all the way back in 1935, where they became the most successful club of the 1980s. As a life-long resident of the Bankstown area, I have also been a life-long supporter of the Bulldogs as was my father and my family. I have been immensely proud of the Club's achievement which include winning eight premierships with the most recent being in 2004 and even a minor premiership win in 2012. The team's determination and spirit represents that of the community of Bankstown. On Monday the 7th of March, the Bulldogs hosted their pre-launch event at Doltone House, Pyrmont, where the 2022 Seasons NRL playing squad was announced and the all the new recruits introduced. I would like to wish the Bulldogs team all the luck in this year's season and I would also like to extend a special thank you to Chairman John Khoury and Chief Executive Officer Aaron Warburton, and the Board, for their efforts in promoting the Club's great work in our community.

HUMAN APPEAL AUSTRALIA'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to acknowledge Human Appeal Australia [HAA] for their invaluable work and congratulate them on their 30th Anniversary. Human Appeal Australia is an extraordinary international humanitarian organisation which provides support in the fight against poverty and social injustices to all people. Human Appeal principally provides this support with a combination of immediate relief such as the provision of food and shelter, and the development of long term sustainable solutions, such funding new businesses. Human Appeal Australia's projects also focus on domestic issues such as their provision of University Scholarships and their HOPE (Helping Older People Engage) project, which combats the social isolation experienced by seniors as a result of COVID-19. The 30th Anniversary Gala Dinner, hosted on 6th March 2022 at Waterview Bicentennial Park, celebrated and reflected on some of the organisation's wonderful achievements. I would like to thank the Chairman, Riyadh Qasim, and the Board of Directors, Bashar Al-Jamal, Mustapha Omari, Mohamad El Hawli, Abdul Kamareddine and the presenters for this excellent and engaging event, and congratulate everybody at Human Appeal Australia on their achievements.

AUSTRALIAN CHINESE BUDDHIST SOCIETY BLESSING CEREMONY

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I was delighted to attend and speak at the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society's Lunar New Year 'The Year of the Tiger' Buddhist Blessing Ceremony on 20th February 2022 at the Friendship Arch in Cabramatta. I take this opportunity to recognise all the wonderful Buddhist organisations who participated in this terrific event; Prajna Monastery Sydney, Phuoc Hue Temple Sydney, Ding Hui Monastery Sydney, Shaolin Temple Australia and The Quan Am Thien Tinh Temple. I also acknowledge the following community organisations for their wonderful contributions; Jintao Qiaoguang Association of Australia, Australian Lao-Chinese Association Inc, Australian Teo Chew Association, Australian Chinese and Descendants Mutual Association, NSW Indo-China Chinese Association, Australian Chin Lien Chinese Association Inc., Australian Cambodian Chinese Association, Timor Chinese Association of NSW, Indo-Chinese Aged-Care Services, Australian Nan An Association Inc., Australian Phuoc Kien Due Alumni, Australian Hokkien Huay Kuan Senior Citizen Branch, World Federation of Chinese Organisation, Australian Han Zhou Association, Sydney Tridung Alumni Association, NSW Tien Hau Temple and S.H.L.K Chinese Opera Concert. I thank Chairman James Chan OAM, President Vincent Kong OAM, Vice Chairman Sen Huynh, and the board members of the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society for their kind invitation and warm hospitality.

URUNGA LIONS CLUB

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley)—I would like to congratulate the Urunga Lions Club who hosted the truck drivers of a 'Need For Feed' convoy enroute from Victoria to the flood-devastated Northern Rivers this month. The Club organised a night-time stopover for members of the convoy, who were responding to an urgent request to provide fodder for farmers who have been devastated by the flooding in Lismore and the surrounding areas. In total, 13 vehicles were parked overnight at the BP North Urunga – a space generously offered by owner Ben Flynn, who also organised facilities for the drivers to shower and freshen up. As I expect from my hometown, a warm welcome was given to the convoy as well as a hearty meal prepared by the members of the local Lions Club. Enormous thanks to President Peter Brotherton who presented a cheque to the truck drivers of \$1000 to help cover the cost of fuel. We are hearing many stories throughout our communities of Aussies helping Aussies; and this display of hospitality and generosity to long-haul drivers, who in turn are delivering vital produce, are the acts of kindness we should all venerate. Thank you to all involved.

KRISTY WILLIAMS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I recognise Kristy Williams, of Parkes. Kristy is a reporter for the Parkes Champion Post, and actively involved in her community. She's hugely passionate about the sporting culture in Parkes as a fan and a journalist, and works closely with locals involved in rugby league, rugby union, football, cricket, hockey, and AFL. Kristy believes sport isn't just about what happens on the field, but what it gives country folk in a rural environment, such as identity, positive mental health, and community interaction and engagement. A newspaper story Kristy wrote in 2021, titled 'You cannot be what you cannot see', caught attention, both near and far. The story was about Young Matildas coach Leah Blayney and Meaghan Kempson, a Parkes High School PE teacher, coach of Parkes Cobras and NSW Country junior level, and the only female coach in Western Premier League. The story explored why women are under-represented in coaching roles, despite the same qualifications and experience. As a result of Kristy's work, she was nominated for the 2021 Sport Australia Media Awards, and was subsequently awarded Highly Commended. I applaud Kristy's remarkable community spirit, and congratulate her on her exceptional journalism and her recent accolade. Well done.

SAMUEL RODWELL

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I recognise Orange-based screenwriter, director and producer, Samuel Rodwell. In 2021, Samuel produced a short film titled Inferno, about the frontline firefighters battling the 2019/20 Black Summer fires, which received international critical acclaim, screening at international film festivals, including the prestigious Cannes Film Festival in France. Inferno attracted further recognition, including nomination for Best Australian Short Documentary at Antenna Documentary Film Festival. Samuel was awarded the highly commended 2022 Young Citizen of the Year by Orange City Council, and nominated for Best Director and the Audience Choice Award for at the CinefestOZ Film Festival. In 2019, Samuel was selected for Screenworks Directing Intensive, where he was mentored by directors Kriv Stenders, Rachel Landers, and the Australian Directors' Guild CEO Kingston Anderson. Samuel was also the screenwriter recipient for Fremantle Australia and Screen NSW for Screenworks Inside of the Writers Room 2020 program. Samuel is now embarking on a new short film project, titled Pyros. The new project is inspired by the true events of juvenile arsonists' crime spree of more than 50 stolen car fires across Orange in 2019 and how the emergency services responded to the crisis. Congratulations, Samuel. I look forward to seeing your career progress.

ORANGE TONGAN COMMUNITY GROUP

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to recognise the Orange Tongan Community Group. On 15th January 2022 the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai underwater volcano erupted, generating a tsunami which left communities of Tonga without clean water and power, and many homes and food crops were completely destroyed. Members of the Orange Tongan community responded by rallying together to raise funds for their relatives and those in need back in their native Tonga. On March 13th 2022, approximately 250 people attended The Robin Hood Hotel at Orange for a relief aid event. The initiative of the Orange Tongan Community Group was to send a shipping container to Tonga, filled with donated items for the affected communities in Tonga, and to raise funds for the shipping. With the support of the Orange community and local businesses, the Orange Tongan Community Group raised over \$20,000 which will pay for the shipping and for useful items to be included in the gifted cargo. I congratulate the Orange Tongan Community Group on their initiative and fundraising efforts. I applaud the community of Orange for their support on the Orange Tongan Community Group and the people of Tonga.

OUR LADY OF VICTORIES PRIMARY SCHOOL SHORTLAND STUDENT LEADERS

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—I congratulate the newly elected leadership team of Our Lady of Victories Primary School Shortland on their appointment. Our Lady of Victories Primary School is a wonderful community. Its members pride themselves on their diverse and nurturing culture. Led by Principal Gerry Vandermaat, the outstanding staff at Our Lady of Victories Primary School work alongside the parent and student body in developing and supporting each student through their foundational years of learning. The kind hearted students at Our Lady of Victories Primary School never fail to approach every opportunity with positivity and diligence, helping uphold the wonderful culture that the school community shares. The 2022 leadership team is a group of amazing students who demonstrate the Our Lady of Victories Primary School's values. I congratulate the 2022 Student Leaders, Marley, Tahlia, Cooper, Harry, Anuncia, Caleb, Sonia, Finlay, Isla and Lily on their successful appointment. These students should be incredibly proud of this achievement. I look forward to seeing them lead their peers through this exciting year filled with new opportunities. I extend my best wishes to the new student leaders at Our Lady of Victories Primary School.

CALLAGHAN COLLEGE JESMOND SENIOR CAMPUS SCHOOL STUDENT LEADERS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—I congratulate the newly elected leadership team of Callaghan College Jesmond Senior Campus on their appointment. Callaghan College Jesmond Senior Campus is a wonderful community. Its members pride themselves on their diverse and nurturing culture. Led by Principal James Ostermann, the outstanding staff at Callaghan College Jesmond Senior Campus work alongside the parent and student body to uphold their motto "Collaborating to Empower Learners" by developing and supporting each student through their foundational years of learning. The kind hearted students at Callaghan College Jesmond Senior Campus never fail to approach every opportunity with positivity and diligence, helping uphold the wonderful culture that the school community shares. The 2022 leadership team is a group of amazing students who demonstrate the Callaghan College Jesmond Senior Campus values. I congratulate the 2022 Student Leaders, Ella, Charlotte, Sophie, Griffin, Liam and Edward on their successful appointment. These students should be incredibly proud of this achievement. I look forward to seeing them lead their peers through this exciting year filled with new opportunities. I extend my best wishes to the new student leaders at Callaghan College Jesmond Senior Campus.

2022 WALLSEND LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR - PROFESSOR FRANCES KAY-LAMBKIN

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—The 2022 Wallsend Local Woman of the Year is Professor Frances Kay-Lambkin. Frances was nominated for her 20 year research career looking at improving outcomes for people living with mental illness and their families and her role as President of the Society for Mental Health Research, Australia's peak mental health research society. Frances is also an advocate for mental health researchers and was instrumental in bringing leaders in the field together to lobby the Federal Government for a more equitable distribution of research funding to mental health. In 2019 Frances took on a leadership role at University of Newcastle, as Acting Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation). For the last two years, in addition to her other responsibilities, Frances also worked as the University's COVID lead. This involved working around the clock to ensure the safety of staff and students during a time of great uncertainty. In her spare time she also coaches netball and supports local schools. Congratulations to Frances on adding the Wallsend Local Woman of the Year to your long list of achievements. I can think of no one more deserving of this award.

GUNDAGAI LIGHT HORSE TROOP 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—Congratulations to the Gundagai Light Horse Troop who this year will be celebrating their 10th Anniversary. This is a very special milestone for the Troop who have been re-enacting historical events from the 17th century onwards, since 2012. It has been my special privilege to have been present for a number of community events where the Troop has taken centre stage, particularly at Anzac Day and Remembrance Day services. Gundagai's Troop is hugely popular, proven through its strong membership numbers which have continued to grow over the years. I've been reliably informed members range from 10 years to 74 years of age, with some hailing from as far as Victoria. The Troop is a special symbol of remembrance and commemoration of those who served our great nation, aiming to educate the community through their realistic re-enactments. Well done to the Gundagai Light Horse Troop and best wishes for all their celebratory plans this year.

YOUNG CRISIS ACCOMMODATION CENTRE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I would like to thank the incredible team of the fundraising committee at Young Crisis Accommodation Centre for their hard work on recent and upcoming fundraisers, and the work they do providing assistance to help those who are homeless or near homeless in obtaining and sustaining affordable housing. The selfless team of Kerrie Coulter, Leanne Kenny, Chris Kenny, Jane Pattinson and Natalie Schiller have been working tirelessly on fundraisers, such as a recent trivia night and an upcoming luncheon to procure enough funds to assist with their efforts to help those who are in desperate circumstances and need. The dedication of these individuals to the community by assisting in providing these services in a way which treats individuals with respect, dignity and understanding is nothing short of admirable. They are a beacon of light for those who are experiencing domestic violence, are in crisis or are down on their luck. Once again I wish to thank the team at fundraising committee at Young Crisis Accommodation Centre for all your efforts and hard work.

GRENFELL COUNTRY EDUCATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—The Grenfell Country Education Foundation has started off the year on a high, awarding a huge 26 scholarships totalling \$44,500 to support local students undertaking further study. Congratulations and best wishes to: Shannon Best, Georgia Brenner, Sophie Bucknell, Hannah Cartwright, Terri Dodaro, Rori Durham, Ayden Eyles, Ethan Eyles, Kate Hodges, Paige Hughes, Anna Hunt, Marie Knight, Sarah Knight, Caprhyse

Lawler, Isabel Pereira, Jessica Pereira, Racheal Perrott, Kate Robinson, Tom Robinson, Tara Schaefer, Aiden Skinner, Ethan Skinner, Harrison Starr, Jaxon Stock, Heather Walker and Faith White. I also take this opportunity to thank the panel, donors and Grenfell Country Education Foundation committee members for their involvement and support of this terrific initiative. These Scholarships assist in producing our Nurses, Teachers, Social Workers and Engineers of the future, many of whom I hope will return to Grenfell or other smaller communities in their future careers. Congratulations once again to all the scholarship recipients. You instil a great sense of hope, pride and inspiration for the future.

THREAD TOGETHER LISMORE SHOWGROUND

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—It was fantastic to catch up with Ross, Abby and Kat at Thread Together in North Lismore yesterday. Thread Together take brand new clothes and set up pop up shops in disaster zones to give flood affected locals a shopping experience. Everything is free. They also have their mobile shop which has been out and about in towns like Woodburn where over 100 locals came along for the shopping experience. It was so lovey to see locals come in and have an amazing shopping experience and get some really nice new clothes. There were so many designer brands from Calvin Klein, to Bonds to Sass & Bide. Stylist Kat was able to set me up with some amazing pieces to replace some of the clothes I lost in the flood. I also wish to thank CEO Anthony Chesler and Adam Hall who have been quick to act and get on the ground. I also thank Toll for their discounted transit of the newly designed clothes. They're located at the Lismore Showground and will be here for the long haul and have more stock arriving regularly. They are open 9-4. A huge thank you to the team.

LIFELINE LISMORE SHOWGROUND FLOOD RECOVERY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I wish to thank Michael Were and the incredible team of volunteers at the Lismore Showground collection centre. Lifeline at the Lismore Showground have been a go to destination for flood affected people. The Lifeline Lismore Office and the Lifeline OpShop were damaged in the floods but that has not stopped Lifeline being there for locals. In addition to their counselling services Lifeline have gone out of their way to set up a fantastic collection centre at Lismore Showground to help people in need. With the essentials everyone needs from food to clothes locals can come grab what they need at the centre. I have been there several times and have seen locals from all walks of life who have been affected by the flood coming in to get what they need and have been life savers for many during this difficult time. How relieved they were they can get what they need all in one place in an accessible and supportive environment. I thank the Showground, the Lifeline staff and volunteers for always being there for our community during these tough times.

KOORI MAIL – FLOOD RECOVERY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—The Koori Mail has done fantastic work organising a community effort for our flood recovery. For so many people's needs they have been there. They have also been strong advocates for the needs of First Nations people during the floods and the aftermath. Last year the Koori Mail celebrated their 30th anniversary as a national Indigenous paper. For 30 years they have been on the forefront of Indigenous reporting and powerfully raising Indigenous voices. When the floods hit, they sprang into action becoming a one stop shop for our recovery. Providing everything from a free grocery store, food hampers, clothes, white goods, house clean ups, accommodation, linking flood survivors with services and tradies. The Koori Mail have stepped up well beyond being a newspaper and into leading our flood recovery. It was great to visit and thank Editor Naomi Moran and all the volunteers for their incredible work and to listen to them about the way forward. It is truly an outstanding community effort and is truly grassroots. Showing the power of community leading our recovery after these devastating floods. I thank the entire team at the Koori Mail and commend them for their efforts.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 20:01 until
Wednesday 23 March 2022 at 9:30.**