



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday 17 May 2022

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 17 May 2022

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Announcements

SPEAKER'S GALLERY

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that, after due consultation, rather than making the Speaker's gallery accessible to members as part of the Chamber, from today it will be open for the public's viewing of the proceedings in the Chamber. It will now join the Cooper gallery, which has been open since last sitting week. I look forward to members of the public returning to both of those galleries.

Bills

RACING AND GAMBLING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

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

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I am delighted to acknowledge the presence of Mary and Philip Silver, who are in the Speaker's gallery. Welcome to the Parliament. I hope you enjoy your visit.

[Notices of motions given.]

Bills

MINING AND PETROLEUM LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill with amendments.

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of Legislative Council amendments.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 12 May 2022

No. 1 **OPP No. 1 [c2022-028E] [as amended by GOVT No. 1 c2022-084C]**

Page 24, Schedule 1[123], proposed section 292W(5)(a)(i). Omit the proposed subparagraph as inserted by previous amendment. Insert instead—

- (i) written advice about the payment given by the Secretary, including advice as to how the payment complies with the eligibility criteria specified under subsection (5A), and

No. 2 **OPP No. 2 [c2022-028E] [as amended by GOVT No. 2 c2022-084C]**

Page 24, Schedule 1[123], proposed section 292W(5A). Omit the proposed subsections as inserted by previous amendment. Insert instead—

- (5A) Money must not be paid from the Rejuvenation Fund under subsection (5)(a) unless it is paid in accordance with eligibility criteria issued and made publicly available by the Secretary for the purposes of this section.

No. 3 **OPP No. 4 [c2022-028E]**

Page 24, Schedule 1[123], proposed section 292X(1), line 43. Omit "may establish 1 or more advisory panels". Insert instead "must establish at least 1 advisory panel".

No. 4 **OPP No. 8 [c2022-028E]**

Page 38, Schedule 1[171], proposed Schedule 2, clause 2A(2), line 15. Insert ", being a period of at least 28 days" after "objector".

No. 5 **OPP No. 9 [c2022-028E]**

Page 38, Schedule 1[171], proposed Schedule 2, clause 2A(4), line 19. Insert ", being a period of at least 28 days" after "Secretary".

Mr GURMESH SINGH: On behalf of Mr Paul Toole: I move:

That the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

RSL NSW AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 10 May 2022.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (12:19): On behalf of the Labor Opposition, I am delighted to make a contribution to debate on the RSL NSW Amendment Bill 2022. I advise the House that the Labor Opposition does not oppose the bill. As members know, it seeks to amend the RSL NSW Act 2018 to provide that duty is not payable under the Duties Act 1997 in relation to an act, matter or thing to give effect to the incorporation under the Commonwealth Corporations Act 2001 of a sub-branch of RSL NSW as a company limited by guarantee. More specifically, the bill inserts new section 15A, which notes the application of the Duties Act 1997. New section 15A notes:

- (1) This section applies if, with the approval of RSL NSW, a sub-Branch incorporates under the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth as a company limited by guarantee.

New section 15A (2) clearly notes:

- (2) Duty is not chargeable under the *Duties Act 1997* in relation to an act, matter or thing to give effect to the incorporation, including in relation to the transfer of assets, rights or liabilities from the unincorporated sub-Branch to the incorporated sub-Branch.

New section 15A (3) notes:

- (3) In this section—

sub-Branch means a sub-Branch of RSL NSW within the meaning of the RSL NSW Constitution.

In essence, these amendments exempt sub-branches of the RSL NSW from payment of duty if they wish to incorporate and become companies limited by guarantee. This is because the incorporation process will necessarily involve the transfer of the sub-branch's real property to its replacement incorporated sub-branch. This duty exemption would allow RSL NSW sub-branches to modernise and reorganise their structures, improving the overall governance regime of RSL NSW sub-branches without having to expend cash reserves that would be better used to fulfil their charitable obligations in support of veterans and their families since World War I.

In October 2019 a new RSL constitution came into effect with major governance reforms. Those reforms allow for RSL sub-branches to modernise and become incorporated entities. These changes were adopted by RSL NSW with the determination that the enhanced regulatory and governance regime available under the Corporations Act is now more appropriate and better suited to current circumstances. A number of liability issues were raised with regard to unincorporated associations, given that it is not a separate legal entity. An unincorporated entity cannot enter into contracts in its own name, own land, employ people, or sue or be sued. The members of the unincorporated association do these things on behalf of the association and, in doing so, run significant personal risk. These amendments address that significant personal risk. RSL NSW supports these amendments and this piece of legislation. RSL NSW notes that this duty exemption would allow many RSL NSW sub-branches that own assets to restructure and improve governance without having to dig into funds that would be better used to support their veteran community.

In conclusion, I commend the RSL for its contribution and the support it has given to veterans since those returning World War I soldiers realised there were not sufficient programs and structures in place to support the families of their comrades who fell during the Great War. Since that time we have seen RSL NSW and the RSL sub-branches—but, most importantly, the members of those sub-branches—stand up and stand by their mates during times of conflict, including World War II, in Korea, Malaya, Vietnam and the Middle East campaigns of Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as in other non-combat roles and those many other peacekeeping missions to date. I take this opportunity to again acknowledge each and every man and woman who has served in our Defence Force since that time.

I note that my colleague Tania Mihailuk is in the Chamber. She is also a passionate advocate for veterans in her electorate of Bankstown. I have been there many times with her and met with that sub-branch, which is very active, like many are. She has an astute understanding of the importance of sub-branches and what they do for their veterans' communities. I thank Minister Elliott for bringing the bill to the House to implement the changes so that the process of governance that began in 2019 can continue for RSL NSW, and ensure that the new structure of governance does not prohibit, stand in the way of or add any financial difficulties for sub-branches. The bill cleans up that process so that New South Wales can continue to provide support and services to veterans and RSL members.

I also take this opportunity to acknowledge Mr Ray James, the president of RSL NSW, who was a major contributor to the establishment of the bill, as well as his son, Paul, who is in the House today. Ray and Pauline James are champions of the veteran community. They are an absolute machine—Pauline with her auxiliary work and Ray heading the peak body through some very difficult times. RSL NSW is in the safe hands of Ray James, with Pauline always by his side providing him with the support that he needs. I thank the House and commend the bill.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)
(12:26): I am pleased to speak in support of the RSL NSW Amendment Bill 2022. The amendment is welcomed, particularly by RSL NSW, and will be of great benefit to RSL sub-branches across the State. It will allow sub-branches to incorporate as companies limited by guarantee and will help reduce sub-branch costs and administrative duties. It will also simplify and strengthen sub-branch governance. The amendment addresses many of the issues highlighted in the Bergin inquiry. The report found that RSL NSW had been deficient in meeting its core governance and compliance obligations and that it had breached the statutory regime in place for the protection of funds raised from the public. As a result, the New South Wales Government worked with RSL NSW to amend the Returned and Services League of Australia (New South Wales Branch) Incorporation Act 1935 to help enable transparent and best practice corporate governance.

The amended RSL NSW Act commenced on 31 December 2018. As noted by other members, as part of the reforms, RSL NSW determined that its sub-branches, which are unincorporated associations established by the issue of a charter by RSL NSW, may benefit from being reconstituted as companies limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act 2001. Despite the encouragement and the new constitution, many sub-branches are dissuaded from incorporating because of the potential for them to have to pay stamp duty in relation to the transfer of property from trustees to the incorporated entity. Currently, under the Duties Act 1997, real estate owned by sub-branches constitutes dutiable property. Therefore, despite there being no change of owner or beneficiary, the conveyance of this real property attracts duty that the incorporated sub-branch would have to pay.

The cost of transfer duty, which is applied on a sliding scale depending on the value of the property, is a real impediment to sub-branches incorporating. As the Minister noted, that duty would significantly deplete the cash reserves of sub-branches, which in turn would affect the charitable operations and the other related activities and operations that are so important to our local communities, which I will touch on later. Incorporation will provide a way to help ensure that their good work continues and volunteer hours are overseen by less burdensome governance. Incorporation would see sub-branches becoming corporate bodies able to hold property and enter into contracts and other obligations in their own corporate name. In contrast, under the trust regime, trustees are individually responsible for the administration of sub-branches and can be held personally liable for any debts or obligations under contracts.

When the trustees change, they must transfer land, assets and liabilities from the ongoing directors to the new and continuing directors, an expensive and time-consuming process. The current trust regime places an administrative and regulatory burden on sub-branches, and makes it harder to fulfil their charitable remit. This, coupled with an aging and declining membership in New South Wales, especially in rural areas, makes sub-branches unsustainable, which is an incredible loss to any community. I acknowledge the Minister's and the Government's response to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. The New South Wales Government submission notes in detail the increased involvement and presence of ex-service organisations like RSL NSW at Australian Defence Force bases and throughout the transition process to better mentor and support a service man or woman returning to civilian life. This amendment, whilst not directly enabling this support, will enable RSL sub-branches to better target their programs towards supporting our men and women transitioning from the Australian Defence Force and connecting them with other necessary supports in their area.

It would be remiss of me not to take this opportunity to sing the praises of my local RSL sub-branch, the incredible Miranda RSL Sub-Branch. The sub-branch was started by ex-servicemen in Miranda and received a charter from the Returned and Services League of Australia New South Wales Branch on 24 October 1935. The sub-branch celebrated its eightieth anniversary in 2015, and it has one of the largest memberships in the southern metropolitan district. Over time, the sub-branch gradually acquired land and property and it sold its holdings to

the Club Limited in October 1999. Despite the club's sale, many of its traditions still remain in place, including a nightly reciting of the ode; the keeping of the eternal flame, which holds pride of place at the entrance to the Diggers club; and the maintenance of the Remembrance Walkway, which contains over 30 framed pictures from the Australian War Memorial that hold pride of place outside the sub-branch offices.

The club has maintained the original club's legacy of supporting community organisations and sponsoring several sub-clubs. The Miranda RSL Sub-Branch is still housed in the Diggers Miranda club. From its base on the third floor, the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch has focused on providing services to its members. These include visits to members in hospital, nursing homes and those confined to their own homes, and the maintaining of official historic military books and videos to borrow, which are available for members as well as local school students who are researching military history. The sub-branch tries to hold a minimum of four significant social events for members each year, although, like for so many other community groups, this has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, the sub-branch is maintaining strong relationships with our local schools, which are often on hand to reciprocate the support at the annual dawn service. The sub-branch donates its books at school presentation nights, sponsors Miranda RSL awards for presentation evenings and hosts the Year 10 Schools Modern History Symposium, where students hear from speakers who were actively involved in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and other conflicts. These works are in addition to its Anzac Day dawn service. As I have acknowledged in this place previously, I was proud to join the members of the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch at their dawn service this year, which was attended by thousands of members of the wider community despite the ever-present chance of rain.

That is just a short summary of the work of my local sub-branch, and I commend the members of the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch Committee past and present for their remarkable and continued contribution to our community. I make particular mention of the club's current executive committee consisting of president Arie Havenaar, vice-president and welfare officer Alan Lark, secretary and treasurer Brian Senior and committee members Brian Fletcher and John Goodger—all pillars of our community.

Several subsidiary clubs are also supported by the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch and volunteers. At one end of the spectrum is the Miranda RSL Youth Club, which was started in 1962 and currently has around 200 members. Committed to keeping young people under the age of 25 fit and healthy, the Miranda RSL Youth Club provides a range of physical activities for young people, including karate, trampoline and tumbling, and caters for all ages and abilities under the supervision of qualified instructors. The Miranda RSL Youth Club is ably led by president John Boes, secretary Amanda Donaldson, treasurer Bill Lewis, chief instructor Louise Brown, head trampoline coach Robert Bill, head karate coaches Robert Bull and Brian Cox and committee members including the effervescent Ann Corey-Hewitt, Anthony Bull, Paul Caruana and Vicki Feriazzo. I thank the committee members for their tireless work and wish them all the very best as they continue this incredibly important service to Miranda and the wider Sutherland shire community.

At the other end of the spectrum, we have the Captain Cook Day Club. The first of its kind in New South Wales, the club was founded in 1977 as a joint venture between the RSL New South Wales Branch and the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The club meets each Wednesday at 10 o'clock at the Diggers Miranda RSL, providing social and activity opportunities for older people who are mostly still living at home but are unable to attend more active programs in their local community. None of the Captain Cook Day Club's good work would be possible without its amazing committee, consisting of Lesley Neil, Lorraine Rowan, Ginger Stansfield, Kerry Maher and Alan Lark. That is the work of one of over 340 extraordinary sub-branches doing incredible work throughout our State. Change is not always easy—and I appreciate that, particularly amongst an older demographic—but the bill is much needed to help the sub-branches modernise their governance and achieve an enduring structure to continue incredible work for years to come. I acknowledge the work of the Minister for Veterans for bringing this important legislation to this place. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (12:35): It gives me great pleasure to contribute to debate on the very worthwhile RSL NSW Amendment Bill 2022. As our shadow Minister for Veterans, Greg Warren, noted in his contribution, Labor will be supporting the bill. The bill seeks:

... to amend the *RSL NSW Act 2018* to provide that duty is not payable under the *Duties Act 1997* in relation to an act, matter or thing to give effect to the incorporation, under the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth, of a sub-Branch of RSL NSW as a company limited by guarantee.

In essence, the amendment bill will exempt the RSL NSW sub-branches from the payment of duty if they wish to incorporate and become companies limited by guarantee. That duty exemption will allow RSL NSW sub-branches to modernise and reorganise their structure, improving the overall governance regime of the RSL NSW sub-branches without having to expend cash reserves that would be better used to fulfil their charitable obligations in support of veterans and their families. I commend the Minister for Veterans, Mr David Elliot, and the shadow

Minister for Veterans, Mr Greg Warren, on working closely and in a bipartisan manner to support the RSL NSW sub-branches and acknowledge the many sub-branches across the State.

It does not surprise me that a number of MPs have contributed to debate on the bill to acknowledge the efforts of their local sub-branches. As the member for Bankstown, I take the opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful sub-branches in my community. I work closely with the Bankstown RSL Sub-Branch and acknowledge its impeccable work in supporting veterans in the local community. Only recently one of the longest-serving members of the sub-branch, Albert Collins, passed away at the age of 105. The Minister for Veterans attended the funeral. Mr Collins was supported for many years by the sub-branch. It ensured that there was always someone supporting him at home, celebrating his birthdays and taking him to hospital visits. It demonstrates the work that is often done behind the scenes to support our veterans.

I also acknowledge another wonderful sub-branch in my community, the Bass Hill RSL Sub-Branch. The secretary of that branch, Gary Roser, wrote to me about the bill and asked that we support it. He and other members of the Bass Hill RSL Sub-Branch worked tirelessly for many years to support their veterans. The sub-branch also supports many local schools and provides them with an opportunity to see the many memorial services the sub-branch undertakes. It ensures that schools are given presentation opportunities and that the members of the sub-branch attend the presentations and provide various awards. One particular initiative is the Kokoda Memorial Track Walkway, where each year the sub-branch pays for a student from a local public school to participate.

The next school to participate will be Villawood East Public School. The Bass Hill RSL Sub-Branch will ensure that at least one student from Villawood East Public School will have the amazing opportunity to visit the Kokoda Track as part of that program. I acknowledge the important charitable work done by sub-branches in support of their communities. The Kokoda Track initiative gives an opportunity to school students that they otherwise would not have. Even more important is the support that sub-branches provide to veterans and their families. That is why sub-branches should not be forced to pay a duty. Sub-branches donate money to fund RSL NSW partner charities RSL LifeCare and RSL DefenceCare and other charities offering veteran support services, such as Legacy and The Salvation Army.

Again, I acknowledge and thank the sub-branches for the work they do. I thank the Minister and the shadow Minister for their work to ensure that the bill will pass—no doubt, comfortably—in this House today. It is important that we support our sub-branches. They play an enormous role in supporting our veterans and their families, and in ensuring that the legacy of those people who fought for this country and its freedom are not forgotten in our schools and within the broader community. I think that is the most pivotal role that RSL sub-branches play, and I am grateful that this Parliament is able to provide them some support through the changes that will be brought about by the bill.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:40): As mentioned in the Minister's second reading speech on the RSL NSW Amendment Bill 2022, on 31 January 2018 the Hon. Patricia Bergin, SC, reported to the Government on an inquiry held under the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991, which investigated RSL NSW fundraising activities following allegations of financial misconduct. I am a former fundraiser. I understand how important that fundraising Act is, and I know how much those who operate under it want to stay within its parameters, because those involved in fundraising are all about doing great things for our community and making a difference. Sometimes things go wrong—but RSL NSW wanted to work with the New South Wales Government to ensure that RSL NSW is transparent and has the appropriate governance. As a result of the Bergin report, the New South Wales Government worked with RSL NSW to amend the Returned and Services League of Australia (New South Wales Branch) Incorporation Act 1935, helping to ensure that RSL NSW has transparent governance.

The amended RSL NSW Act commenced on 31 December 2018. The amendments strengthened RSL NSW's corporate governance and accountability and made RSL NSW subject to additional reporting requirements, including tabling an annual report in Parliament. RSL NSW initiated a tremendous period of transformation to ensure that its ways of working reflected modern society's expectations of a charity. As part of the reforms, RSL NSW determined that its sub-branches, which are unincorporated associations established by the issue of a charter by RSL NSW, might benefit from being reconstituted as companies limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act 2001. As described by other members, the reforms included a new constitution, which was adopted at the December 2019 State congress. That constitution included new checks and balances designed to ensure transparency and accountability at all levels of RSL NSW, as well as a clause to enable sub-branches to incorporate.

Despite encouragement—and the enabling clause in the new constitution—many sub-branches are dissuaded from incorporating because of the potential for them to have to pay stamp duty on the transfer of property from trustees to the incorporated entity. Currently, under the Duties Act 1997, real estate owned by sub-branches constitutes dutiable property. Therefore, despite there being no change of owner or beneficiary, the conveyance of that real property attracts stamp duty, which the incorporated sub-branch would have to pay. For

example, if the proposed amendment was not in place the transfer of a \$1 million property would incur duty of \$40,305, the transfer of a \$5 million property would incur duty of \$259,875 and the transfer of a \$15 million property would incur duty of over \$800,000. That duty would significantly deplete the cash reserves of sub-branches, which in turn would affect their charitable organisations and other related activities and operations.

I had a chat about this with the member for South Coast, Shelley Hancock. We talked about how the loss of income would be sorely felt by her local sub-branches and that it could impact on their important work. The recent Anzac Day commemorations are a testament to this important work. Thousands of people lined the streets of Wollongong and Nowra to honour those taking part in the Anzac Day marches. As well as running a busy and important commemorative calendar of events, sub-branches on the South Coast and across all our electorates are providing much-needed services to veterans and their families. As an example, the new RSL LifeCare led Nowra Veteran Wellbeing Centre is key to this. It is delivering veteran-centric and community driven support services.

The centre will link more than 7,000 local veterans and their families in the Shoalhaven and neighbouring local government areas—as well as personnel from the nearby HMAS *Albatross* and HMAS *Creswell*—to health, education and employment services. The centre is operating at a time of increased need, with the pressures of the recent COVID-19 restrictions, participation by the veteran community in the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and the impacts felt as a result of the withdrawal from the conflict in Afghanistan this year. Many of the same impacts are occurring in my community with our defence population, which is predominantly in the Holsworthy area. Under the current trustee regime that is in place for sub-branches, an administrative and regulatory burden is placed on sub-branches that makes it harder for them to fulfil their charitable remit.

Additionally, all trustees are at risk of being held personally liable for any debts or obligations under contracts. When trustees change they must transfer land, assets and liabilities from the outgoing directors to the new and continuing directors. This is an expensive and time-consuming process. In contrast, incorporation would see the sub-branch becoming a corporate body, able to hold property and enter into contracts, and able to undertake other obligations in its own corporate name. I know that this is an important issue for local sub-branches. A clear way to resolve this would be an amendment to the RSL Act 2018. Incorporation under the Corporations Act 2001 will preserve the current relationship under the RSL NSW constitution between the State office and the sub-branches as one organisation, while enabling improved governance.

This amendment will enable sub-branches to use savings from the incorporation process for charitable purposes, including providing localised supports for our men and women transitioning from the Australian Defence Force. I thank the board at the Liverpool RSL for all they do supporting veterans and defence families in our local area. It is an honour to attend the dawn service and the remembrance services that the Liverpool RSL puts on each year. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend this year, but I know that it puts on a great service with the Liverpool City Council. During COVID it put on a few services virtually to ensure that local residents were still able to attend and commemorate during lockdown. That was really important.

I attended a dawn service put on by our local community as well. A former member of our defence force puts on a great display of uniforms throughout the decades. It was lovely to be able to continue to commemorate in that way. I thank RSL clubs and sub-branches across the State for their service, for all they have done to provide for local communities and to keep them safe and secure, and for the support they provide to veterans who have returned from war.

I also make special mention of a fabulous lady, Ms Marcia McInerney, who is this year's Heathcote Local Woman of the Year. I was so pleased that the member for Heathcote, Lee Evans, chose Marcia as the Local Woman of the Year. I have known her for a very long time. Marcia and her husband, Brian, are heavily involved in the Engadine RSL sub-Branch. They are always out there selling Legacy badges at Bunnings and everywhere else they possibly can, volunteering their time to make a difference. It is people like Marcia and Brian—and many other members of RSL sub-branches across New South Wales—who provide integral support to our veterans and their families. They play an important role in ensuring commemorative services take place.

As I said, defence and veterans play an integral role in my local community. I have such a strong connection to the Holsworthy Barracks. It is why this amendment is so important. It will ensure complete transparency and openness within sub-branches of the RSL and ensure that they can continue their fine work looking after the people that look after us. I highlight that RSL NSW has been consulted on the amending bill, which it supports. The bill will clearly have a positive impact from the point of view of both governance and reducing red tape for the RSL and its sub-branches. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (12:49): I support the RSL NSW Amendment Bill 2022 and note that it is an important bill for the RSL sub-branches. As other members have said, the RSL has been through a challenging period over the past few years. The opportunity to remove onerous stamp duty obligations from sub-branches that move into an incorporated structure is important to ensure that they can continue their

enormously good work in the community, such as raising funds to support the mental and physical health of veterans in our communities and running commemorative services. They include those that we have had in the past few weeks for Anzac Day and those that commemorate other theatres of war, like Remembrance Day. It is really important. I put on record my thanks and the thanks of my very grateful community to the local RSL sub-branches, including East Maitland and Maitland, which are located in my electorate. The Maitland RSL Sub-Branch comprises president Fred Goode, OAM, JP; vice-president and secretary Graham Solomons, JP; and treasurer Henry Meskauskas.

Recently I visited Maitland with shadow Minister for Veterans Greg Warren, who came to meet with the branch specifically. That sub-branch has been working on a project to rehabilitate the Maitland cenotaph and the surrounding Memorial Park at Maitland Park, which is a magnificent feature and plays an integral role in our city's commemoration of Anzac Day, Remembrance Day and other events that salute our servicemen and servicewomen from the Vietnam War, the Boer War and Borneo—so many theatres of war are commemorated in that park. A large memorial upgrade project worth \$146,000 had been staged and about \$40,000 or \$50,000 was made available for urgent work health and safety repairs. Sadly, that was not funded under the Federal Government's Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grants Program, which is a shame because thousands of people turn up to that park on all of those days of remembrance. We will keep trying to get that funding because it is really important as we come to the anniversary of the Memorial Park and the cenotaph. It must be safe for members of the public to gather.

The Maitland RSL Sub-Branch has done an amazing job of keeping that memorial together with the help of Maitland City Council. It is important to support it at every level. That exemplifies the importance of the bill, which helps to keep property in the hands of RSL sub-branches. They no longer have to pay stamp duty if they transfer the ownership into an incorporated entity, which will enable RSL sub-branches to modernise and reorganise their structures; improve the overall governance regime of the RSL, which is vital; and help sub-branches fulfil their charitable commitment to helping and supporting our veterans. I give a shout-out to East Maitland RSL Sub-Branch. The other morning I went to one of its fortnightly coffee meetings. The sub-branch has provided an enormous amount of counselling through its rooms. It has made a lot of upgrades to its branch, including some under the State Government's Community Building Partnership grants, which I have been very happy to support.

Again, through State funding we have also been able to support its memorial upgrades because there were some building expansion problems in Maitland with the extreme heat and cold—it plays havoc with some of those memorials. I pay tribute to East Maitland Sub-Branch president Anthony Mulquiney, and secretary and treasurer Neil Cromarty, OAM, for doing an amazing job in managing the facility. The veteran centre has been quite good. I note the Federal member for Paterson, who is the Federal assistant shadow Minister for Defence, made an announcement a couple of weeks ago when the Federal shadow Minister for Defence was in her electorate. The Hunter region has one of the largest number of veterans and Maitland is in the middle of Williamstown and Singleton where a lot of people who have served live, and it is really important that Federal Labor has committed funding to that \$5 million veterans services centre.

Veterans served our nation with distinction and honour, and we owe them an enormous debt. The bill goes some way to supporting them but more can always be done. It would be great for the Federal Government to step up and support the Maitland memorial before its 100th anniversary in 2023 so that the sub-branch has the funds to do the work to continue to hold services safely for the public and also so that due respect is shown to our veterans. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (12:55): I speak in support of the RSL NSW Amendment Bill 2022. I acknowledge the outstanding and important work that many of the RSL sub-branches around the State do, in particular the ones on the northern beaches. The Northern Beaches District Council of RSL sub-Branches is a very proud group, whether it is the Harbord RSL sub-Branch led by Mr Sean Routh, who has been a very strong and powerful voice for veterans in the northern beaches community for many years or the Balgowlah-Seaforth-Clontarf RSL sub-Branch, which has done equally outstanding work. I recall its support very early on for the Invictus Games when it came to Sydney and I thank its members for that.

It is important to acknowledge the great work being done by the New South Wales Office for Veterans Affairs, led by Caroline Mackaness and Craig "Dallas" Delaney and their team. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans I thoroughly enjoyed working with them and handing down the Veterans Strategy, which was the first of its kind in New South Wales. The heart and importance of that work really goes to the impact and changes that will be delivered through the bill.

The object of the bill is to amend the RSL NSW Act 2018 so that duty is not payable under the Duties Act 1997 in relation to an act, matter or thing to give effect to the incorporation, under the Corporations Act 2001 of the Commonwealth, of a sub-branch of RSL NSW as a company limited by guarantee. That is to say, the

Government has undertaken significant reform in conjunction and partnership with RSL NSW to improve its corporate governance structures and allow it to achieve the fundamental aims of the RSL movement, which are to support veterans wherever they might be across New South Wales. A central function of that is providing more freedom and ability for local RSL sub-branches to determine how they will go about supporting veterans in their communities.

People in my community such as John Platt; Geoff McKay; Chris Ballantyne; Sean Rout; Jackie Costello; Michael Nipperess; Peter Watson; Matt Stevens; Sandy Howard; Pam Hansen; Arthur Ball; Bob Lund and the team at Balgowlah RSL sub-Branch; the great team at Harbord Diggers and Harbord RSL sub-Branch; Grant Tucker; and others who work as part of my Australia Remembers committee to commemorate important military and wartime events, people, stories and histories across the northern beaches, do work that is an example of providing the freedom that RSL sub-branches and the groups they work with on a daily basis need to better support our veterans.

Importantly, the work that is also done by RSL sub-branches has taken on a new dimension, with a younger cohort of veterans needing support and welfare as a result of the conclusion of both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The profound impact that the return of Taliban control to Afghanistan had on a number of veterans who served there has been consequential and it has been very difficult for them to deal with, for good reason. People would rightly raise the issue of what was it all for, as many of the veterans that I have spoken to have, in particular my brother-in-law who served two tours in Afghanistan. It is understandable why that concern would be raised. Ultimately his view, which is shared by many others, is that it created space and time for those communities, and in particular young women in Afghanistan, to have an opportunity to live a normal life, to learn and to appreciate what a life of freedom could look like.

Whilst perfunctory, the object of the bill is a very important one. It will provide a great deal of freedom and opportunity for local sub-branches to support veterans in their communities and allow them to make sure that the money that they raise and have control of goes to veterans and their welfare in our communities, no matter where they are in New South Wales. I commend the NSW Office for Veterans Affairs and in particular the Minister, who is in the House, for supporting and pushing through the bill. It is important work. It will allow veterans to live a fulfilled life after their service to our country. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Transport, and Minister for Veterans)
(13:00): In reply: I thank members for their contribution to the debate on the bill and for their support, including the member for Miranda, the member for Bankstown, the member for Holsworthy, the member for Maitland and the member for Manly. I also acknowledge the shadow Minister for Veterans, and member for Campbelltown, not only for his support but also his contribution to the veterans of this State. I noted in the second reading speech the amendment will greatly assist sub-branches to incorporate. That will enable them to modernise their governing structures and also use the resources saved through the incorporation process to support local communities—whether they are commemorative events or supporting the welfare of our men and women transitioning from the Australian Defence Force.

I thank RSL NSW President Ray James, OAM, JP, and NSW RSL for the great work they do in supporting our veterans and local communities. I also thank the executive of the RSL, which has done a magnificent job since the Bergin review. They consulted widely with sub-branches about the bill. The shadow Minister and I were very conscious of any concerns that sub-branches may have had—veterans and soldiers, being who they are, get very suspicious about government; I reassured them that there was nothing suspicious about this reform.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge that in the past month veterans in this State have seen the significant reinstatement of commemorations, given that for the past two years they have missed Anzac Day commemorations because of COVID restrictions and the cancellation of gatherings. With insurance and obligations to communities, and in providing the support that veterans need when they attend, given the age of many of our veterans, particularly the dwindling number of World War II veterans, the costs of holding these commemorations are increasing. I know I speak for all members who support the bill in saying, and it is my desire, that 100 per cent of the money saved through the incorporation and the setting aside of those costs should go to supporting our veterans. We need to ensure that the next generation of contemporary veterans, who we talk about so much but are so challenged, get the support they need, and they will be the beneficiaries of these savings.

I draw on recent experiences in the past week where the Minister for Multiculturalism and I joined leading members of the Greek community. Indeed, members of the Opposition—such as the member for Rockdale, Steve Kamper, and the Leader of the Opposition—attended to commemorate the eighty-first anniversary of the Battle of Crete and the entire Greek campaign. The exact date of the anniversary is tomorrow. Our thoughts and good wishes are with all those veterans of the Greek campaign and the Battle of Crete who will tomorrow reflect on what was a very traumatic time, particularly for the Second Australian Imperial Force as they attempted, alongside

their Anzac brothers from New Zealand and the British Army, to repel the Nazi attack on the peace-loving people of Greece and Crete.

So many of those stories are becoming legend, particularly the legend of Captain Reg Saunders, who I am on the record as saying we must acknowledge at a higher level in this State, given that he was the first Indigenous Australian to be commissioned in the Australian Army. He escaped the Nazis in Crete 81 years ago and had a stellar career in the military over the course of the conflict in the Pacific Theatre. After the war he returned to the Australian Army and served in Korea. If anybody wants to read about a legend or wants to know about the true blue Aussie digger who has gone above and beyond the call of duty, they would only have to read a story about Captain Reg Saunders, who I am very much committed to honouring in my capacity as the Minister for Veterans. I will be making announcements about that in due course.

This legislation is of course a result of the wonderful work by a public servant named Caroline Mackaness, who is the Director of the Office of Veterans Affairs. I also acknowledge those in my ministerial office who worked with the Office of Veterans Affairs and with the shadow Minister for Veterans to ensure that the RSL's intent in having this legislation amended is fulfilled. The Bergin inquiry, which was the genesis of these reforms, was a dark day in the history of the RSL. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge that the current Treasurer but then fair trading Minister and I were faced with some very challenging decisions when the previous executive of the RSL was called into question about their management practices. I think what we saw from Justice Patricia Bergin was a very fair response to a very difficult and sensitive matter when it came to the management of finances within the veterans community. This bill will bring to fruition the intent from the recommendations that came out of the Bergin inquiry.

This year has seen veterans matters being first and foremost and front of mind in the veterans communities right across the State and their families because of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. It would also be remiss of me to conclude my contribution without acknowledging the fact that the royal commission is also a dark time for the veterans community, as our contemporary veterans come to grips with the support they need and an increasing number of veterans who are suiciding. The New South Wales Coalition Government has a lot to boast about when it comes to veterans support. Over the past four or five years the Government has introduced the Veterans Employment Program, which has been a resounding success.

The initial target was to have 200 veterans employed in the New South Wales public sector. I can now boast that the figures are now in the thousands. Not only is the Government committed to that; the Premier wants to supercharge it. He does not believe we should be restricted by targets when it comes to finding employment for our veterans. They have proven to be wonderful assets to the public sector in New South Wales. During my time as the corrections Minister, I recall seeing on the parade ground at the Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy the graduates who would be joining Corrective Services NSW. It was not uncommon for me to see up to 10 per cent of the new corrections officers wearing the Australian Defence Medal with its red and white ribbon that proved they served in the Australian Defence Force for a defined period.

I know, from the time that I spent in charge of that portfolio, that Corrective Services NSW is grateful to receive applications from discharging members of the Australian Defence Force. They have excellent skills to work as prison officers, whether it be their ability to understand command and control or their ability to handle firearms, which was something that I was closely associated with at one time within the Corrections portfolio. They also have the ability to continue their careers as reservists, with Corrective Services NSW being a preferred employer of reservists, thanks to the generous leave entitlements that it gives for training and exercises.

When I was the police Minister, it was common for me to inspect the parade ground at the academy in Goulburn, where I would meet men and women who had multiple decorations from their military service. I recall at one graduation I came across a young constable who had finished his time at the academy. Looking at the left of his chest, I noted that he had served overseas in a number of theatres. I asked him where he had served to get the Active Australian Service Medal, and he said that he had been serving on operations in Afghanistan just 12 months beforehand. I then asked him where he was being posted in his first deployment with the NSW Police Force. He said, "I'm going to Kings Cross." I made the point that he probably would have been better off staying in his previous profession than being a constable at Kings Cross! But I assure members that commanders across New South Wales are grateful when they see new constables turn up on the Monday after their graduation ceremonies with ribbons that prove they have proudly served their country with the Defence Force in some of the most difficult and traumatic theatres of modern conflict.

I expect that more than 100 sub-branches will make significant savings because of this bill. As I said in my second reading speech, this Parliament expects that money will go to veterans' welfare. We do not want to see this money sitting in bank accounts. The intent of this Parliament is for the savings that sub-branches make as a result of this bill to go to veterans' welfare and the support that they desperately need. Finally, I acknowledge the 200,000 veterans who have made a contribution across the State. I also acknowledge the members of this House

who have served in the Australian army. As we pass this bill, we look upon the plaque that commemorates two of our peers who served and made the ultimate sacrifice in Gallipoli. With a great deal of pride, I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

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

Members

MEMBER FOR GOSFORD

MEMBER FOR TERRIGAL

The SPEAKER: I wish the member for Gosford and my senior electorate officer, Kohrig Boulghourjian, happy birthday for today. I also wish a happy birthday to the member for Terrigal, who celebrated his fiftieth birthday yesterday.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery the guests of the member for East Hills: the school captains and vice-captains from East Hills Boys High School, Sir Joseph Banks High School and Picnic Point High School. I welcome you all and hope you enjoy your time in the Parliament.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that a media representative has been authorised to take still photographs on a pool basis from the side door of the Chamber this afternoon.

Rulings

POINTS OF ORDER

The SPEAKER (14:16): I refer to the point of order made by the member for Heffron last Thursday 12 May regarding the use of the words "and any threats to its delivery" at the end of a question. I stand by my preliminary comments and ruling made at that time that it would be allowed. I also stand by my previous rulings made in 2019 that questions that contain additional words such as "related matters" and "are there any alternative policies" are open ended and invite Ministers to pass comment or debate a matter, which is contrary to Standing Order 130. Finally, I note the House has recently agreed to reforms to question time, which is a matter I have promoted throughout my time as Speaker. I consider that further improvements could be made, including to the rules surrounding questions, which the Standing Orders and Procedures Committee might consider in due course.

Members

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: On behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet: I inform the House that the Deputy Premier will answer questions today in the absence of the Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing.

Question Time

The SPEAKER: Last Thursday during question time members' conduct got out of hand. I put all members on notice that today I will be tougher.

DRUG CRIME

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:18): My question is directed to the Attorney General. In the 18 months it took the Attorney General to enact legislation allowing the drug supply prohibition order pilot scheme, there were 13 killings on Sydney's streets.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 128 (2) (a), which allows statements of fact only if they are strictly necessary to render questions intelligible and can be authenticated. It is quite clear that the Leader of the Opposition is not asking a question. He is making statements, which the standing orders do not permit.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough from the Leader of the House. I believe some questions asked last week during question time were out of order. At this stage, I am happy to hear further from the Leader of the Opposition. However, I remind him not to make a statement but to link it quickly to a question.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I am allowed to introduce a piece of information.

The SPEAKER: I have given the Leader of the Opposition the opportunity to continue.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Shall I speak to the point of order or ask the question?

The SPEAKER: I have ruled on the point of order. I have allowed the Leader of the Opposition to continue asking the question.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: In the 18 months it took the Attorney General to enact legislation allowing the drug supply prohibition order pilot scheme, there were 13 killings on Sydney's streets. Will he please tell the House the reason for that significant delay?

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (14:20): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question on an important matter of policy. We all know what a scourge drug addiction and drug crime is in our communities. It affects the communities of every member in every electorate across New South Wales. We know there are many ways to tackle that scourge, including rehabilitation of drug offenders through appropriate medical and psychological treatment, and police and law enforcement intervention to get to the root of supply. So we tackle it by dealing with demand for drugs, dealing with tapping the underlying causes—the family backgrounds that drug users may have and their medical and psychological problems—but also making sure that we have appropriate law enforcement powers to deal with it.

That is why over four years the Government is increasing the number of police on the beat by 1,500. It is why we have engaged in a number of serious law reforms during our term—including, for example, introducing the offence of drug supply causing death—and it is why we promised at the 2019 election to introduce drug supply prohibition orders. The pilot scheme will be rolled out in four police districts in New South Wales. The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research will measure whether giving police enhanced powers to search convicted serious drug offenders works to reduce drug use and crime in those areas. It is not simply a matter of waving a magic wand, passing a law and telling police to go out and do those things. We must train the judiciary and train police in operational areas. That takes time, which is why there has been a time period between the legislation being debated in this House, on the one hand, and enabling magistrates and law enforcement officers to implement it, on the other hand.

It is an important piece of legislation and an important pilot scheme. I will be interested to see whether it results in the reduction of drug crime in the electorate of Dubbo, which is one of the pilot areas. We hope it will be successful. We hope that police interrupting the operations of convicted serious drug suppliers will have that effect. But time will tell. That is why the scheme is a two-year pilot and is not being rolled out right across the State. We will see whether the scheme has that effect. The time lag is because we have to operationalise the scheme, and make sure that police and magistrates are fully across it before it comes into operation.

STATE ECONOMY

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (14:23): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the strong economic management of the Liberal-Nationals Coalition is securing a brighter future for New South Wales families?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:23): Yes, certainly I can do that. As the member for Vaucluse knows, for over a decade the Liberals and The Nationals have managed the finances of this State incredibly well. We have taken on the difficult reforms, which, as the member for Vaucluse knows, were opposed by Labor every step of the way.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Macquarie Fields to order for the first time. I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The asset recycling approach driven by this State, unlocking capital, investing in infrastructure, tax cuts to grow the economy—those opposite cancelled them.

Mr Ryan Park: Tax cuts? We are still the highest-taxing State in the country.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member for Keira opposed every one of our tax cuts, including reducing taxes on every small business right across our State.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: He thought it was a good idea leading into the next election. At least he was honest about it, but the voters did not agree with taxing every business, taxing farmers in the middle of a drought and taxing home owners. No wonder those opposite could not find a shadow Treasurer in this House. The former shadow Treasurer runs on a policy of introducing 10 new taxes in this State going into an election. Members opposite opposed asset recycling, which has delivered a record pipeline of 154—

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. We are in the highest taxing State while this guy is the Premier. No-one is taxed more than the people of New South Wales under his leadership.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Touched a nerve.

Mr Ryan Park: Tax and toll!

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Someone is a little bit sensitive about their performance during the last election campaign.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wollondilly will remain silent.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: There have been \$9 billion in tax cuts in this State, with every single one of the past five budgets cutting taxes and growing the economy. What those opposite have not worked out is that increases revenue into this State to deliver essential services right across New South Wales. They opposed asset recycling and the poles and wires transaction. What did that do? That has ensured \$150 billion in schools, hospitals, public transport and roads since 2011, and \$110 billion over the next four years. That is the Liberals' and Nationals' way. [*Extension of time*]

Never has a government in our State's history built more than the Liberals and Nationals. I was out with the Minister for Transport at a metro—we were somewhere in the city, underground—and, gee, it looks good. The students in the gallery were probably not even born when Labor promised a north-west metro, but Government members came in and delivered it. Now that metro is continuing right across the city and into western Sydney as well, really transforming the infrastructure agenda in our State. The Government is working closely with the Federal Government on the Northern Road. Our relationship with the Federal Government is delivering record infrastructure. I was out at the second airport recently with the Minister for Roads and the infrastructure Minister, Paul Fletcher. We see that second airport coming to life with the M12, another 80-20 funding arrangement with the Federal Government that will transform western Sydney for the future.

I spoke about WestConnex—a \$16.8 billion investment that would not have happened but for the Liberals and The Nationals and our asset recycling program here in our State, opposed every step of the way by Labor members. They have the gall to talk about the sale of WestConnex when they opposed the construction of it in the first place. But once again it unlocked \$5 billion, which we are investing directly back into western Sydney—the biggest health building program in our State's history, 110 health projects worth \$10.8 billion; education, \$7.9 billion. One cannot drive even a kilometre in this city or State without passing a major infrastructure project—schools, hospitals, public transport—and we know it would never have happened without the Liberals and The Nationals.

ORGANISED CRIME

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (14:29): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. Are the public reports accurate that the Minister's chief of staff tried three times to get the Premier to take warnings about organised crime seriously, yet was rebuffed or ignored each time?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Transport, and Minister for Veterans) (14:29): I thank the member for Heffron for his question and for his interest in law and order policy, because we are still cleaning up from the 16 years of Labor that left us here in this state. I must say that nobody on this side of the Chamber will rest until we have cleaned this city up. We are still cleaning up after Eddie Obeid. We are still cleaning up after Phuong Ngo. We are still cleaning up after Ian Macdonald—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I have a long list.

Mr Alister Henskens: Didn't you represent Phuong Ngo?

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr Ron Hoenig: He was acquitted when I did, too.

The SPEAKER: The point of order is dismissed. If the member for Heffron is going to stand up and make comments—

Mr Ron Hoenig: The Minister asked me a question.

The SPEAKER: The member for Heffron will resume his seat. The Minister has the call. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the second time.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: We are still cleaning up after the Aldi bags. We are still cleaning up after—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: The Minister was asked a specific question. Under Standing Order 129, he is required to be directly relevant to the question he was asked, not just spray about the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: I ask that the Minister now come to the question directly.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I am actually quite chuffed that the Labor Party would invite me up to talk about law and order. I am not surprised that the Leader of the Opposition asked the member for Heffron to do his dirty work, because I have a whole three minutes on Jamie Clements that really—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Oh, come on!

The SPEAKER: I will hear a little further. The Minister may continue but will come to the question directly, as I asked him to.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I will not be turning. Labor Party members in this city have destroyed the reputation of the left wing of politics. They have mimicked Tammany Hall. They have mimicked all the evils of corruption that we saw under the—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister has not been even remotely relevant in 2½ minutes in answer to a specific question.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Minister to come directly to the question about the warnings from his chief of staff in relation to crime risks.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I am very proud of every member of this Government, both parliamentarians and staffers, because we are committed to making sure that this State has the toughest anti-drug laws. Nothing pleases me more than today's announcement.

Ms Jo Haylen: Yes, but you can't get any of them to listen to you, can you, David—on rail negotiations or on organised crime? Why don't they listen to you?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Nothing pleases me more than today's announcement. The member for Summer Hill is looking very dull today. She is not very happy about the fact that the right wing of the ALP have had to endorse this policy. [*Time expired.*]

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

ORGANISED CRIME

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (14:32): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on what the Government is doing to combat gang crime in western Sydney?

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Wollongong to order for the first time. I call the member for The Entrance to order for the first time. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the third time. I call the member for Auburn to order for the first time.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:33): I thank the member for East Hills for her question, and I acknowledge the boys and girls in the public gallery who have come from the electorate of the member for East Hills today. That is how one asks a question in this place about something that is important here in the State. On this side of the House, we continue to support our hardworking police, who are out there every day working on our streets—including those in western Sydney. They are on the ground every day and night, and they are out there working to keep our community safe. Sadly, they have been forced into action on too many occasions over the past number of months. But this Government will continue to act and to support them in the work they do to keep our community safe. Yesterday we launched Task Force Erebus to bring together the resources of the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission and also the NSW Crime Commission. That saw an additional 60 police officers coming in to deal with this particular crime.

This is on top of the announcement last week that saw an additional 30 officers as part of our Raptor Squad. That is going from 115 to 145 officers. Our police can also now issue drug supply prohibition orders against a person who has been convicted of a serious drug offence to search their house, their car, their plane or their boat, or to search them even if they are walking on our streets. These new police powers are another way of supporting our police and giving them the ability to disrupt these organised criminal networks. These criminal networks attack our communities. The powers that we have given our police are attacking the business models that these criminals are operating right now.

I inform the House that just a few hours ago I joined the police commissioner at a press conference. We were able to announce that, with Task Force Erebus being announced yesterday, this morning there were seven arrests: six men and one woman. The seven arrests have occurred in the Illawarra, on the South Coast and in the north-west of Sydney. Those people have links to bikie gangs—that is, disruptive criminal activities through bikie gangs—the Comancheros, the Rebels and the Bandidos. Two of the people on the South Coast were charged. One was the sergeant-at-arms of the South Coast chapter of the Comancheros.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: They also had two kilograms of MDA and up to a kilogram of cocaine, which were seized.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Our police are continuing to work on our streets. [*Extension of time*]

In Schofields a member of the Bandidos was also arrested by Raptor Squad officers, who have been assisted by the Tactical Operations Unit. Three other men have been arrested as part of the operation in south-west Sydney. I assure the House that this Government will continue to work and support our police across the State. The message is pretty simple: If you are remotely associated with criminal networks, whether you are an associate or a member of those gangs, rest assured that our police will continue to be in your face and will continue to ensure that you are locked up behind bars, where you deserve to be.

I wish I could say the same for those opposite, because yesterday the shadow police Minister was on radio and said, "You know who is doing it. You know who they are. You know the families involved. Just make the arrests." This is what the shadow Minister for Police actually said. But then he said, "Oh, if it was in the north of the State, there would be more action." That is rubbish. That is an attack on our police, who are out there working in every corner of the State and who are working whether it is east, west, north or south.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Our police are out there working to bring these criminal networks and gangs to order, but the shadow Minister is out there having a shot at our police. When I spoke to our police officers, they were offended by his comments, because they see them as a direct attack on them. I also point out that our drug supply prohibition orders are supporting our police. This morning the police were saying that they were pleased when the orders came into practice yesterday. They have already made applications. But I say this: I wonder whether the member for Summer Hill—as has already been said—actually supports our drug prohibition orders?

Ms Jo Haylen: I voted for it.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: She said they were narrow and a punitive approach. Again, she is not standing up for our police in this State.

ORGANISED CRIME

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:38): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported on 13 May that he said, in relation to warnings by senior NSW Police Force about the rise in organised crime, that if the public knew—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: The member for Londonderry is a serial offender with regard to Standing Order 128 (2) (a). She makes long statements that are completely unnecessary and in breach of the standing order. She is not making statements that are necessary to render a question intelligible.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will resume their seats. I am listening to the point of order.

Mr Ryan Park: What is the point of order?

Mr Alister Henskens: It is under Standing Order 128 (2) (a).

The SPEAKER: The member for Ku-ring-gai has made that clear.

Mr Alister Henskens: The statements are not necessary to understand the question. The member for Londonderry often makes long statements before even getting to a question and they are usually irrelevant. She should ask the question. That is what the standing order says.

Mr Greg Warren: To the point of order: It is perfectly appropriate for a fact to be drawn to the attention of a Minister in the lead-up to a question. It is in line with the standing orders. There is nothing in the standing orders that prohibits it. I suggest to you, Mr Speaker, that the Leader of the House is simply trying to disrupt question time and divert attention from the actual question.

The SPEAKER: I have heard both contributions to the point of order. I make my position clear. Standing Order 128 says:

- (2) Questions should not contain –
 - (a) statements of facts or names of persons unless they are strictly necessary to render the question intelligible and can be authenticated;

I have made it clear that I am happy to hear a brief preamble to a question when it is necessary to create a context. I have also ruled on a number of occasions that questions have gone beyond that and contained unnecessary detail, or became statements that were not necessary to render the question intelligible. I have asked members on both sides of the House for copies of questions at the beginning—not before; I respect those confidentiality—of question time. In the absence of having received those questions and mindful that the member for Londonderry has been a repeat offender in transgressing that standing order, I rule on this occasion that she either provides me with a copy of the question or redrafts her question to make it more direct.

Ms PRUE CAR: I will provide you with a copy of the question, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I will allow the question as it is drafted.

Ms PRUE CAR: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will start from the top. My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported on 13 May that he said, in relation to warnings by senior NSW Police Force about the rise in organised crime, that if the public knew:

That would freak everybody out. They would shoot us because we are not looking after the public interest.

Did the Minister pass on those warnings to the Premier?

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government) (14:43): I thank the member for Londonderry for her question. I have five points to make in response to the question—

[*Opposition members interjected.*]

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: —if Opposition members want to listen to them. The first is, as the Premier and Minister for Police announced recently, the NSW Police Force has established Task Force Erebus to coordinate efforts to arrest those behind several recent gang shootings in western Sydney. Secondly, the NSW Crime Commission is currently investigating links between organised crime, money laundering and licensed premises and we look forward to the outcome of that inquiry. Thirdly, it was under this Government's watch that the inquiry into the Crown casino was established and held by Patricia Bergin. That then set off a number of royal commissions in Victoria and Western Australia that resulted in an uncovering of massive problems with organised

crime and money laundering. Fourthly, it was under this Government's watch that the inquiry into the Star casino by Adam Bell, SC, was established. That inquiry has already revealed entrenched problems around organised crime and money laundering. In summary, our Government has a strong track record of combatting organised crime, and we on this side will continue to do so and focus on that, hence the recent announcement of Task Force Erebus.

Ms Prue Car: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The answer has been completed.

TRADE UNIONS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:45): My question is addressed to the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy. Will the Treasurer update the House on the potential impact of trade union activity upon the New South Wales economy and who is supportive of such activity?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:45): I thank the member for Holsworthy for her outstanding question and for her concern about the Chris Minns-sanctioned campaign to lock up \$3 billion worth of trains that are costing New South Wales taxpayers \$30 million a month. That is right: A Chris Minns-sanctioned campaign to mothball nearly \$3 billion worth of rolling stock, sitting out there in sheds, is costing the people of New South Wales \$30 million a month, to deprive the travelling public of the most modern, comfortable, state-of-the-art and safe trains in New South Wales—that is right: safe trains, as determined by the National Rail Safety Regulator.

What is worse, not only is the Leader of the Opposition, on instructions from his union bosses, depriving the public of these trains and costing taxpayers \$30 million a month; he wants us to spend almost \$1 billion to downgrade the safety of the trains. The Leader of the Opposition—working with his boss, Alex Claassens—wants us to remove CCTV cameras from these trains. The Leader of the Opposition, in conjunction with his mate Alex Claassens, wants us to remove sensor technologies from the doors. The Leader of the Opposition, in conjunction with his mates in the Rail, Tram and Bus Union—the people who helped put him into the job—want to upgrade the platforms—

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

Mr MATT KEAN: —as a result of this industrial campaign. The Leader of the Opposition is waging industrial war on the families of New South Wales, costing taxpayers millions of dollars to mothball trains and billions of dollars to downgrade safety. This is what the year of the strike looks like—the only policy that we have seen from the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition belled the cat. It was the great work of that great investigative journalist, someone who should win a Walkley, James O'Doherty from *The Daily Telegraph*, which today revealed that the unions will have hell to pay on the people of New South Wales. They have said that the people of New South Wales will experience industrial action of a size and scale never seen before. That is what the Leader of the Opposition endorses by his silence. He has said more about patting pooches than he has about the industrial warfare that he is waging on the people of New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

The Leader of the Opposition cynically wants to downgrade the safety of these trains, rip out CCTV cameras and remove sensor technology. Next he will want to bring back the red rattlers. That is his strategy for the people of New South Wales: the red rattler. He wants to reinstate the typing pool. He is a modern man! "We don't need Netflix. We need Blockbuster Video." That is the Leader of the Opposition. He hates progress. He hates policy. All he wants to do is whatever his union bosses tell him. We on this side of the House want the people of the Central Coast and the Illawarra to experience the best trains. We want them to travel to work in style and in the most comfortable way.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Coogee to order for the first time.

Mr MATT KEAN: Most importantly, we on this side of the House want to ensure that the travelling public gets access to the safest trains. The best people to determine the safest trains are with the regulator who looks after these things, the National Rail Safety Regulator. As I said, what have we heard about the year of the strike? What is the Leader of the Opposition's position on the unions' year of the strike? Silence. What is the Leader of the Opposition's view on the unions' having hell to pay on the people of New South Wales? Silence. What is the Leader of the Opposition's view on the unions waging industrial war of a size and scale never seen before? Absolute silence. He is too busy patting pooches while Alex Claassens pats him and tickles his tummy down at Trades Hall. That's right: The Leader of the Opposition wants to be Peter Malinauskas. Well, he can't even be Peter Primrose. He has no policies, no plans and no ideas.

WESTINVEST FUND

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (14:50): My question is addressed to the Minister for Western Sydney. The WestInvest program has been designed to fund transformational infrastructure projects in western Sydney. Why has the City of Canada Bay Council, part of the inner west electorate of Drummoyne, been excluded when its direct neighbours in Burwood, Strathfield and Parramatta councils are all eligible to apply for the grant funding? Why is my community missing out on a share of \$5 billion in infrastructure grants?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:51): I thank the member for Drummoyne for his question. I am sure that there are lots of members in this Chamber who would love for their communities to be able to access the WestInvest Fund. There is no doubt that the communities of Drummoyne and those in the Inner West Council area, which is not included in the WestInvest program, would like to access those funds. However, when you run the economy in a strong way, you can provide additional funding. I can think of a number of times when the community of the Canada Bay area has received funding, such as that for the work we have done along Parramatta Road, off the back of WestConnex.

Unfortunately, what we have to do is draw lines on maps and make funds available to certain locations. What we have done with this fund is make a decision around the 15 local government areas that are receiving funds through WestInvest. Those funds are not available to every local government area across New South Wales; it is only made available to those 15. Lines on maps mean some adjoining local government areas have access to those funds but others do not. I know that members of the community across the inner west would love to access that \$5 billion. We will continue to work with that community. I know other Ministers—

Mr John Sidoti: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question was: "Why has the City of Canada Bay missed out?"

The SPEAKER: The Minister is reminded of the direct question.

Mr STUART AYRES: And I am saying we made the decision to allocate to those 15 local government areas that we considered to be impacted across western Sydney. We have not included the inner west in that definition. That means that local government area does not have access to those funds. Like I said, I have no doubt that people in regional New South Wales, northern Sydney or southern parts of Sydney would love to access those funds. The Government is doing other things to allow those communities to access support. But we have made a conscious decision around where the WestInvest funds should be allocated. We have been very open and transparent about where those local government areas are. There will be lots of other opportunities for the residents of Canada Bay to access support from the New South Wales Government.

ECONVEYANCING

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (14:54): My question is addressed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government is working with the Commonwealth to enhance digital transformation in our State?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government) (14:54): I thank the member for Wollondilly for his question because it is a topical question given what is happening on the Federal scene, with both the Federal Government and the Opposition having a play in relation to home ownership with different policy proposals. When you think about home ownership, in order to get into home ownership, you have to transact. You have to buy and sell a property, and mortgage properties. You would be pleased to know, particularly the students in the gallery, that 10 years ago or 20 years ago, when I was a paralegal—

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

Mr Michael Daley: Or 30 years ago.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Or 30 years ago. The member for Maroubra is right. About 30 years ago when I was a paralegal—and many of the lawyers in this room would know this—you would have to go in to a place like the Law Society with a cheque and the certificates of title, and a whole lot of people would just swap papers around in order to buy a property or mortgage a property. But the New South Wales Government has led the way not just nationally but also internationally with eConveyancing. We started that journey in 2013. That means you now do not need all that paperwork and all of those people gathering around the table swapping bits of paper in order to get into the property market. You can do it through eConveyancing.

It has been a long road because it is such complex reform. But it shows again that the Coalition Government is prepared to do the heavy lifting for future-focused work. Some of the benefits of eConveyancing are as follows.

eConveyancing is nearly 400 times more beneficial for industry than the previous paper-based system. There is more than \$300 million worth of benefit per annum across the country, and for every transaction there is a saving of 3.7 hours. The recent Electronic Conveyancing (Adoption of National Law) Amendment Bill 2022—or ECNL bill, which is the eConveyancing bill—was the last piece of the jigsaw. It required the operator to interoperate. That means they had to make sure there was competition in the marketplace.

So important is competition that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] said in its submission dated 11 March 2022 that it strongly supports interoperability in the electronic conveyancing market. Interoperability will facilitate competition, which will foster innovation and provide improved services, whilst—and I emphasise—placing downward pressure on prices. As such, the ACCC welcomes the introduction of the ECNL bill as a critical milestone in the electronic conveyancing market reform process. That bill was supported not only by the ACCC but also by the Australian Banking Association, the Law Council of Australia, the Law Society of New South Wales and many others.

The SPEAKER: The Minister's time has expired.

BUS SERVICES

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (14:58): My question is directed to the Premier. The inquiry into bus privatisation found that 75 per cent of residents are dissatisfied with their bus services since privatisation and 82 per cent are now more likely to drive. Since privatisation, bus journeys take twice as long and are less reliable. Why has the Premier reduced services, cancelled routes, removed stops and restructured routes to make essential transport and bus services less accessible?

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 128 (2) (a)—a long statement not necessary to render the question intelligible. It is a clear flouting of the standing order. Those opposite continue to do it and the question ought to be ruled out.

The SPEAKER: I will rule the question out of order on the basis that, while the first part of the question referenced an authority, the second part clearly expressed an opinion in terms of bus journeys taking twice as long. I do not believe there is an authority for that. I am going to take the next question. I ask the member for Coogee to redraft her question.

JOBS GROWTH AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (14:59): My question is addressed to the Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology. Given this week is National Careers Week, will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government is working with the Commonwealth to invest in fee-free training and help people get the skills they need for the jobs they want?

The SPEAKER: The Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I will hear the point of order before the Minister commences.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 128 (2). It is clearly a question that is offering an opinion and it is also way too long. Based on your previous ruling against the member for Coogee, Mr Speaker, I ask you to consider the decisions that are being made and the precedents being set. Clearly the Leader of the House is doing everything he can to disrupt proceedings.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough from the member for Campbelltown. The question is in order. I will hear from the Minister. I call the member for Newcastle to order for the first time.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (15:00): I thank the member for Camden for his strong interest in skills and training—and, of course, it is very appropriate given that it is National Careers Week. This is an important opportunity to highlight what the New South Wales Government is doing to help secure a brighter future so that young people, or not-so-young people, can get a first job, a new job or a better job. In November we launched Careers NSW. Careers NSW is a whole-of-life, one-stop shop for everyone in our State to help people unlock their potential by empowering them to make informed decisions about their career path.

I am pleased to report that the local government areas of the member for Camden and the member for East Hills and those of the young students in the gallery have been responding in droves to Careers NSW, to get information about how they can get a new job, a first job or a better job. It was great to see so many of those opposite—who are so loud today—at National Careers Week investigating what their possibilities will be after next March, when they will be working somewhere other than in this place.

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

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: It was great to be in Liverpool yesterday with the Premier and the member for Holsworthy at the site of the new Liverpool Hospital, where we met some of the young people who are benefiting from New South Wales' fee-free training boom. We announced that there are over 200,000 enrolments in JobTrainer across the State, close to 60 per cent of whom are women. This is a great program, jointly funded by the New South Wales and Federal governments. When we invest in infrastructure, we create jobs. Those infrastructure projects require skilled workers and our Government is funding a suite of fee-free training programs to help people get the skills they need for the jobs they want.

I tell you what, it is not a great career move to ever stab your boss in the back. You do not need professional help to know that. Speaking of Liverpool, it is interesting when we think of what happened to the member for Liverpool, the member for Blue Mountains and the member for Swansea when their boss got stabbed in the back. It is not a great career move, not a great way—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr Ron Hoenig: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister is no longer anywhere near relevant to the question that was asked of him. He was relevant for most of it.

The SPEAKER: The Minister's time has expired.

BUS SERVICES

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:03): My question is directed to the Premier. The inquiry into bus privatisation found that 75 per cent of residents are dissatisfied with their bus services since privatisation and 82 per cent are now more likely to drive. Why has the Premier reduced services, cancelled routes, removed stops and restructured routes to make essential transport and bus services less accessible?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:04): I appreciate the question from the member for Coogee. She knows all too well how good the light rail is. It is fantastic. It is great. The member for Coogee knows all too well how good that footy stadium is going to be—from which you will all be banned from attending.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Are you going to go? Will you be sipping champagne in the corporate suites?

Mr Michael Daley: Sit down.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: There is plenty of room for you, Michael. There is plenty of room.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, relevance. I would like to tell the Premier that the light rail just hit someone.

The SPEAKER: That is enough. The member for Coogee will resume her seat.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Once again, it has just hit someone and it is out of service again, because your—

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Coogee to order for the second time. That is not the way to take a point of order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The police are banning you for life—banned for life.

Mr Michael Daley: Ban me from the light rail too, while you are at it.

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: When it comes to public transport—and buses—let us ask about customer satisfaction. Let us ask the customers; there is a 93 per cent satisfaction rate. That is the second highest result in history. Our commuters love it. They have never loved public transport more than under the Liberals and Nationals. Overall customer satisfaction has increased by—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Do you look outside of the city?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am just asking the people. Overall customer satisfaction has increased by 14 per cent. There has been a 17 per cent increase in buses turning up on time. Students love getting the bus to school—don't you? Yes, the students in the gallery are nodding. We got a few nods. They are nervous, but they agree.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat.

Mr Ron Hoenig: The Premier should direct his comments through the Chair. I ask that the Speaker intervene to stop the Premier baiting members of the Opposition, because then they are being put on calls to order.

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am not baiting anyone—I am talking to the students.

Mr Ron Hoenig: The Premier should direct his remarks through the Chair and not interact with members across the Chamber.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Premier will direct his remarks through the Chair.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I mean, there is high energy, low energy and Ron energy—the mayor of Mascot Towers over there. Anyway, let us go back to journey times. Satisfaction with journey times has improved by 14 per cent. So when it comes—

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question is actually about buses—can he even say the word once?

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being relevant to the question.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: He is talking about light rail; he is not talking about buses.

The SPEAKER: The question was about transport. There is no point of order. The Premier will continue.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: It was not. It was about buses.

The SPEAKER: The Premier was specifically asked about transport being less accessible. I listened to the question—even though I did not have a copy of the question in front of me. The question referred to transport being less accessible.

FLOOD RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (15:07): My question is addressed to the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and the Minister for Flood Recovery. Will the Minister update the House on the rollout of the individual and business support measures available to flood-impacted communities after the February-March floods?

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (15:07): I thank the member for Tweed for his question and the opportunity to update the House on this important part of the ongoing recovery. I acknowledge up-front that there is still a long way to go, but the situation is improving as Service NSW, Revenue NSW, Resilience NSW and the Rural Assistance Authority work seven days a week to get applications processed. We have more than 220 assessors working right now and the current average processing time for an application is three days. More than 95 per cent of applications being processed by Service NSW have either been approved, deemed ineligible, determined fraudulent or require further supporting information from the applicant.

In relation to storm and flood business grants—which are also open to the not-for-profit sector—16,000 grant applications have been received, of which more than 3,000 have been approved, more than 8,000 have been deemed ineligible, Service NSW is waiting on more than 3,600 customers to come back with additional information, 616 have been deemed fraudulent, and Service NSW has 150 left to process. To help get money out the door, the Government cut the red tape that was preventing sole traders from accessing this support. Across the disaster-affected local government areas, 10,500 Back Home Grant applications have been received. More than 2,500 of those applications have been approved, 1,700 have been deemed ineligible, Service NSW is waiting for further information from 4,800 applicants, 794 applications have been deemed fraudulent and 737 are still to be processed.

With respect to the Flood Recovery Rental Support payment, more than 10,000 applications have been received, of which more than 1,400 have been approved, 6,500 have been deemed ineligible, Service NSW is waiting on supporting information to be provided by more than 1,000 applicants, more than 300 applications are awaiting processing and 700 have been deemed fraudulent. The Disaster Relief Grant is helping people on low incomes to replace their household contents, and repair and rebuild their flood damaged homes. We have received nearly 2,000 applications for the grant—almost half of those are pending, awaiting further supporting information from the applicants. Unfortunately, we are continuing to see high numbers of potentially fraudulent applications. A total of 2,159 applications are suspected to be fraudulent, worth \$24 million. It saddens me that our

flood-affected communities have had the processing of their applications impacted by this. I note that the grants are just one aspect of the New South Wales Government's recovery efforts. To date the Government has committed a total of \$1.6 billion to rebuild the road network, replace social housing, rebuild Aboriginal housing, reconstruct community infrastructure, rehabilitate riverbanks and repair flood levees.

ROADS FUNDING

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (15:10): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Does the Deputy Premier agree with the Federal member for Mackellar, Mr Jason Falinski, who said, "It is a double standard that people living in metro areas have to pay for roads, whereas people in rural and regional areas don't"?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (15:11): What I agree with is the Government's announcement that I made on Sunday about the Great Western Highway. I know that the member for Blue Mountains would be welcoming that announcement as well. Here we are talking about the Great Western Highway—in 2019 we went to the election with a promise that this Government would duplicate a 34-kilometre section of the road from Lithgow to Katoomba. Why should the people of the Blue Mountains and the Central West not have a safe, reliable road that they can travel on? Investments have been made by this Government to upgrade roads like the Pacific Highway, Princes Highway, Newell Highway, Cobb Highway and Silver City Highway. Why should we not be investing in the Great Western Highway?

The Government has already said, as part of the announcement on Sunday, that last year it undertook further work in relation to how those two tunnels would look. We said a 4.5-kilometre tunnel would go under Mount Victoria and a 4.5-kilometre tunnel would go under Blackheath. We asked Transport to go away and have a look at whether or not—

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Deputy Premier was asked if he agrees with the statement made by the Federal member for Mackellar.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. The Deputy Premier will speak more directly to the precise nature of the question.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: We also announced on Sunday that it is a toll-free road—that was always said. But I ask the question: Is that the policy of the Federal member for Macquarie, Susan Templeman, or is it Labor's policy that they now want to have a toll on the Great Western Highway? To me, it sounds like that is Federal Labor's policy if they are going to invest in this particular road. So what we have found out today from the member for Macquarie Fields is that the Australian Labor Party and the member for Macquarie Fields are going to put a toll on the Great Western Highway. This Government has always said that the Great Western Highway was going to be toll-free. This Government has always said that the Great Western Highway is an important connection to the Central West. There is going to be an 11-kilometre tunnel—Australia's longest road tunnel. The Liberal-Nationals have a track record of investing in big projects across this State. This Government can build roads, hospitals, schools, and we know how to build tunnels. We will continue to build projects across this State that make a difference to the lives of the people in our communities. I say, with that announcement—

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I notice that the member for Blue Mountains is very quiet on this matter. Where is she? She is not even in the room.

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

GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (15:14): My question is addressed to the Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales and Australian governments are securing a brighter future for families through the Government's infrastructure program?

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (15:14): I thank the member for Mulgoa for her question and her interest in matters of infrastructure. The member for Mulgoa has been an irrepressible, indefatigable advocate for better infrastructure in her community and inoculating her community against the attacks of those opposite. A good example is the commitment that has just been achieved through the recent Federal budget of \$232.5 million towards the upgrade of Mulgoa Road from Glenmore Parkway all the way to Penrith and beyond.

It also gives me a great opportunity to continue where the Deputy Premier left off because it is an excellent example of State-Federal cooperation on the upgrade of the Great Western Highway. That is a free road, not a toll road like those opposite seem to want. Part of the leverage that enables our investment in that road that will increase important connections between the city and the regions is that the Federal Government is committing more than \$2 billion towards that project. Since 2013 about \$48.5 billion has been committed by the Federal Government into co-investments in infrastructure projects that have unlocked productivity and better environment, social and economic values for the people of New South Wales. Wherever we go across this State we will see examples of where the State and Federal governments have worked collaboratively to build better infrastructure across New South Wales.

This morning I was with the member for Vaucluse, the member for Wentworth, and the Federal Minister for Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon. Paul Fletcher, to see the completion of a small but very significant piece of infrastructure, the Bondi Junction Cycleway, which is an \$18 million matched investment. What was a missing link now enables direct transport between the eastern suburbs and the CBD, making it less congested for motorists, safer for pedestrians and enabling more people to get on their bike if that is what they choose to do. We are about providing choices and there are 48.5 million reasons why that partnership is delivering for the people of New South Wales.

This Saturday those opposite have a wonderful opportunity to vote for a Liberal-Nationals Government in Canberra and they will have another great opportunity in March next year to ensure that collaboration continues so we can get on with building a brighter future for people right across New South Wales. Whether it be WestConnex, the Sydney Metro West, or Western Sydney Airport we are focused on building the infrastructure that our community needs and deserves.

LIGHT RAIL AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:17): My question is directed to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's statement a moment ago, "How good is the light rail?"

Mr Dominic Perrottet: Great.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: This is incredibly serious.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: I will start from the beginning. I refer to the Premier's statement a moment ago, "How good is the light rail?" At 12.45 p.m. today a pedestrian was hit by the light rail. Why did the Premier replace the buses that people love with a light rail that has serious safety problems?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:18): That is a ridiculous question. I start by saying obviously I have not heard of that incident and my thoughts go out to the person involved. To raise that and connect it to the success of our public transport investment in the State is incredibly low. It is base politics—

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat. What is the point of order?

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being relevant to the question.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: There have been ongoing safety issues with the light rail since it was constructed.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member for Coogee is trying to score political points over somebody who has suffered an injury from an accident. She is seriously attempting to connect me saying how great the public transport network is and how great the light rail is with that accident. Her advisers in the corner have come up with a grubby tactic to play politics about somebody who has been injured in an accident that no-one is aware of. It is absolutely disgraceful.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I will hear the point of order. The Premier will please resume his seat.

[*Interruption*]

The Premier will please resume his seat.

[*Interruption*]

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

Mr Ron Hoenig: The Premier was asked a specific question and he is imputing improper motives on the member for Coogee, who asked a question about—

The SPEAKER: Order! I will allow the Premier to continue in the circumstances.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Given the seriousness of the question and the disgraceful nature in which it has been asked, I advise that NSW Ambulance Inspector Mick Corlis has thanked passers-by who helped the man after the collision. He said, "The members of the public who rushed to his aid should be applauded. It is great to see people looking out for each other in such difficult moments." That is the great thing about the people of our State who do that day in and day out. It is important to maintain vigilance when near any tramline or road, especially at busy times of the day.

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will please resume his seat.

Mr Chris Minns: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Safety concerns have been an issue with the light rail since it was conceived.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will please stop.

Mr Chris Minns: For the Premier to dismiss answering the question in a callous and arrogant way is disgraceful.

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

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Alister Henskens: The repetitive points of order are in breach of Standing Order 131 (9). The Premier was being directly relevant to the question. There was spurious, vexatious and repetitive interference with his answer.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. I have ruled that there is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition has been called to order. The Premier has 13 seconds to complete his answer, if he wishes to do so.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I do. Obviously, when incidents occur on the network the New South Wales Government takes them very seriously. What we saw just then was absolutely disgraceful, base politics and it shows Labor has not learnt anything.

REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (15:22): My question is directed to the Premier. As per our discussions, will the Government allocate funding for the installation of a PET-CT scanner at the Orange Health Service in this year's budget?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:22): I thank the member for Orange for his question and, unlike those opposite, the strong and constructive way that he advocates for his electorate. Obviously I will not pre-empt the budget process in Parliament, but as the member would know, understand and appreciate, in the electorate of Orange the Liberal-Nationals have invested record amounts over time. One thing he knows about the Liberal-Nationals is what we say, we deliver, whether it is Orange Base Hospital, the ongoing upgrades and maintenance, which I know the member is supportive of; the Canowindra HealthOne facility; the government hub in Orange, where public servants provide support in his community; the sports complex with a capacity of 8,500 visitors, which the member loves; or the Parkes Special Activation Precinct, which will make a real difference and drive investment in regional New South Wales. We specifically chose Parkes as a key area in the State. Through the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade there is significant interest in relation to that development. There are also upgrades at Bletchington Public School.

I say to the member for Orange that we are looking at that issue. He has raised it with me constructively, as he has always done. My door is always open to the member for Orange to raise issues. We are working through the budget process now concerning the competing interests right across the State, whether that is in public transport, infrastructure investment, or schools and hospitals. Right across the board, we are balancing all those issues with the fiscal position of our State, particularly in circumstances where we have invested \$46 billion—as the member will know—to keep people safe and in work, and keep businesses open during the pandemic. We will announce all elements of the budget in due course.

The SPEAKER: I remind members that under the new sessional order questions 7 and 15 both go to members of the crossbench. There is no discretion there, which is why I am keeping the order as I did today.

HOUSING SUPPLY

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (15:24): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes. Will the Minister update the House on what the Government is doing to increase housing supply across the State?

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes) (15:25): I thank the member for Monaro for her question. Historically, it has been a bit of a lottery getting a question from the member for Monaro. In the past, I could have been up here tap dancing around a newly announced nuclear arms policy that The Nationals have come up with. When I thank the member, I really do thank her for the question because this Government is passionate about housing supply and affordability. In fact, the Government has been working actively and collaboratively with the member for Monaro, her local council and her community to deliver new housing in Cooma. The Government's plans to unlock Crown land in Cooma mean more people have access to new housing, with the fast-tracked delivery of 140 new homes, which will ease housing pressures for the community while delivering jobs and boosting the local economy.

Increasing the supply of housing is part of every plan and strategy to address the challenges of making homes more affordable and ensuring that house prices are within reach of those who aspire to buy their own homes. But we need to acknowledge that there is no silver bullet. The housing market is complex and impacted by factors, including interest rates, bank lending policies, supply chain challenges, immigration settings, tax structure and income growth. A key lever for the New South Wales Government in enabling housing supply is the supply of homes themselves. The Government is focused on boosting the number of homes available across New South Wales by creating a healthy pipeline of new homes through rezoning and supporting infrastructure and open space, supporting housing projects through the planning assessment process and putting the right infrastructure in place at the right time to support new homes.

The Government is slashing planning assessment times, has incentivised councils to spend money on infrastructure and public spaces, and is streamlining planning approvals. Under the former Labor Government, Sydney experienced an extended period of high population growth combined with a lack of new housing supply. Unlike Labor, this Government is working hard to unlock the housing supply pipeline so that more homes can be built for the people of New South Wales. Assessments for State significant projects are now 28 days below the target this year and 157 days below this year's targets for planning proposals. The NSW Public Spaces Legacy Program saw assessment time frames for councils reduced by 30 per cent in those local government areas. Last month the department approved a total of almost 7,000 dwellings and lots, and around 22,500 lots were rezoned, including in the Parramatta CBD, which builds on its reputation as one of the best places to live and work in Sydney.

Dr Geoff Lee: The best place.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: It is well led by the member for Parramatta. For this financial year, the Government is on track to deliver almost 93,000 development approvals for lots and dwellings, and over 36,000 total rezoning lots. This Liberal-Nationals Government is working hard to increase housing supply and affordability right across this great State because it believes everyone deserves a safe place to call home.

Documents

INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 16 of the Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2012, I announce receipt of reports of the Inspector of Custodial Services entitled:

- (1) *Inspection of Emu Plains Correctional Centre*, dated May 2020.
- (2) *Inspection of Lithgow Correctional Centre*, dated May 2020.

I order that the reports be printed.

SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 28 of the Small Business Commissioner Act 2013, I announce receipt of the report of the Small Business Commissioner for 2021. I order that the report be printed.

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

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government's response to report No. 7/57 of the Public Accounts Committee entitled *Follow-up Review of the Management of NSW Public Housing Maintenance Contracts*, received out of session on 13 May 2022 and authorised to be printed.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD SAFETY**Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 13 May 2022 Mr Nathaniel Gerard Smith was elected deputy chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 13 May 2022 the Hon. Robert Borsak was elected deputy chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**Reports**

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 43/57*, dated 17 May 2022. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: I also table the minutes of the committee meetings regarding *Legislation Review Digest No. 41/57* and *Legislation Review Digest No. 42/57*.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Waste-to-Energy Incinerators

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly direct the Government to ban waste-to-energy incinerator facilities in the Goulburn Mulwaree and Southern Tablelands regions, received from **Mrs 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 motions (general notices) Nos 3073 to 3125 have lapsed.

*Bills***STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2022****First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Gabrielle Upton, on behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (15:31): On behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2022 continues the statute law revision program, which has been in place for more than 35 years. It is a feature in most Parliaments and has been a feature of this Parliament since 1984. It is an effective way for making minor policy changes. It is also significant in maintaining the quality of

our statute book and does important things like removing typographical errors, updating cross-references and repealing redundant provisions. Schedule 1 to the bill contains policy changes of a minor or non-controversial nature. The schedule gives effect to proposals that are too inconsequential to warrant the introduction of a separate amending bill. The schedule to this bill contains amendments to three separate Acts. The first relates to the Public Works and Procurement Act 1912, to introduce a delegation power. The new power allows for the relevant Minister and the constructing authority under the Act to delegate functions to a government agency employee or other persons authorised by the regulations. This amendment updates the 110-year-old Act to reflect the current legislative practice of our powers of delegation, allowing the Minister and the constructing authority to delegate functions in a way that better reflects modern governance practices.

Secondly, the schedule amends the Subordinate Legislation Act 1989 to postpone the automatic repeal of statutory rules. The Subordinate Legislation Act 1989 provides a mechanism for statutory rules to remain in force until a specified date. Four regulations are postponed this year. First, the Heritage Regulation 2012 is postponed in light of the preparation of a bill as part of the Government's response to report No. 59 of the Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Social Issues entitled *Review of the Heritage Act 1977*. Secondly, the Animal Welfare Bill 2020, which has been released for public consultation, has prompted the postponement of the remake of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2012. If enacted, the bill will replace the Act under which the regulation is made. Therefore, its automatic repeal should be postponed until new regulations can be made.

Thirdly, the Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011 is also postponed by this amendment to account for the recently passed Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022, which will repeal and replace that regulation. Finally, the amendment also provides for the postponement of the automatic repeal of the Poisons and Therapeutics Goods Regulation 2008. That postponement, which exists in the current schedule to the Subordinate Legislation Act 1989, will be continued by this provision. Schedule 1 to the bill amends the Western Sydney University Act 1997. This amendment provides, very simply, for a member of the board of trustees of Western Sydney University to be appointed by that board to preside at meetings of a committee that is constituted by the board. That amendment is considered appropriate and allows for the good governance of committees that are constituted by the board of Western Sydney University.

Schedule 2 to the bill deals purely with statute law matters consisting of minor technical changes to legislation that the Parliamentary Counsel considers appropriate for inclusion in the bill. For example, amendments in the schedule include the correcting of typographical errors, removing duplicate punctuation, inserting missing punctuation and correcting cross-referencing errors. They are tidying-up matters for the House to turn its mind to but are matters that are at the margin of any policy. Schedule 3 to the bill contains general savings, transitional and other provisions. It includes provisions that deal with the effect of amendments on amending provisions. The schedule also includes provision allowing for regulations to be made that are of a savings or transitional nature.

I hope the members of this House appreciate the straightforward nature of the provisions contained in this miscellaneous provisions bill. However, of course, as is the normal approach in this House, if any amendments cause concern or require clarification, they should be brought to my attention. If necessary, of course we will make that clarification. If any matter cannot be resolved in such a fashion and is likely to delay the bill, the normal process in this House is for the Government to be prepared to consider withdrawing the matter for consideration from the bill in this House. Otherwise, I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

PUBLIC HEALTH AMENDMENT (REGISTERED NURSES IN NURSING HOMES) BILL 2020

First Reading

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

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I advise the House that I have received a written authority from the Hon. Mark Banasiak, MLC, advising that the member for Orange will have carriage of the bill in the Legislative Assembly. I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a later time.

FIREARMS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 11 May 2022.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (15:38): On behalf of the shadow Minister for Police, and Minister for Counter Terrorism, Walt Secord, in the other place, I lead for NSW Labor in debate on the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. Labor will not be opposing the bill. It responds to an unintended anomaly created by a

decision of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] in 2020, after which 175 category D firearm licence holders found themselves in possession of prohibited weapons, despite those weapons having been acquired and used lawfully. Category D licences are highly restricted, as they should be. New South Wales has around 500 category D licence holders. They are authorised to possess or use self-loading centre-fire rifles, self-loading rimfire rifles with a magazine capacity of more than 10 rounds, pump action shotguns with a magazine capacity of more than five rounds and self-loading shotguns with a magazine capacity of more than five rounds.

Those firearms have specialist uses. They are used for pest control of large vertebrate animals like wild pigs. A category D licence can only be issued to a professional contract shooter who is engaged in controlling vertebrate pest animals; a person in or employed by a government agency with functions relating to the control of pest animals; or a primary producer participating in an authorised eradication campaign for large feral animals or animals affected by brucellosis or tuberculosis. Licences for those firearms are only issued to fit and proper persons after extensive probity checking by the NSW Police Force. The commissioner must be satisfied that the firearm is for the genuine purpose of vertebrate animal pest control and that there is a special need for the person to possess such a firearm.

As I noted at the outset, the bill seeks to correct an anomaly created by a 2020 NCAT decision, which determined that a previously lawful category D firearm was prohibited under item [5] of schedule 1 to the Firearms Act 1996 because it was "of a kind that is designed or adapted for military purposes". Following that NCAT decision, the NSW Police Force identified that a range of firearms that had been purchased legally under category D licences were now prohibited. As a result of that decision, 175 licence holders found themselves in possession of a prohibited firearm. Temporary exemptions for affected licence holders were made by amending the regulation, but this bill provides a more permanent solution.

Firearm models that are subsequently adapted for military use will still be prohibited. However, the amendment means that category D licence holders in legal possession of such firearms will be able to retain possession. Importantly, they will still be unable to supply or transfer ownership of the firearm to another person. In providing a permanent solution, the bill provides for a one-, two- or five-year licence rather than the current 12-month maximum. That change brings with it some administrative improvements, given the extent of the examination of licence holders and the nature of the use of the firearms in question. The reforms will not make it any easier to acquire or retain category D licences and firearms. Importantly, the bill is not a watering down of the National Firearms Agreement. I note that the Police Association of New South Wales has not objected to the change.

I acknowledge the attention that organisations including NSW Farmers; the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party; and *The Land* newspaper have brought to the matter. I note that the proposed changes will bring the New South Wales firearms regulations relating to firearms used by farmers and pest animal controllers into line with those of Queensland, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, which has some of the most stringent firearms laws in the country. The changes will put New South Wales farmers back on a level playing field with farmers in those States. Labor will not oppose the bill because it is a modest, sensible change to the firearms legislation.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (15:43): I contribute to debate on the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, which amends the Firearms Act 1996 and the Firearms Regulation 2017. As the Deputy Premier said in his second reading speech, the purpose of the bill is to remove the barriers and unnecessary regulatory burden faced by pest controllers and farmers with category D licences seeking to access fit-for-purpose firearms to carry out their important work. As the Minister noted, the amendments will clarify which firearms can be authorised for use under restricted category D licences.

I note that the member for Wollongong, who led for the Opposition in this debate, quite rightly indicated that category D licences are some of our most restricted licences. The people that have those licences go through a rigorous checking process and they have very important reasons for holding those licences. Either they are professional marksmen that engage in commercial pest eradication programs or they are primary producers who typically require them for pest eradication, particularly west of the Great Divide. I do not have access to the geographical spread of category D licence owners, but I would bet that almost all of the current category D licence holders are west of the Great Divide because of the nature of the terrain and the nature of the work involved.

As we have heard already, the need for this legislation was brought about by a 2020 decision of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT]. It was basically a silly decision because it put significant doubt on the rights that category D licence holders had over the firearms that they could access and use. What was quite lawful was, according to the tribunal, suddenly unlawful. That decision was then implemented by the Firearms Registry in a very black-and-white way, as they always are, with absolutely no consideration of individual circumstances. It made the work that a lot of category D firearms licence holders do impossible.

In my part of the world in the Northern Tablelands, that has had a number of flow-on impacts to primary producers like Mark Bryant from around the Graman district; Charlie Rendell, who is a Moree professional shooter; Andrew Chick, who is a farmer from Gurley; and the wonderful team from Northern Tablelands Local Land Services [LLS], which actually spearheads a lot of professional eradication programs. I have had other items of correspondence. In my view, this legislation is overdue because it essentially nullifies the negative impacts of that NCAT decision on those category D licence holders and makes a number of other sensible amendments.

I will put it into context for the benefit of the House. To understand the prevalence of some of the pest species that were mentioned in the Minister's second reading speech and in the contribution by the member for Wollongong, more than 5,000 pigs were destroyed in a recent two-week Northern Tablelands Local Land Services aerial shoot campaign across the Gwydir and Inverell shire local government areas. Mark Bryant, a primary producer in my neck of the woods who was impacted by the work during that two-week campaign, wrote to me after the campaign and stated:

Pest animal control is a critical issue for farmers and landholders and is of benefit to the entire community—

whether farmer or non-farmer—

Firearm owners must provide genuine reasons for requiring the type of firearm they wish to own and professional shooters and farmers certainly have those genuine reasons.

Professional shooters who are generally engaged by private landholders to control feral pests hold those category D firearms licences and, as I have said, are negatively affected by the changes to the definition of category D firearms as a result of that NCAT decision. Mark Bryant's correspondence goes on to state:

The changes meant that firearms previously available to professional shooters for pest control—

prior to the NCAT decision—

are not and they are permitted only to use semi-automatic rifles that had been developed for sporting use.

He also argues the New South Wales Firearms Registry provided a list of eight rifles permitted for use but most are no longer even in production.

That goes to a broader issue about the Firearms Registry. I am glad that the Minister has engaged the services of former assistant commissioner Geoff McKechnie to do a review of the Firearms Registry because it is long overdue. The NCAT decision is one thing, but what the Firearms Registry does with that decision is a whole other issue. I do not have legal qualifications, but people who are more au fait with this system than I am and have been engaging with the registry for decades are very clear and unanimous in their view that the Firearms Registry has taken the inch that NCAT offered and run an absolute mile in the way that it has implemented what it perceives as the meaning of the ruling, rather than approaching it from what the category D firearm licence holders need for the tools of their trade. If there is no problem with what they are doing then why do we come up with a solution in search of a problem? There was no problem that required fixing, but I am sure the Firearms Registry will tell a different story.

It is not just landholders but also the important work that Northern Tablelands Local Land Services do in my neck of the woods. Charlie Randell, a professional shooter from Moree who is employed on a regular basis by LLS and other agencies for kangaroo harvesting and aerial pig shooting, made the observation to me that while shotguns are also used for aerial pest shooting, they are not always suited to the task. The factors to consider include humane destruction of the target pest, animal size and weapon reliability. Sporting or hunting semi-automatic rifles are just not suited to the task—again referring to the fact that those options were put forward by the Firearms Registry.

The bill is welcome and I hope it delivers on the stated intent as outlined in the second reading speech. Primary producers and professional marksmen in the Northern Tablelands will be looking to this Parliament to pass legislation that delivers on that intent. It is crucial not only that the NCAT decision is walked back but also that the Firearms Registry has a rocket put up its rear end so that those people who have the most restricted class of licence are not denied the tools of the trade that they need to do their job. Their job is crucial not just in protecting farmers' livelihoods but also because by eradicating pests from the landscape we reduce the risk of biosecurity incursions and make the agricultural sector more productive. The flow-on effect is that high-quality, fresh food for people in our State is cheaper, not more expensive, because we do not have to rely on imports. Do not underestimate the bill, which is significant for those people and for the sector. The people of the Northern Tablelands look forward to the intent of the bill being implemented by this Parliament.

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (15:53): At the outset I flag that I will be moving amendments to the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. On 4 May the Deputy Premier announced legislation changes that would restore the ability of some primary producers and pest animal controllers to access and retain the

fit-for-purpose category D firearms they need. The Deputy Premier said, "I have worked closely with industry to create a permanent and practical solution", and that the reforms will ensure that fit and proper people who access those firearms for their work in pest control or primary production can do so effectively. The proposed amendments in the Government's bill fall short and will not deliver on the commitments the Deputy Premier gave to primary producers in his second reading speech.

As a former category D vertebrate pest animal control shooter and as a former professional pest controller, I can attest to how difficult this space is to navigate. I can also back in all the comments that category D licences are not easy to access, so this is not about trying to water it down or make it easier for people who would not otherwise be eligible. For the past two years we have been at a stalemate. People need firearms to be able to control pest species. With the incredible seasons that we have been having and with all this rain, the number of pest species such as feral pigs that have bred is incredible. Wild dogs out west are very cagey. Sometimes you do not get a second shot at them with a bolt-action rifle. That second follow-up shot is very important for a primary producer or a pest controller. I certainly agree with what the member for Northern Tablelands said. It is important for these professional shooters and landholders to have this access to enable them to get on with their business of primary production.

I have flagged that I will be moving amendments to the bill. It was my preference for the Government to move those amendments; however, it has not seen fit to do that so we will do it instead. In closing, I make the following points. First, the Deputy Premier made it clear that category D firearms licences are very tightly controlled, and I agree. There are only about 500 category D licence holders in New South Wales. That is less than half of 1 per cent of all firearm licence holders in the State. We are not talking about opening the floodgates here. Secondly, I refer members to the response by police Deputy Commissioner David Hudson to a question put to him in budget estimates on 4 May 2022, when asked to confirm that gang members who conduct horrendous criminal shootings are not licensed firearm owners. Deputy Commissioner Hudson said, "I can guarantee that."

The amendments that the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party will move are sensible and in no way affect the close review of firearm licence applicants by the NSW Police Force before licences are issued, nor do they circumvent the National Firearms Agreement. The amendments simply fulfil the pledge by the Deputy Premier to create a permanent and practical solution for farmers and vertebrate pest controllers to ensure that they can access the firearms they need for their important work. I would also like to say that I very much welcome the review of the Firearms Registry by Geoff McKechnie and look forward to seeing its outcomes.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (15:56): I support the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I will be interested to see the amendments that the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers intend to move. I also echo the thoughts of the member for Northern Tablelands about the absolute need to support primary industries at all levels, and that obviously includes clearing pest animals from all different types of landscapes. I too look forward to the input of former Assistant Commissioner and Western Region Commander Geoff McKechnie in what will be some important reforms.

The bill contains amendments to the Firearms Act 1996 and the Firearms Regulation 2017 to help remove barriers faced by pest controllers and farmers across the State to access fit-for-purpose firearms that their businesses depend on, and gives more flexibility in licensing periods to support pest-eradication campaigns, which is important to note. Category D licences, as we have heard, are the most restricted types of firearm licences. They are only issued to fit and proper persons after extensive probity checking by the NSW Police Force. Category D licences are only available where a person establishes a genuine reason for vertebrate pest animal control and evidence of a special need for the person to possess that category D firearm that cannot be met by any other means.

To illustrate how restricted this licence is—and as the previous speaker noted—only around 500 out of the roughly 240,000 firearms licences in the State are category D licences. That cohort is made up of professional contract shooters, government-employed pest controllers and also primary producers participating in authorised eradication campaigns. Let me be clear: Despite this only being a fairly small cohort, it is nevertheless an extremely important one—as we have heard from each and every speaker so far—especially for the regional and rural communities across New South Wales. Managing vertebrate pest animals is critical to our environment and our economy. It is certainly one of the constant concerns I hear when travelling around and catching up with primary producers and people involved in agriculture at every level. Interestingly, the NSW Department of Primary Industries website says that pest animals:

... present a significant threat to our biosecurity, biodiversity and economy, environment and community wellbeing.

How true those words are. The website goes on to list the negative impacts that these pest animals have, which include preying on livestock and wildlife; damaging crops, fences, and infrastructure; and spreading diseases to people and other animals. Examples of current pest species in New South Wales include feral pigs and goats and wild dogs. One of the things we are talking about at the moment is the significant risk to biosecurity, and certainly

controlling pest animals is a huge part of that. Category D licence holders play a significant role in managing those vertebrate pest animals in New South Wales. They are authorised to use and possess otherwise prohibited firearms.

Category D firearms include certain self-loading centre-fire rifles and self-loading shotguns other than those that are the kind designed or adapted for military purposes. These category D firearms provide the capabilities that are required to effectively manage and eradicate large numbers of vertebrate pest animals. Since 1996 New South Wales has balanced the need for these firearms and the public safety interest by allowing self-loading centre-fire rifles and self-loading shotguns under category D licences but completely prohibiting those of a kind that are designed or adapted for military purposes. This prohibition is found in items [5] and [6] of schedule 1 to the Firearms Act 1996.

In the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal decision of *Bankowski v Commissioner of Police* [2020] NSWCATAD 175, the tribunal found that Six Corp MOD KS-30 category D firearms were prohibited firearms by virtue of item [5] of schedule 1 to the Firearms Act 1996—that is, they were self-loading centre-fire rifles of a kind adapted or designed for military purposes. In making that decision, it was determined that "of a kind" in item [5] should be construed quite broadly. Following this decision, the NSW Police Force identified that a range of firearms previously purchased in good faith under category D licences were prohibited. This resulted in around 175 category D licence holders potentially being in breach of the firearms legislation for inadvertently being in possession of these prohibited firearms. This had a detrimental impact on the ability of pest controllers and farmers to manage and eradicate pests throughout New South Wales and right across regional communities.

This bill is designed to deliver a permanent solution to that very issue that has been affecting category D licence holders. It will ensure that they can access the firearms they need for those extremely important jobs. The bill will do that without watering down the stringent restrictions placed on those licences and firearms and will maintain the balance between the need for the firearms and public safety. The NSW Police Force will continue to have full oversight over the continued probity of each category D licence holder, ensuring that only fit and proper people have access to these firearms. I have every confidence in its ability to do so. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:02): The Greens oppose the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. When the Government briefed us last week on this piece of legislation, it sounded very much like an attempt to weasel around determinations made by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] that certain firearms should be prohibited. In fact, the Government is now moving into legislation—as it did through regulations—an attempt to work around that NCAT decision. This is not a good approach. I, and I think others who were in that briefing, found it quite disturbing when we heard the reasons for this legislation. It is on the record in the Minister's second reading speech. The simple fact is that this is all about removing barriers and unnecessary regulatory burdens faced by pest controllers and farmers with category D licences. We all agree that the last thing we want is to remove barriers and regulatory oversight of the use of the kinds of weapons under category D licences.

It is one thing to say that there are certain purposes for certain weapons in certain circumstances but a whole other thing to start making it easier for people to use such weapons by reducing the barriers and removing, if you like, the red tape. It is important for us to realise that, in the context of what occurred in the 2020 NCAT decision, it was determined that certain Six Corp MOD KS-30 category D firearms were prohibited firearms under item [5] of schedule 1 to the Act by virtue of being self-loading centre-fire rifles of a kind adapted or designed for military purposes. I think we all agree that applying this broad interpretation resulted in about 175 category D licence holders potentially being in possession of now-prohibited firearms. There are solutions to that problem. If NCAT believed that there was a reason to take those firearms, the solution could have been that the Government engage in an amnesty and a buyback scheme to address that small problem.

The solution is not just to say that NCAT determined that this is a dangerous weapon that should be included in the kind that it is used for military purposes and, therefore, should be prohibited. The solution is not to change the regulations and the law to allow those firearms to be used. Instead, it should be about how we keep our communities safe, not go through a process that weakens gun laws. Sadly, we have seen that happen for decades now in New South Wales and other States across the country. That may be because the increase in numbers of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party in this Chamber makes Government members feel as though they need to placate crossbench members, especially when the numbers are tight, and we all agree that the numbers are tight now.

Let us be clear. The Greens are not satisfied with a dangerous and backward approach that will wind back gun laws in this State. In addition, there is a suggestion that this process resulted in an unintended consequence and that this law was intended to prohibit the use of weapons designed for military or militia purposes. However, in some cases people are using them for other purposes but they might also be used for military or militia purposes;

therefore, that is okay and the Government will now remove the red tape, the barriers and the regulatory requirements to make it even easier for people to have those weapons.

I appreciate that people will have a go at me—that the member for Newtown has no idea what we are talking about and the challenges that people in the regions face. But it is clear that The Greens have a very strong position on winding back regulations and controls relating to people who use firearms in this State and country. We need to not cave in to the likes of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party and the fact that the Government does not have the numbers in this Chamber. We see the cosy relationship between some of the Shooters and some of the Opposition members in this place. From what I can tell, we see the Opposition lining up with the Government on this so-called reform. But it is not a reform. The NCAT decision is weakening the protections of our communities by removing so-called barriers and regulatory measures. This was presented by saying, "We've always done this in regulation. We've done it twice. We renewed the regs and now we're just putting it into legislation." But it fails to recognise the significance of winding back gun control laws in this State and country.

I foreshadow that The Greens in the other place will seek to amend this legislation. In addition, it is important to place on record that there is no finding by NCAT or anyone else that suggests that we remove the 12-month maximum licence period—section 21 (2) of the Act—for category D licences issued to primary producers involved in the eradication campaigns and instead provide that those licences be issued for one, two or five years. That has nothing to do with the NCAT decision. This is yet again the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government attempting to appeal to the Shooters in this place because the numbers are tight. There was no requirement to do that. We need to remember that this Liberal-Nationals Government is weakening our gun control laws. We should be worried about that because we know that in both this Chamber and the other Chamber the Shooters sit in a powerful position—in the balance of power. We are moving into a period that as soon as the Federal election is finished we will be focused on a State election, and Government members are coming to the Chamber while everyone is focused on what is happening federally and trying to further weaken gun laws in this State. It is a dangerous precedent to set.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (16:09): I welcome the opportunity to speak on the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. In particular I focus on the bill's sensible approach to firearms licensing for pest controllers in our State, which will support an industry that is essential to ensuring our State's biosecurity. Damage to our biosecurity framework affects not only our environment but also our economy and our community. The impacts of biosecurity outbreaks are real. Pest animals damage crops, plants and infrastructure, resulting in loss of produce for our primary industries. Pest animals also spread diseases to people and other animals. Those diseases could shut down markets and industries, costing our economy billions of dollars.

As a veterinarian, I recognise the imperatives of maintaining a healthy and sufficient food supply that is free from biological contamination while also seeing that the threats, particularly from animals, are managed in a humane fashion. Feral pigs alone can spread brucellosis to people. As a veterinarian, I am keenly aware of the key risk they pose in spreading exotic diseases such as African swine fever or foot-and-mouth disease, should they ever come to our shores. As I mentioned, this is a reality that is affecting our communities. Earlier this year, we had concerns about the Japanese encephalitis virus in southern New South Wales and northern Victoria. Experts in the media have talked about the risk that the feral pig population plays as a vector for the Japanese encephalitis virus.

As our community is well aware, feral animals can also cause long-term environmental damage. Behaviour that can appear relatively harmless to the environment at one time causes significant ecological damage as the density of the feral animal population increases. A critical component of our community response in limiting the impact of those types of outbreaks is our pest controllers. Under the Biosecurity Act 2015, everyone has a role to play in protecting against biosecurity risks. Alongside Government education and programs that ensure that landholders know about their biosecurity risks and how to effectively manage them, it is important that our legislative framework supports landowners being able to manage those risks. Effective and efficient firearms legislation that ensures that pest controllers have access to fit-for-purpose firearms is a critical part of that component. Having spoken with professional animal pest contractors, it is clear to me that they have a skilled and, at times, isolated job to perform. The bill is about getting the job done more effectively while vigilantly assessing and regulating newer weapons.

Regional and rural communities, such as my own, recall occasions when feral animal culling was not done well and the issue entered into the domain of the communities. For this important industry, access to appropriate firearms is an essential tool of the trade to enable controllers to keep our communities and economies safe. We might not want their job or to dwell on the nature of animal pest control, but we should all hope that the workers performing those tasks have the most appropriate tools at hand. The bill specifically addresses what has been an ongoing issue for our farmers, primary producers and landholders in being able to address and eradicate the threat of pest animals to our communities. How are our primary producers, farmers and landholders supposed to fulfil

their biosecurity obligations under legislation and to their communities if they do not have the appropriate tools to properly do that?

The bill enables category D licence holders to access firearms that are fit for large pest animal control. That includes using them in control activities such as aerial culling, which can be necessary to reduce the number of pest animals quickly, especially in areas difficult to access. The bill also delivers increased efficiencies by allowing for more streamlined applications for primary producers with category D licences. While still adhering to stringent requirements under the Firearms Act 1996—and I note that that was raised in the second reading speech—primary producers will have options for periods of one, two or five years for a licence, rather than having to renew each year despite an ongoing and genuine necessity of pest control.

The options provide more flexibility to support pest eradication campaigns. New South Wales has several large pest animal management programs that occur across the State. Aerial culling and ground shooting are among the available control tools to manage pest animals. These requirements will align with other firearms licences, including other category D licences. This is also in line with the National Firearms Agreement, whereby a firearms licence must be issued for a period of no more than five years. The amendments in the bill are an important tool for helping to protect the biosecurity of this State, and I commend the measures in the bill that ensure that they will remain effective for years to come. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (16:15): I welcome the opportunity to contribute to debate on the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I note that the Minister for Police, and Deputy Premier, who has carriage of the bill, is in the Chamber. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party supports the bill. However, we will be moving a number of amendments to the bill to make it more practicable for primary producers. I listened very carefully to the contribution from the member for Newtown; I do not agree with her. Primary producers need to be able to access category D firearms. As many of the other speakers have said, a category D firearm is a self-loading or semi-automatic centre-fire rifle or a shotgun. I hold a category A and B firearms licence. I am not sure how many members in this place hold firearms licences, but my good friend and colleague the member for Barwon used to have a category D firearm. In the past he performed roles as a professional pest controller. I listened very closely to what he had to say.

No doubt all members in this place have received representations from constituents—and I have made many representations to the Minister—in relation to delays of the Firearms Registry. Those include lengthy and inexcusable delays, in some cases, where it can be simply a renewal of a licence—a category A and B licence, for example—an application for a licence, an application for a permit to acquire a firearm or an application to add a condition to a firearms licence. In all of those processes, you need to engage, involve and deal with the Firearms Registry. The member for Northern Tablelands spoke earlier about the review that is being conducted, and we welcome that review by the former Assistant Commissioner of the Firearms Registry, Geoff McKechnie. I share the same sentiments as the member for Northern Tablelands. It needs an overhaul and a rocket, because there are inexcusable, lengthy delays that frustrate the process. In fact, in some cases, I have made representations to the Minister where we have had professional pest controllers—because their licences were only valid for 12 months under the current regime—having to wait three to six months for their licence renewals because of inexcusable and unexplained delays by the Firearms Registry.

I will tell the House a story. Once upon a time, in a previous life, when I was a police officer working at the front counter of Liverpool and Macquarie Fields police stations, I dealt with many, many firearms licence applications. A person would make an application at the local police station, go through the vetting process and the police officer who received the application would check the computer system for Computerised Operational Policing System [COPS] events, for a criminal record, for criminal intelligence or for anything that could be adverse to a person's application for a licence because, as the objective of the bill says, having a firearms licence is a privilege, not a right. From my experience, applications took between 20 and 30 minutes. They were done on the spot, while the applicant waited in the front foyer of the police station. Now it takes six to nine months—or 12 months in some cases.

The Minister may or may not agree with me, but deep down he knows that I have made numerous applications to him on many of these lengthy delays. We will move amendments to add primary producer to the list of persons so that it is clearly detailed, not just mentioned in the second reading speech. We know that the firearms industry and the solicitors at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] are not going to read the second reading speech. What will they do? They will turn to the Act of Parliament. They will look at the various sections of the Act. If it is not clearly outlined in this bill it will put a certain ambiguity or greyness over the issue. We want to remove any ambiguity in relation where primary producers can satisfy a genuine reason for being able to access category D firearms.

That is one of the amendments we will be seeking to make to the bill. It is in line with what the Minister said on many occasions in his second reading speech: In making this bill fit for purpose, licence holders include

not only pest controllers but also primary producers. As I said, it is all well and good to be mentioned in the second reading speech, but it needs to be in the actual bill which becomes legislation. That is what will be referred to by the police, by the Firearms Registry, by NCAT in later proceedings or by a court in other proceedings that may result from it. In relation to professional pest controllers, as the member for Albury said, and I agree with him, these are essential tools of the trade. People may not like it. The member for Newtown may not like that people in Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange, Parkes, Forbes or Bourke need a semi-automatic shotgun to shoot pigs because they have bred. In the good seasons, which we have had in the past couple of years, the grass is fairly high and they are difficult to see. They lay in big nests, and 20 to 40 pigs can bail out of a big nest. Unless you have a semi-automatic shotgun or a rifle, it is very difficult to get the numbers down.

The member for Albury, who was a vet in a previous life, spoke about the biosecurity risks that some of these animals carry. He spoke about the damage that pigs do to properties, fencing and infrastructure on farms, and also about the very real threat of them spreading disease. In summing up, we will be moving a number of amendments. I hope the Minister, who is closely listening to my contribution, will take those amendments on board. They are genuine amendments. We are not trying to water down the bill or to wind back the National Firearms Agreement. We are not trying to do any of the things that the member for Newtown suggested, alleged or purported. We are trying to make it better. We are trying to make a more workable bill for the people of the bush, primary producers, farmers and pest controllers by having those terms clearly outlined and defined in the legislation. For those reasons we will be moving amendments, and I commend the bill to the House.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:23): I make a contribution to debate on the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The objective of the bill is to amend the Firearms Act 1996 to clarify certain requirements in relation to category D firearms licences, and to amend the Firearms Regulation 2017 to make consequential amendments and update references to government agencies.

Schedule 1 to the bill amends the Firearms Act 1996 requirements in relation to category D firearms licences by: firstly, amending section 8 to clarify that a firearm other than a pistol fitted with a stock that is designed to be readily detachable, or to operate on a swivel, folding or telescopic basis will be a firearm to which a category D licence may apply; secondly, replacing section 21 (2) of the Act to provide that a category D licence issued for the purposes of vertebrate pest animal control may be issued for a period of 12 months, two years or five years, rather than the current period of only 12 months; thirdly, replacing schedule 1 items 5 and 6 of the Act, which enforce the prohibition on self-loading centre-fire rifles and shotguns; and, finally, by inserting a new schedule 3, part 12 into the Act, containing new clause 35, which stipulates that self-loading centre-fire rifles and shotguns acquired legally under the Act are not prohibited firearms. However, the exemption under clause 35 will only apply to rifles or shotguns of that type which were legally acquired before such firearms were adapted for military purposes. Clause 35 will also prevent these adapted rifles and shotguns from being on-sold.

The bill will also amend the Firearms Regulation 2017 through: firstly, schedule 2 [1]-[3] amending clause 8 of the regulation to provide for the terms of category D licences; and secondly, schedule 2 [4] amending clause 35 to update references to departments that may carry out vertebrate pest animal control as a result of machinery-of-government changes. I believe the bill makes reasonable amendments to the Firearms Act 1996 and Firearms Regulation 2017. The bill rightfully expands the regulation of firearms under category D licences, and expands the prohibited use and sale of self-loading centre-fire rifles and shotguns adapted for military purposes.

The bill also ensures that workers within the pest control industry have more freedom to conduct their work. This is very important, as it provides our workers in the regions with greater agency to exterminate pests that may be a threat to livestock. In doing so, it also ensures that our farmers benefit from pest control workers being able to conduct their work more efficiently. This protects the crops and livestock which farmers produce and breed. This will, of course, have a positive impact on the New South Wales agricultural industry. It will also protect our native wildlife from foreign pests such as wild pigs and feral dogs.

While, understandably, there may be concerns that the bill could deregulate the use of firearms, I do not believe it will be the case. Currently, there are only approximately 500 category D firearm licence holders in New South Wales. Category D licences are highly restricted to individuals who are professional vertebrate animal pest control workers. The purpose of the bill will be to ensure that these licences are still highly restricted. The bill also makes it much harder for the categorised rifles or shotguns to be used or sold for illegal or unsafe purposes. The Victorian, Australian Capital Territory and Queensland governments have adopted similar legislative frameworks for category D licences. The reforms have been successful in those States and Territories.

New South Wales Labor supports the passage of the bill. We agree with the Government that this is sensible reform that needs to be made. The Victorian, Australian Capital Territory and Queensland governments, which have made similar reforms to class D licences, are all Labor governments. The New South Wales Opposition has a similar position to these governments on this issue, and we believe that similar reforms will be successful here. The bill requires that extensive probity checks are still undertaken by the NSW Police Force. The bill stipulates

that the New South Wales Police Commissioner must be satisfied that the applicant has a genuine reason for vertebrate animal pest control when applying for a firearm.

The police commissioner will also be required to discern that there is a special need for the applicant to possess such a firearm. Following consultation, the Police Association of New South Wales has stated that it does not oppose this legislation. As a legislator, I always listen intently to any recommendations which the Police Association of New South Wales makes regarding potential legislative loopholes that may affect our State's safety and security. If the Police Association has not raised concerns about the bill then I have every confidence that the amendments the Government proposes will not undermine the safety of our community.

While there are many matters of community safety and security I believe the New South Wales Government gets wrong, I find no fault with the bill. I commend the Government on the bill's provisions. The bill is not a winding back of the Commonwealth gun laws that the New South Wales Carr Labor Government agreed with the Federal Howard Government in 1996. This fact is important, as it ensures our gun laws are still moderate and in line with the spirit of the far-reaching reforms agreed in 1996. Farmers in our State, led by the NSW Farmers Association, have been seeking this reform for some time. The NSW Labor Opposition has listened to the concerns raised regarding this issue by the farmers in our State. The Opposition will act in accordance with their best interests.

Those opposing the bill do not accept the realities of pest control that are faced by farmers in New South Wales. The farming sector has been calling for such reform, to increase the efficiency of eliminating vertebrate animal pests, for quite some time. Those who oppose the bill would be ignoring the needs of farmers as well as the needs of regional communities in New South Wales. As parliamentarians, we are here to listen to the concerns of all communities in New South Wales, not just those who live in our cities. I believe the bill is sensible and necessary to increase the efficiency of vertebrate animal pest control, whilst also keeping our community safe from deregulation of gun laws.

Through its amendment of the Firearms Act 1996, the bill expands category D licences, lengthening the time for which these licences will be held; enforces the prohibition of self-loading centre-fire rifles and shotguns; and prohibits the adaption and sale of those types of self-loading firearms for military purposes. Updating the terms of licence D categories and references to relevant departments with oversight over vertebrate animal pest control, through amendment of the Firearms Regulation 2017, is also sensible reform. I am pleased that the Government has listened to the NSW Farmers Association, farmers and the farming sector on this issue. Continued NSW Police Force oversight of category D licences is necessary to keep our community safe. The fact that the Police Association of New South Wales does not oppose the bill makes it clear that it is a sensible bill that will not infringe on the safety of our community. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (16:32): In reply: I thank members for their contribution to the debate on the Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill. In particular I thank the members for Wollongong, Northern Tablelands, Barwon, Newtown, Albury, Orange and Prospect. Certain matters have been raised during the debate, which I will come to in a moment, but I reiterate why the bill was brought to this House: It was to support our farmers, our landholders and our pest controllers across the State. The purpose of the bill is to remove barriers that impact on farmers and pest controllers around New South Wales. Around 500 licence holders were impacted by a decision handed down by the New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT]—overnight, their guns were prohibited.

The NCAT decision stopped those licence holders from being able to undertake work that was necessary to control pests on land and property around New South Wales. This Government then put in temporary exemptions to assist, effective for a 12-month period, followed by a further 12-month period. The bill fixes a problem that has been an issue for those 500 licence holders for a number of years. The bill will support our licence holders. They will no longer have to apply for a licence every 12 months. Licences will be able to be issued for a two- or five-year period.

The intent of these legislative changes was always about restoring the ability of existing category D licence holders, including some primary producers and pest animal controllers, to access and retain the fit-for-purpose category D firearms if needed. These amendments are not about broadening the group of people who can hold a category D licence. We were resolute about that from the outset. These are sensible changes to preserve the intent of the legislation prior to a 2020 New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] decision and to remove the need to rely on a regulation. The Firearms Act already provides the ability for primary producers participating in authorised pest eradication campaigns to obtain a category D licence. That remains the case. The changes are about ensuring category D licence holders have fit-for-purpose firearms, not expanding the reach of some firearms beyond category D licence holders.

New South Wales will continue to have appearance-based regulation of firearms in line with most other jurisdictions around the country. The bill also makes appropriate amendments to ensure that pest controllers and farmers with category D licences have and retain access to fit-for-purpose firearms, and it gives more flexibility in licensing periods to support pest eradication campaigns. This is a sensible bill. It will deliver a permanent solution to an issue affecting category D licence holders to ensure that they can access the firearms they need for their important jobs. I reiterate, the measures included in the bill will achieve this, without watering down the stringent restrictions placed on these licences and firearms. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Roy Butler.

Consideration in Detail

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): By leave: I will deal with the bill in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2, and schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (16:37): I move Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party amendment No. 1 on sheet c2022-100A:

No. 1 Genuine reasons for having a firearms licence

Page 3, Schedule 1. Insert after line 4—

[1A] Section 15 Category D licences—restrictions on issue

Omit section 15(a). Insert instead—

- (a) the genuine reason established by the person for being issued with the licence is that of—
 - (i) primary production, or
 - (ii) vertebrate pest animal control, and

Section 15 of the Firearms Act restricts the issue of a category D firearms licence for the genuine reason of vertebrate pest animal control. Unless primary production is explicitly included as a genuine reason for the issue of a category D firearms licence, primary producers will likely be precluded from accessing category D firearms. To rectify this problem, Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party amendment No. 1 adds primary production as a genuine reason in section 15 of the Act. This change is entirely consistent with the Government's intention, spelled out in the second reading speech, and with the provisions of paragraph 16 of the National Firearms Agreement, which enables category D firearms to be issued to primary producers.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party amendment No. 1 on sheet c2022-100A be agreed to. A division has been called for. There being only two members for the question, the question is resolved in the negative. I direct that the names of those members be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Ayes, 2

Mr R. Butler
Mr P. Donato

Amendment negatived.

Mr ROY BUTLER: By leave: I move Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party amendments Nos 2 to 4 on sheet c2022-100A in globo:

No. 2 Prohibited firearms

Page 3, Schedule 1. Insert after line 11—

[2A] Schedule 1 Prohibited firearms

Omit item 3.

No. 3 Prohibited firearms

Page 3, Schedule 1. Insert after line 19—

[3A] Schedule 1, item 7

Omit the item.

No. 4 Prohibited firearms

Page 3, Schedule 1[4], proposed clause 35(1)(b), line 29. Omit "subsequently adapted". Insert instead "manufactured".

Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party amendment No. 2 removes item [3] in schedule 1 to the Firearms Act. Item [3] is a broad catch-all provision dating back to 1996, when the Firearms Act was first introduced 26 years ago. It conflicts with items [5] and [6]. It is nonsensical and, in the interest of removing confusion and delivering on the permanent and practical solution promised by the Deputy Premier, it should be removed. Amendment No. 3 relates to the infamous "appearance" clause, which the Firearms Registry and New South Wales Police Force uses to prohibit certain firearms simply because of the way they look. It is grounded in the irrational belief that appearance has something to do with the lethality, danger or public safety, much like the urban myth that red cars go faster than other cars. I will let the Government and the New South Wales Police Force in on a little secret: Black firearms are no more lethal than pink firearms, just as red cars do not go faster than white cars. That is a fact. The appearance of a firearm has nothing whatsoever to do with lethality.

Item [7] in schedule 1 is nonsense, and only serves to perpetuate the false belief that prohibiting certain firearms simply because of the way they look will do something to improve public safety. For this reason, item [7] in schedule 1 in the Act needs to be deleted once and for all. Amendment No. 4 amends clause 35 (1) (b) of the bill and provides that it is only firearms that are specifically manufactured for military purposes that are prohibited, not those that are designed or adapted for military purposes. The distinction between firearms that are "designed or adapted" and "manufactured" for military purposes was discussed at length by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal in the Bankowski decision in 2020.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party amendments Nos 2 to 4 on sheet c2022-100A be agreed to. A division has been called for. There being only two members for the question, the question is resolved in the negative. I direct that the names of those members be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Ayes, 2

Mr R. Butler
Mr P. Donato

Amendments negatived.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that clauses 1 and 2, and schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2, and schedules 1 and 2 agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

MARINE RESCUE NSW AND BRUCE MITCHELL

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (16:52): Today I acknowledge, congratulate and thank the Marine Rescue NSW Illawarra Regional Operations Manager, Mr Bruce Mitchell, who has been part of the organisation for 22 years. Bruce is now retiring, although he intends to volunteer and undertake regular radio duties. For the past 12 years, he has overseen all major incidents along the Illawarra and South Coast, covering 160 kilometres of coastline from Wollongong to North Kioloa. Bruce went from being a fisherman to a volunteer as a radio operator for the coastal patrol, Australian Volunteer Coast Guard and the Volunteer Rescue Association before all three were joined to become Marine Rescue NSW. He has held the regional operations manager role for 12 years. His role involves liaising with the various units along the coast to ensure they have what they need to perform their jobs and that their assets are adequate. There have been many outstanding efforts by Bruce Mitchell over the years. I thank him for all of his great successes during his time as regional operations manager, and for guiding and assisting our Marine Rescue NSW units along the South Coast.

BRIAN SUTERS, AM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (16:53): In Newcastle a person does not have to go far to see the legacy of Brian Suters. In recognition of over 50 years of award-winning architectural design, Brian has been named a Freeman of the City. Brian was the brains behind some of Newcastle's most iconic structures, including the brutalist-style former City Administration Centre, the Civic Playhouse and a Newcastle East housing estate. His work is loved locally, but his talent has been recognised far beyond Newcastle. He has won a travelling

scholarship and a prestigious Blacket award, and has been named a Member of the Order of Australia. I congratulate Brian on a wonderful career. The bestowal of Freeman of the City is a much-deserved honour.

COOPERNOOK PUBLIC SCHOOL PARLIAMENT

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:54): I recognise the student leaders who will be sworn in as Ministers of the Coopernook Public School Cabinet for 2022. As a former teacher, I understand the important role that our student leaders play in representing their school and peers. I am certain that the new Ministers are confident and caring representatives who promote fairness, understanding and advocacy on behalf of the whole school community. I congratulate the new Ministers: Percy Buchanan, Minister for Sport; Chloe Fisher, who is also a Minister for Sport; Aston Crawford, Minister for Visual Arts; Jamie Moore, Minister for STEM; Sienna Hawkins, Minister for Creativity; Sophie Pickford, Minister for Performing Arts; India Robertson, Deputy Prime Minister; and Ella Kenane, Prime Minister. Being elected as a leader in their school community is a wonderful honour. They are the leaders of our future, who will help build and advance Australia so that it continues to be the thriving and inclusive nation that we are all proud to call home. I congratulate them on their achievements and wish them every success for the future.

INTERNATIONAL TAG SERIES PLAYER JACK THOMAS

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:55): I acknowledge Jack Thomas of St Brigid's Catholic College, who has been selected to represent Australia at the 2022 International Tag Series. Following the second postponement of the 2021 Tag World Cup in July last year, the International Tag Football Federation announced the inception of the International Tag Series to ensure that the selected players had an opportunity to compete before the 2023 World Cup. The 2022 series will commence at the University of Limerick, Ireland, as well as Coffs Harbour, from 5 August to 7 August. The final tournament will take place at Bruce Pulman Park, Auckland, from 11 November to 13 November. Selection in this world-first event at a young age is a testament to Jack's commitment to his sporting aspirations. Jack is an excellent young man and athlete, and will represent with great pride not only the St Brigid's Catholic College community but also the Central Coast region. I congratulate Jack on being selected for the Australian squad. I wish him and his teammates all the best for the championships.

PARAMATILDAS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:57): Last week in this place I wished the very best to the ParaMatildas for their upcoming competition in Spain, and especially my cousin and their number 5, Laine Harrison, who attends Hunter Sports High School. The ParaMatildas will be contesting the gold-medal match against the USA tonight. It will be the first International Federation of Cerebral Palsy Football Women's World Cup title to be awarded. The team is in the top two of the competition. It is fantastic to see the Australian team perform so well. Highlights from the competition include three wins in a row: 11-nil against host country Spain, 4-nil against Japan and 12-nil against The Netherlands. I wish the team the best of luck tonight. The USA team is going in as favourite after winning its last match-up in the group stages 4-nil. Whether or not the ParaMatildas bring home the gold, their achievements in this tournament have been outstanding. I congratulate the team and local young woman Laine on their efforts.

INABURRA SCHOOL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (16:58): I congratulate Emma, a year 12 student at Inaburra School in my electorate, who recently secured a pair of gold medals at the 2022 Australian Track and Field Championships. Emma is a sprinter and won the under-18 women's 200 metres and backed it up with gold in the under-18 women's 4 x100-metre relay. Emma also won a bronze medal in the under-18 women's 100-metre event. That is an absolutely outstanding achievement. I wish Emma all the best in her future endeavours.

KU-RING-GAI ROTARY CLUB

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (16:58): On 4 December I joined the Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai at West Pymble shopping mall for the official launch of a lifesaving defibrillator, which the club donated to the West Pymble community. I met IGA owner Tony Aglio, who generously agreed to host the lifesaving device in his shop. I also spoke to Northside Radio. Rotarian John Aitken gave demonstrations of how to use the device, which we all found highly informative. Events like that are important because they build on existing links with the community, illustrate Rotary in action, and encourage locals to participate in projects and join the club. I hope nobody will ever need to use the device, but I am pleased that it is now available in a local shopping mall that many members of my local community attend. I acknowledge the Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai and President John Hepburn; IGA owner Tony Aglio; Rotarian John Aitken, who gave demonstrations of how to use the device; the local shopkeepers who donated items for the barbeque; and our local community who came out to support the event.

Business interrupted.

Bills

RSL NSW AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

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

Public Interest Debate

FEDERAL LABOR ELECTION COSTINGS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (17:00): I move:

That this House notes with concern the failure by Federal Labor to release costings on its election promises within a reasonable time to allow for an assessment of their effect on the people of New South Wales.

This is a vital matter of public interest for the people of New South Wales.

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

Mr TIM JAMES: Of course those opposite are not interested in the people of New South Wales. But this is an important matter in the public interest and an important motion that goes to a clear choice this Saturday, which has real consequences for New South Wales. The people of our State and country deserve to know that their Government has a fully costed plan for the future. After all, it is their money; it is taxpayers' money. Government funds do not grow on trees, as those opposite would have us believe. It is for Labor to come clean immediately.

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

Mr TIM JAMES: Voters must be able to scrutinise the chilling impact that Labor's reckless policies will have on their country, their lives and their families. We all know that economic management is central to all of that government does. Schools, hospitals and vital services cannot be delivered for the community without getting the economy right first. One day those opposite might learn that. Only with a strong economy and sound economic management can people be provided with jobs—

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

Mr TIM JAMES: Two calls to order! The member is going well. Only with a strong economy and sound economic management can people be provided with the jobs, financial security and confidence to flourish and prosper. It is a stark choice: on the one hand, a Coalition that has a strong record of delivering for the people of New South Wales and Australia and, on the other hand, a Labor Party that has demonstrated that it is not up to the task, has not done its homework and cannot manage money. The choice is abundantly clear.

With the Coalition, a stronger economy means a stronger future for us all. With international headwinds upon us, it is not the time to undertake some experiment with an inexperienced Labor leadership on its L-plates. Continuity, stability and experience at all levels of government are required to navigate the challenges of the future. Frankly, it is extraordinary and embarrassing that during this election campaign Labor has not submitted even one policy for costing, independent assessment and publication. What is it? Is it arrogance, incompetence or both? Is it lazy Labor? Is it loose-with-the-truth Labor? Is it insolent Labor? It is like a lottery of Labor failures that we seem to play consistently every few years.

Despite being pressed five times at his press conference yesterday, Anthony Albanese refused to rule out bigger deficits and more debt under Labor. Today he ran out of his press conference after being asked twice about his costings. That may be because today Jim Chalmers admitted that Labor's costings will be higher than those of the Coalition. So what does Labor have to hide? Is it trying to slip this through at one minute to midnight? Is it afraid of scrutiny? If it was confident in its figures, it would have released them by now. It knows that the people of Australia know that Labor cannot manage money. What does that mean for New South Wales? Rest assured, Labor's uncoded policies for New South Wales mean only one thing: higher taxes. Higher taxes and Labor go hand in glove. The people of New South Wales know it too. They know that Labor not only cannot do costings properly but also is inherently addicted to higher taxes. The people of this State remember that at the last election Labor promised to cancel \$3 billion in building projects, planned to introduce \$1 billion in new taxes and to scrap cost-of-living measures. In classic Labor style, those election promises would have cost twice those of the Coalition. Indeed, some of those Labor plans were not coded either. At least Labor members are consistent—State and Federal. They are simply not up to the task.

This Federal election is a very clear contest between a government that is building a strong economy and working closely with us here in New South Wales and a Labor Party that would weaken our economy. Members only have to look back to the first week of this campaign to be reminded of just how much Labor is not up to the job. Remember how Anthony Albanese said he was an economic adviser with economics qualifications, and yet he simply did not know the basics like the unemployment rate and the cash rate—just not good enough. The people of New South Wales, and indeed in my electorate of Willoughby, will be rightly anxious and terrified at the risk of Labor regaining control over the Treasury bench.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Port Stephens will come to order.

Mr TIM JAMES: Labor has a track record of economic failure, of not being able to manage money and of high spending, high taxes and high deficits. The people of this State have rightly had nightmares for the past 16 years about the economic malaise brought about by a New South Wales Labor government. Labor is no friend of Willoughby, or indeed of anyone north of the Harbour Bridge. State Labor threatened to close Chatswood High School when last in power. In contrast, the Coalition is investing record amounts in local schools, including in Chatswood public and high schools—the topping out ceremony of which I attended just yesterday. Those north of the Harbour Bridge will not see a cent of infrastructure spending from Labor; indeed, a Labor government would cancel any spending north of the bridge.

That is basically because Labor is only ever interested in politics and class warfare. Projects such as Sydney Metro, which will revolutionise public transport in Willoughby and which we are getting on with, would frankly never happen under Labor. Returning to the Federal scene for a moment, the Federal Coalition has done the right thing. It has fully released its costings for public scrutiny, and they show an improvement to the budget bottom line of around \$1 billion over forward estimates compared with the 2022-23 budget. That comes on the back of the \$103 billion budget improvement delivered in March, which is a clear demonstration of the Coalition's proven commitment to fiscal discipline and spending restraint. Those circumstances and that responsible economic management have allowed the Coalition at both State and Federal levels to deliver for New South Wales, including the Western Sydney Airport and Bradfield city, the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport, the Pacific Highway upgrades and WestConnex.

Here in New South Wales, since 2011 this Government has invested more than \$150 billion in new and upgraded infrastructure and is committed to \$110 billion of infrastructure spending looking ahead. Only the Coalition, therefore, can build the schools, roads, hospitals and vital infrastructure to make the lives of New South Wales families better. The people of this State and this country deserve to know the price of Labor's reckless policies. How much will Labor need to borrow and indebt our children to pay for its excesses? [*Time expired.*]

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (17:07): I start by saying to the member for Warringah: When a member is first in here, they are often given a punt. Mate, you have just been handed one. This motion is a complete waste of time and is a clear signal of a government that is old, unimaginative and at the end of its life—something it shares with the Morrison Government. I have no doubt that everyone on the Government benches will be very interested in Saturday night's results. They will be looking at seats like North Sydney, which the member for Warringah might be interested in.

Mr Tim James: Willoughby, actually. Maybe get some facts right first before you start carrying on.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: In Robertson, Dr Gordon has Lucy Wicks looking nervous. In Reid, if only Fiona Martin was half as popular as Jodi McKay then she might not be so concerned. In Gilmore, poor Andrew is looking pretty uncomfortable every time Morrison is there to visit him. In Bennelong, poor old Victor is out there looking rather nervous. Jerome Laxale looks like he will be the Federal member out there—someone members opposite will be working with yet again.

Mrs Tanya Davies: Point of order: The point of this debate is Federal Labor not releasing its costings. The member for Swansea is talking about election candidates, which has nothing to do with the substance of the debate. I ask that you draw her back to the debate, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The debate is broadly about the Federal election, and I will allow the member for Swansea to continue. I will hear further from the member.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: The Government wants to talk about the budget, so let me enlighten members about its track record. We might start with this Government's \$7 billion blowout on the Sydney Metro West—great budget managers—or perhaps the \$6.8 billion blowout on WestConnex, or the \$5 billion blowout on Sydney Metro City and Southwest. The list is so long that I might actually send it in an email to those opposite. Maybe we should move to the hand-on-heart promises that are made before an election, just like the member for Warringah mentioned earlier.

Mr Tim James: For goodness sake, it is Willoughby!

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I remind members of when we heard Gladys Berejiklian say, "We will not privatise a further asset". FYI, we then saw the Sydney Motorway Corporation privatised for \$11.1 billion. I could go through the privatisation list yet again, but I have done that so many times in this place. I ask members to refer to my comments in *Hansard*. I remind the House that the Morrison Government announced its budget costings in the dying days of the 2019 election campaign, just before election night, even though it had all the resources of the Government. Call me cynical, but it might lead by example. The member for Warringah asked, "Is this arrogance or incompetence?". I suspect he is right: I suspect the Morrison Government is arrogant and incompetent. I remind members opposite that the last time they were in opposition, in 2013, Tony Abbott released his budget costings the Thursday night before the blackout—again, arrogant and incompetent, to use the words of the member for Warringah.

Mr Tim James: Willoughby!

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: More interesting is how the Morrison Government has managed those projects. I agree with those opposite that there should absolutely be integrity in the spending of taxpayer money. As they note, it is our money. Let us start with the sports rorts, and I need not say too much more—\$100 million of community money spent on sports infrastructure. Let us go to New South Wales and to the Leppington Triangle. The Government paid \$27.6 million for land valued at \$3.1 million—what a bargain that one was! Let us talk about the Building Better Regions Fund, worth \$201.8 million, where 156 of 166 grants went to Coalition-held seats ahead of the 2019 election. But my favourite is the commuter car parks, worth \$660 million, with 77 per cent selected for Coalition-held seats.

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

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Guess what? As of March, just two of the 47 in this country have been delivered. We see tears rolling down the face of the poor old member for Robertson, Lucy Wicks, all the time. [*Time expired*]

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (17:12): The genesis of the Parliamentary Budget Office was the Liberal-Nationals Coalition in opposition in 2009. It was about transparency and giving some respect to the taxpayers of New South Wales. What followed that was a little bit of argy-bargy as the Labor Party did not want to accept our bill in 2010, and we amended it in 2013 to reflect the opportunity for honesty. It came from a commitment made by Bob Carr in 1995 to wipe the tolls, and he got into power by one vote off that lie. The issue here is having costings that are appropriate, which the electorate deserves to see. I will not make apologies for those that have not followed the Commonwealth process in the past, but we are very proud that our Government, in opposition, created a process that respects the people of New South Wales.

I believe one of the reasons that Jim Chalmers admitted today it would cost more but said he will not release the details is the Labor budget costings will not include any provisions for infrastructure in regional New South Wales, whether it is the Great Western Highway, the Princes Highway, the rise over the Great Dividing Range, Wyangala Dam or Dungowan Dam. Labor will not make those promises for regional New South Wales because it does not care about regional New South Wales. That is what the people of New South Wales deserve to see and know: that Labor does not care about us. It does not care about our communities.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Summer Hill will come to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: It does not care about the issues that we need to address. If Opposition members interjected on aged care and issues in that sector, I would agree. It is about time we had some sensible conversations around aged care.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Summer Hill that she is on two calls to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: It is about time we had sensible conversations around health and around the way the GP network does not deliver for regional patients and the way the pressure is left to the New South Wales hospital system. These are the types of conversations that we should have and deserve to have. But the Labor Party needs to be held accountable for not respecting the process, because—whilst members opposite are not Federal members; they are New South Wales State parliamentary representatives—the promises and commitments that it will not put forward and that will not be in its plan if it wins will impact on our communities. The conservative side of politics is very proud of the Parliamentary Budget Office. We created it in this country. As I said, it was first proposed in 2009 by us in opposition and legislated in 2010 as we went into that election. It was based off the learnings from that terrible lie by Bob Carr that Labor was going to abolish tolls. You can see history starting to reinvent itself. Because, by building those toll roads, we have been able to pour tens of billions of dollars into public transport so that people can catch a train to work and not rely on getting in a car.

Ms Jo Haylen: Not in the western suburbs.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: Are you serious? Do think that metro west is not going to service the western suburbs? What map are you looking at? I know you are from the North Shore.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Oxley will resume her seat.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: The member for Oxley should direct her comments through the Chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The member for Oxley will direct her comments through the Chair. I remind the member for Summer Hill that she is on two calls to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I make the point that public transport is being delivered through the north-west, the south-west and western Sydney. It is under construction as we speak. That has been done by recycling assets and by ensuring that the user-pays system works for roads and that we have the money left over for public transport. It is actually quite a simple equation—one that Labor was not able to deliver between 1995 and 2011. We are building infrastructure. We have been able to be honest with the people of New South Wales wholly based off the fact that we created the Parliamentary Budget Office. I can tell the House now that the reason Labor is not submitting with three days of consideration for the taxpayers and the citizens of Australia is it does not want to reveal what it is not going to fund. It has also revealed that it is going to be spending more than us.

Ms Yasmin Catley: You just told us we are going to spend too much.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: You will. But it will not be on the infrastructure and the jobs to grow this country and to grow our capacity; Labor will continue to bleed the taxpayers for its own union mates.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (17:18): I thank the member for Warringah or—

Mr Tim James: Oh, for goodness sake!

Mr STEPHEN BALI: Actually, you will not be here long enough for us to worry about what electorate you belong to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Blacktown will refer to the member by his correct title.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: I thank the member for Willoughby for moving this motion. It is quite funny that he is the one talking about L-plates. I congratulate him. Who is the L-plater? He talks about how money does not grow on trees. I can understand the importance of submitting the costings to the office of the budget or whoever looks after it all, but when you look at how things change over time, governments pivot. We know what happens. Pandemics or whatever happen. When this Government brought its 2019 budget, it said that by 2023 it would have a budget surplus of \$2.6 billion. Last year it already had a deficit of about \$1.7 billion.

Look at the debt: In 2019 when the Government was doing the forward estimates to 2023, it anticipated net New South Wales debt would be \$38 billion. It is now at \$80 billion. By 2024-25 it is anticipated to be over \$100 billion. While it is important to identify everything in the costings, at the same time governments need to pivot depending on what is happening. For instance, even last weekend an \$8 billion rail link between Blackheath and Hartley was announced. Is that in any of the forward estimates? Where did the \$8 billion suddenly grow from? Going back to the member for Willoughby and all his clichés that he has thrown out, money seems to grow on trees from his Government's point of view.

Let us look at the train debacle. The Government bought trains that did not fit on tracks to go through the Blue Mountains. It had to widen and destroy heritage tunnels because two trains could not pass each other. Look at all of the problems: There are other aspects of the Government's budget that it has not accounted for ever. I notice the member for Camden is in the Chamber. He is a former mayor. The Government changed how section 7.11 is paid for by developers, where part of it would be subsidised to councils. As we stand today—and it is not in any of the budget papers—some \$250.1 million is owed to Blacktown City Council.

The Government was going to subsidise that amount to support the developers in relation to section 7.11. There is also \$525 million of outstanding infrastructure that needs to be delivered for one of the fastest growing regions in Australia. By 2037 the population of the City of Blacktown will be greater than the population of Tasmania. Every single year for the next 30-odd years the entire population of Mudgee will be added to Blacktown. And we do not get the funding that is required. The Government runs the highest taxing State in Australia—

Mr Tim James: Rubbish.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: Well, it is. We are about the highest tolled place in the world. That is a University of Sydney study. I am sure if it was a Western Sydney University study, Government members would not accept it. But it is a University of Sydney study. If you look at the other elements that—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: None of this is relevant to the motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the House. I will listen further to the member for Blacktown.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: This is ridiculous. To a large extent, it is about the Federal election.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the House will come to order.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: Look at the Federal division of Greenway—which overlaps with the electorate of Riverstone—for instance. Labor has promised \$300 million to deliver planning and road upgrades for Richmond Road and Bandon Road and to establish a planning team for the north-west sector. Where was the Government? For four years it sat on its backside doing nothing for the area. The member for Greenway, Michelle Rowland, has worked hard and advocated from opposition to get \$120 million to upgrade the roads. She advocates for her local area, versus the Liberal candidate—whatever his name is—who was even rejected as a Liberal candidate for council and who the Government wants to send to Canberra.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (17:23): I am pleased to support the public interest debate motion of member for Willoughby. The question is really all about honesty and transparency. What we have seen from Federal Labor has just been an atrocious demonstration of its lack of transparency and honesty in this election campaign. As has been revealed in this place, the current Liberal-Nationals Federal Government has submitted 35 of its costings to the Treasury and Finance departments. They are available for the people of New South Wales to look at and consider as they weigh up who they are going to vote for come this Saturday. I encourage them to vote for the current Government.

In comparison, Labor has submitted not one policy for costing. We do not know what we will get if people vote Labor in. It is a scary, horrific, terrifying thought. Here is a classic example of what we could very well have if the Federal Labor opposition is elected to government and if the understanding of the member for Blacktown about finances has anything to do with the financial understanding of Federal Labor. The Labor member for Blacktown said "whoever looks after it all". There is no articulation of things such as budgets or forward estimates. There is nothing in relation to profit and loss—

Mr Stephen Bali: Point of order: My point of order is on relevance under Standing Order 129.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Mulgoa is being entirely relevant.

Mr Stephen Bali: Every other point of order has got up during these debates.

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

Mrs TANYA DAVIES: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. That was a very good ruling. Let us look also at what Labor is like when in government. We have examples of what Labor was like in New South Wales to show to the people of this State, and we can easily transpose them into the Federal sphere. When the Labor Party was last in power, it spent \$500 million on the Rozelle metro. Is there a Rozelle metro today? No. The money was wasted. The party scrapped 50 million brochures by pulping or shredding them. When the Federal Labor Party was in government last time, the best our local Federal member could get to put into the much-needed Nepean Hospital was \$80 million, for a massively growing community in western Sydney.

The Liberals and The Nationals in New South Wales have committed \$1 billion for one hospital, let alone all the hospitals that are being rebuilt and the brand-new hospitals being built. This is a clear demonstration of what the citizens of New South Wales and Australia get when they vote for the Liberals and The Nationals. What we are doing in New South Wales is what the Liberals and The Nationals have done federally, and will continue to do, for our community. Here is another wonderfully clear example of the difference between a Liberal-Nationals government and a Labor government. In the dying days of the last Labor Government in 2010 and 2011, the soon-to-retire Labor member for Blacktown—

Mr Stephen Bali: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the member for Blacktown because of the injections. The member for Keira will come to order. I am trying to hear the point of order.

Mr Stephen Bali: Government members took points of order against us for talking about Federal—

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

Mr Stephen Bali: My point of order is on relevance under Standing Order 129. Government members are talking about State issues instead of Federal issues.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Blacktown will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES: The then newly retired Labor member for Blacktown, Paul Gibson, came to this newly elected Liberal-Nationals Government in 2011, praising the Liberals and The Nationals for committing to build the hospital. He could not get his Labor Government to build his own hospital. The Labor Party has continued to fail whenever it is in government. It talks the big talk when it is in opposition but, when it gets into government, it fails and fails. We know what Anthony Albanese and his Labor cohorts will deliver: a disaster. Vote for the Liberals and The Nationals.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (17:28): Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker—Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: Madam Deputy Speaker, it is insulting to refer to you in that way.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I thank the Leader of the House and appreciate his concern for my title.

Mr RYAN PARK: Madam Deputy Speaker, I have had a few text messages in the past few minutes from a couple of friends across the divide. One of them said to me, "Parky, remind Willoughby he can't count. He lost to North Shore. So he is talking about costings." That is reasonable. Another one said, "Tell your colleagues, 'Watch out what you are saying' because he takes people to court, including his own."

Mrs Shelley Hancock: Point of order: That is completely outrageous and completely off the topic.

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

Mrs Shelley Hancock: My point of order is on relevance under Standing Order 129.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The member for Keira will address his comments to the motion before the House.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: I believe the member for Keira is misleading the House because he has not given the text message about his failed health costings.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Oxley will resume her seat. I call the member for Oxley to order for the first time.

Mr RYAN PARK: I think this is the first public interest debate for the member for Willoughby. The first time he speaks in here in a public interest debate, as a State member of Parliament for the good folk of Willoughby—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Keira—

Mr RYAN PARK: —he does not talk about tolls or charges or the cost of living.

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

Mrs Tanya Davies: Point of order: Madam Deputy Speaker, I request that you ask the member for Keira to direct his comments through the Chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was, as the member could hear, attempting to remind the member for Keira to direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr RYAN PARK: Madam Deputy Speaker, you would think a member of State Parliament elected to the oldest Parliament in this country would talk in his first public interest debate about State issues—the type of issues that many people on this side of the House talk about regularly

Ms Yasmin Catley: Cost of living.

Mr RYAN PARK: Such as the cost of living, tolls, charges, taxes—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

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

Mr Alister Henskens: Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for Keira continues to disrespectfully turn his back to you and not direct his comments through the Chair, as he should.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. I have asked the member for Keira to direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr RYAN PARK: Madam Deputy Speaker, when you come into this place, you want to make a difference for your community. The member for Willoughby did not get elected to the Federal Parliament. He got elected to the State Parliament to talk about issues that are important to the community and affect this Parliament. Unless we have been teleported somewhere else, I do not think we are in a Federal Chamber. We are in a State Chamber. I think the people of Willoughby, when they elected a State member, thought they would get a member who takes up the issues important to them on a State basis. I think that is what they expect. I have a small amendment—

Mrs Shelley Hancock: Small amendment!

Mr RYAN PARK: A small amendment that I think most people would agree with. It covers a lot of things—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Keira will resume his seat. The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Alister Henskens: I am not sure whether that was "a short amendment" or "a small amendment".

Mrs Shelley Hancock: A small appendage, it was.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is difficult to hear what is being said.

Mr RYAN PARK: That is not nice to the member for Oatley either, by the way.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Keira has just 51 seconds remaining. He will be allowed to conclude his remarks.

Mr RYAN PARK: My amendment is a very simple one. I move:

That the motion be amended by removing all words after "notes" and inserting instead "that the New South Wales Liberal Party has actively campaigned against the Federal Liberal Party and should instead focus on fixing the cost-of-living issues affecting the people of New South Wales".

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: That is not an amendment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will consider the amendment later. I thank the Minister for bringing that to my attention.

Mr RYAN PARK: Of course it is an amendment. I said, "Remove all words after 'notes'."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will look at the amendment once it has been tabled.

Mr RYAN PARK: The people of Willoughby, like the people of New South Wales, expect people elected to this place to fight for the issues that they are elected to deal with. If the member for Willoughby wants to be in Canberra, he should go to Canberra.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (17:34): In reply: Facts matter. That is not an amendment and you know it. That is downright embarrassing and you should do better. Further, my electorate is Willoughby, not Warringah. Maybe one day, again, you might get some basics right. But most importantly, facts matter. Should the public know how much policies will cost? Does the public deserve to know? Of course they deserve to know. Frankly, those opposite are defending the indefensible. You are treating the public like mugs. Those opposite are shameful and embarrassing. Try harder, do better, maybe do some homework and you might make some impact. Members on this side of the Chamber believe in fiscal management, in accountability and in the public interest. That is why members on our side of politics set up the Parliamentary Budget Office. We submit our costings in a timely, responsible and proper fashion. You do not do so.

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

Mr TIM JAMES: The member for Blacktown raised the matter of L-plates. I am going to make a few points on that. I will stack up my CV against any of yours any day of this week. How many of you have 10 years' private sector experience?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Willoughby will resume his seat. I can predict what the member's point of order is.

Ms Yasmin Catley: I suspect that you are a very good predictor. The member needs to direct his comments through the Chair—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Ms Yasmin Catley: —and not incite quarrelling across the Chamber.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have ruled on the point of order. The member for Willoughby will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr TIM JAMES: How many Opposition members have lived and worked in New York and London, as I have? There is a real world outside of the trade union movement. Maybe that is what some members opposite might learn one day. How many Opposition members have worked for a prime minister? How many have a Master of Business Administration? The answer is probably very few. I will take the member for Blacktown's line about L-plates and I will deal with it as I see fit. I did a bit of background research for today and one of the books I was reading was Frank Sartor's book *The Fog on the Hill: How NSW Labor Lost Its Way*.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member for Swansea that she is on one call to order.

Mr TIM JAMES: Do you remember Frank Sartor? He was a senior Labor Cabinet Minister and he basically said that Labor could not control the public spending on wages and so it lost control of the economy. It could not control its budget because it was paying too much to its union paymasters. Therein lies the inherent conflict of interest that is the Labor Party today. It should get its costings in and do its homework, and maybe then people will consider voting for it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Blacktown to order for the first time. The member for Willoughby has moved a motion, to which the member for Keira has moved an amendment.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 160. Any amendments have to be relevant to the question it is proposing to amend. This proposed amendment by the member for Keira is so far outside of the original motion that it is not—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I reflect on my previous ruling on a similar issue in relation to a public interest debate and amendments that were provided to the Chamber by members on the opposite side. I did broadly rule previously. Looking at the motion and the amendment, they both deal with issues affecting the people of New South Wales, and they both deal with Federal issues. I will allow the amendment.

The question is that the amendment of the member for Keira be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes32
Noes44
Majority..... 12

AYES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S
Barr, C
Car, P
Catley, Y
Chanthivong, A
Cotsis, S
Crakanthorp, T
Daley, M
Dib, J

Doyle, T
Finn, J
Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Hornery, S
Kamper, S
Li, J
Lynch, P
McDermott, H

Mehan, D (teller)
Mihailuk, T
O'Neill, M
Park, R
Scully, P
Tesch, L (teller)
Voltz, L
Warren, G
Washington, K
Zangari, G

NOES

Ayres, S
Butler, R
Clancy, J
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Davies, T
Dominello, V
Donato, P

Hazzard, B
Henskens, A
James, T
Kean, M
Layzell, D
Lee, G
Lindsay, W
Marshall, A

Provest, G
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Sidgreaves, P
Singh, G (teller)
Smith, N (teller)
Speakman, M
Stokes, R

NOES

Elliott, D
Evans, L
Gibbons, M
Greenwich, A
Griffin, J
Gulaptis, C
Hancock, S

McGirr, J
O'Dea, J
Overall, N
Pavey, M
Petinos, E
Piper, G
Preston, R

Taylor, M
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Upton, G
Williams, R
Wilson, F

PAIRS

Holland, M
Lalich, N
Minns, C
Saffin, J
Watson, A

Crouch, A
Conolly, K
Perrottet, D
Anderson, K
Bromhead, S

Amendment negatived.

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

The House divided.

Ayes41
Noes38
Majority.....3

AYES

Ayres, S
Butler, R
Clancy, J
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Davies, T
Dominello, V
Donato, P
Elliott, D
Evans, L
Gibbons, M
Griffin, J
Gulaptis, C
Hancock, S

Hazzard, B
Henskens, A
James, T
Kean, M
Layzell, D
Lee, G
Lindsay, W
Marshall, A
O'Dea, J
Overall, N
Pavey, M
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Provest, G

Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Sidgreaves, P
Singh, G (teller)
Smith, N (teller)
Speakman, M
Stokes, R
Taylor, M
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Upton, G
Williams, R
Wilson, F

NOES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S
Barr, C
Car, P
Catley, Y
Chanthivong, A
Cotsis, S
Crakanthorp, T
Daley, M
Dib, J
Doyle, T
Finn, J

Greenwich, A
Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Hornery, S
Kamper, S
Leong, J
Li, J
Lynch, P
McDermott, H
McGirr, J
Mehan, D (teller)

Mihailuk, T
O'Neill, M
Park, R
Parker, J
Piper, G
Scully, P
Smith, T
Tesch, L (teller)
Voltz, L
Warren, G
Washington, K
Zangari, G

PAIRS

Anderson, K
Bromhead, S
Conolly, K
Crouch, A
Perrottet, D

Saffin, J
Watson, A
Lalich, N
Holland, M
Minns, C

Motion agreed to.*Community Recognition Statements***ST VINCENT'S BRAIN BALL**

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:02): On Friday 13 May 2022 I was delighted to be a guest at the inaugural St Vincent's Brain Ball charity gala event at Doltone House Marconi, hosted by Minds and Moving Limited. The aim of the Brain Ball was to raise funds and awareness for Parkinson's disease and all brain movement disorders. The proceeds from the evening were directed to St Vincent's Hospital Sydney Neurosciences. The much-needed funds will assist researchers in combating Parkinson's disease, which is the second most common neurological disease in Australia after dementia. Unfortunately, the disease affects 100,000 Australians, with 38 people diagnosed every day. I extend my congratulations to Mr Sam and Mrs Rosa Vaccaro, Ms Genevieve Bruzzese and the wider Vaccaro family for their dedication and commitment to raising funds and awareness of Parkinson's disease and all brain movement disorders.

JOHN MARTIN, OAM

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (18:03): I congratulate John Martin, OAM, of Singleton, who was recently awarded life membership of Ourcare Services. Mr Martin is a long-serving board member of the Singleton-based organisation that has been providing support to many people in the Upper Hunter for more than six decades. John was part of the inaugural Meals on Wheels in Singleton, which is now an important service of Ourcare Services. It should be noted that John was one of only two recipients who was recognised by the organisation with life membership. John Martin has been an active member of the Singleton community for over 60 years and was Mayor of Singleton during a lengthy term as an elected representative on the local council. Being National Volunteers Week it would be remiss of me if I overlooked his efforts with the State Emergency Service, which recognised his efforts when he was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 1994. He was most recently named as an Honorary Freeman of Singleton Shire.

MERLE HANSARD

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (18:04): Merle Hansard is a member of the Rotary Club of the Central Blue Mountains garden crew, which maintains the garden at the Blue Mountains District ANZAC Memorial Hospital. The garden was established in 2005 to mark the 100th anniversary of the foundation of Rotary, and it has continued to provide a calm and beautiful place for palliative care and rehab patients to spend their time and for visitors to enjoy. Its continued beauty today is due in part to Merle's devoted love and care. She has dedicated the past 12 years to actively maintaining the garden, purely out of kindness and compassion for people who are going through a difficult time. Merle and the crew tirelessly arrive every Monday, weather permitting, to clean, sweep, mulch, plant, mow and cut edges. The result is a gift that brightens the day of the hospital patients, time and again. I am proud to acknowledge Merle and her achievements today. I thank her for her dedication to the welfare of others. She is a bright star in our community. I also congratulate Merle on her recent Blue Mountains City Council seniors award. It is well-deserved recognition.

DUGALD AND BEC MCINDOE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (18:05): I recognise Dugald and Bec McIndoe, principals of Smithson Farms, as winners of the overall grand champion pen of lambs at the 2022 New England Livestock Agents Guyra Lamb Show and Sale. Judged by Brian Wellings from Walcha, the pens of 20 were complimented for the quality of lambs, despite a few seasons of unpredictable weather—excuse the pun—availability of transport, market variables and restrictions. Dugald and Bec competed against beautifully presented lambs. Mr Wellings said there were only 10 or 12 pens in contention for the prize. Nonetheless, Smithson Farms won on the day not only for presentation but for meat content, finishing an outstanding pen of lambs. I congratulate Dugald and Bec on a successful day at the Guyra Saleyards, winning the cash prize and bags of feed donated by the local Mort & Co Stockfeeds mill manager, David McCathie. I commend Smithson Farms for practising agricultural excellence.

BONDI ICEBERGS CLUB

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (18:06): I was thrilled to attend the opening day of the Bondi Icebergs Club's winter swimming club. The Bondi Icebergs Club is an iconic staple of Sydney, but it would not be complete without at least a couple of locals doing laps in winter—rain, hail or shine. On 1 May the winter swimming season launched, and the community and club members turned up in droves to register, swim and race. The pool was packed around the edges with keen locals, ready to enjoy a dip and show their friends and laneway arch rivals what they are made of. After the official ceremony and races, everyone celebrated the launch with live music and shared food. There were smiles all around. Best of luck to everyone for a successful winter swimming season. I send a huge thankyou to the amazing volunteers who run the club for their dedication and commitment to the community.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE COUNCILLORS

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (18:06): I acknowledge the significant contribution of two of the Sutherland shire's longest serving councillors, Carmelo Pesce and Carol Provan. Residents of the Sutherland shire are blessed to have two councillors of their calibre serving as mayor and deputy mayor, with over 30 years of combined service between them. Mayor Carmelo Pesce is a lifelong Sutherland shire resident, small business owner, board director of Local Government NSW and member of the Kamay 2020 Project board. Throughout his time on council he has earned a reputation as a strong advocate for improved infrastructure, small business and fiscal responsibility. Deputy Mayor Carol Provan is the longest serving councillor in the Sutherland shire and a two-time former mayor. Councillor Provan has continued to be a fierce advocate for our community since her election in 1983 and was recognised earlier this year with an outstanding service award from Local Government NSW. I thank both councillors for their service to Sutherland Shire Council and look forward to working with them to achieve great outcomes for our community.

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION TOUKLEY

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (18:07): I congratulate the Toukley Country Women's Association on celebrating 100 years of CWA. Toukley CWA loves to get involved in the community in any way possible, specialising in everything from home-cooked goods to knitting and crocheting. During the recent devastating floods, the group sent funds to families and areas in need. The CWA is the largest women's organisation in Australia. It aims to improve conditions for country women and children by lobbying for change, helping the local community and creating a network of support by meeting together in towns and cities. Well done. I thank them for all their hard work in our community and wish them all the best in their future projects.

COROWA DISTILLING CO.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (18:08): I congratulate Corowa Distilling Co. on winning an award in the inaugural national Decoded Spirits Awards program, hosted by retailer Dan Murphy's. It is the result of many years of hard work and long hours. Corowa Distilling Co.'s single malt whisky, which stood out from the others, will now be sold in 258 Dan Murphy's outlets across Australia. Managing director Dean Druce and the team have put in a mighty effort to produce this award-winning whisky. The expansion of retail outlets stocking the product should boost sales and enjoyment of their product, as well as promote tourism to Corowa to see where the magic happens. I expect the award will also fuel a renewed growth strategy for the expansion of what is already a major drawcard for the region. The future looks bright for Dean and the team at Corowa Distilling Co. as they continue to grow their business with their masterfully crafted spirits. That is the spirit of Corowa.

CHERYL BROWN

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (18:09): Cheryl Brown has owned and operated the Ourimbah post office franchise for over 20 years. During that time she has provided essential postal services to the local community. The Ourimbah post office is an historic institution on the Central Coast and is the oldest continually operating post office in the region. Ms Brown has made the decision to retire and has sold the business. I thank her for her service to the community and for all the hard work involved in ensuring that our mail is sent and delivered, particularly the parcels she coordinates day to day, and keeping the community satisfied. I also take this opportunity to welcome the incoming owners, Min and Stewart Chen, who will no doubt continue this service to the community.

COOTAMUNDRA DOMESTIC TRAINING HOME FOR ABORIGINAL GIRLS SITE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (18:10): I thank all of those involved in the ongoing maintenance, preservation and education at the former Cootamundra Domestic Training Home for Aboriginal Girls site. That site is important to

survivors of the Stolen Generations, their families and the Aboriginal community. Founded in 2013, the Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation plays an integral part in supporting the social, emotional and wellbeing needs of Cootamundra girls home survivors and their descendants. It also serves to educate the community through its many partnerships, including one with Cootamundra High School. Through that partnership, Aboriginal students recently volunteered at a working bee, giving them the chance to connect to country, learn about the history of the site and chat to members of the corporation. Cootamundra High School has also been involved in the unveiling of the commemorative plaque at the Cootamundra railway station, which is another significant site in the Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation's story and for Wiradjuri Elders and Stolen Generations survivors. I congratulate the Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation on developing partnerships within the community to ensure their voices are heard and to make strong connections to survivors and their families.

PADDLE AGAINST PLASTIC

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (18:11): The River Canoe Club recently held its fourth annual Cooks River Clean Up and Paddle Against Plastic. Our waterways are one of our most precious environmental assets, and I acknowledge all of the extraordinary and dedicated volunteers and organisations working to improve the health of the Cooks River, which is essential to the inner west suburbs that it runs through. The Paddle Against Plastic is a terrific example of this community effort, coordinated by the River Canoe Club, Cooks River Alliance, Inner West Council, City of Canterbury Bankstown council and Conservation Volunteers Australia. A massive 400 kilograms of litter, including shopping trolleys, was pulled from the river, adding to the 20 tonnes that had already been removed through clean-up efforts over the past four years. The Paddle Against Plastic complements the important Cooks River Litter Prevention Strategy spearheaded by the club, and aims to halve the amount of litter entering the river by 2050. I am grateful to the president of the River Canoe Club, Simon Wilkes, and to all of the dedicated volunteers and paddlers who gave up their Sunday for this important effort.

JACOB CASEY

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (18:12): I recognise Mr Jacob Casey, who won the joinery competition at the WorldSkills Australia National Championships in August 2021. Due to the evolving COVID situation, the championships had to undergo format changes to provide the opportunity for competitors across Australia to compete. Jacob works at Choice Interiors and was both delighted and surprised to be announced the winner during an online event in Perth. He had 14 hours to plan, draw and construct his pentagon frame, which included angle joints and three curve bars in the middle. Jacob felt confident and said, "I knew that nine out of the 11 joints were done well, but I ran out of time." Judging inspected how precisely and accurately Jacob had completed his drawing, as well as the appropriate arrangement of his work, measuring with callipers to ensure that the size of the frame was accurate. Jacob's win will see him travel to Shanghai in the coming year to compete at the international competition. I congratulate him and commend the fine workmanship that he demonstrated. I wish him all the best in Shanghai.

WEAR ORANGE WEDNESDAY

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (18:13): Tomorrow is Wear Orange Wednesday, or WOW Day, which is an opportunity to acknowledge SES volunteers who generously give their time in support of communities during flood and storm events. WOW Day forms part of National Volunteer Week, the annual celebration that acknowledges the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers. This year it carries particular poignancy. The unpredictable La Niña season has seen thunderstorms and flood warnings ravage New South Wales. Throughout it all, SES units across the State have responded to calls to assist communities in this time of need, often risking their own safety for that of others. I acknowledge and thank the SES volunteers who are called upon to protect people, property, animals and habitat. When these emergencies and often life-threatening events occur, our emergency services are the first on the scene. Their dedication and skills are crucial to minimising the level of damage caused and the hardship those situations bring on families. I deeply acknowledge the crucial work that our volunteers, particularly those in the SES, do to keep us safe and comfortable. Let us all celebrate WOW Day and extend our heartfelt appreciation to volunteers for their tireless efforts and work. I thank them for making our State better.

NSW PUBLIC SCHOOLS STATE DRAMA ENSEMBLE

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (18:14): The 2022 NSW Public Schools State Drama Ensemble provides students from years 9 to 11 with the opportunity to develop a work for performance at the State Drama Festival in October. I congratulate Elizabeth Macarthur High School students Kavin and Amsterdam, who have been selected to be part of the 2022 NSW Public Schools State Drama Ensemble. Amsterdam and Kavin will join with students from around the State in workshops to develop an original performance. It is a fantastic opportunity to showcase their hard work and dedication to the arts. I wish Amsterdam and Kavin all the best as they prepare for the State Drama Festival in October.

CENTRAL COAST LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT AWARD WINNERS ERIN HEINE AND JASON VAN RITTEN

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:15): I send my most sincere congratulations and thanks to Erin Heine and Jason van Ritten from the Central Coast Local Health District. Erin and Jason were recently recognised at the Australian Pride in Health + Wellbeing Awards for their work towards LGBTQ+ inclusion in the health and wellbeing sector. Through her work as Diversity and Inclusion Manager for the Central Coast Local Health District, Erin was recognised with the Out Role Model award. Erin and her team play an important role in our local healthcare system, ensuring that local services are an inclusive and safe space for all. Jason is the HIV and Related Programs Health Promotion Officer for the Central Coast Local Health District. He was recognised for his work as an LGBTQ+ ally due to his significant role in ensuring LGBTQ+ inclusion within the sector. Through the fantastic work of local healthcare workers such as Erin and Jason, we can continue to work together to ensure that our health sector is a trusted space for all community members. I send my deepest thanks to all our healthcare workers for their commitment to the inclusion of all across our Central Coast community.

MARK LEECE SPORTS COMPLEX

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (18:16): I recognise the significant improvement that the newly opened rebuilt amenities block at the Mark Leece Sports Complex in St Clair will make to local sporting clubs. Some \$1.7 million went into the project. The New South Wales Government provided almost \$1.3 million and Penrith City Council contributed almost half a million dollars. St Clair United Soccer Club and St Clair Netball Club are more than deserving of that necessary upgrade to their sporting facilities. Their original amenities block was more than 40 years old. Our local sporting clubs are central to many communities. I was so pleased that I could support them in their efforts to secure much-needed upgrades to their facilities. In particular, I thank St Clair Netball Club president Joe Bisset and St Clair United Soccer Club president Marc Finnigan for their advocacy for these improvements that have now been delivered. I wish both clubs and players all the best for their respective upcoming seasons.

PLAYLAB THEATRE AND JOSHUA MAXWELL

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (18:17): I congratulate Joshua Maxwell on having his play *Very Happy Children with Bright and Wonderful Futures* published nationally in hard copy by Playlab Theatre. Joshua has been working on the play for the past two years. The story reflects on Joshua's activism roots. Joshua has also been Central Coast Council's Arts, Culture and Entertainment Citizen of the Year and 2020 Central Coast Volunteer of the Year. Joshua is a Director of Jopuka Productions, an innovative youth theatre organisation. I commend Joshua for all his accomplishments.

WATTLE GROVE PUBLIC SCHOOL ANZAC DAY SERVICE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (18:17): I recognise Wattle Grove Public School for its Anzac Day service. Anzac Day is always an important time to reflect on and appreciate the sacrifices made for us. The annual service at Wattle Grove Public School is always special. Because I was in isolation due to COVID, I was unable to attend this year. The service, which was held on 6 April, is always an opportunity for the community to connect and enjoy light refreshments afterwards. As Wattle Grove Public School is close to the Holsworthy Barracks, many defence families attend the school. It is great to see Wattle Grove Public School going to the effort of hosting such a significant event. It is also an honour to represent a community that comprises so many courageous men and women who have defended our country or are ready to do so if needed. I thank Wattle Grove Public School for hosting such an important event.

INNER WEST MUSIC FEST

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (18:18): I congratulate Pratten Park Bowling Club, Ashfield, on hosting the Inner West Music Fest this Sunday. The pandemic has been a long and difficult road for musicians, performers and artists, whether due to income lost during lockdowns, the closure of venues or, more recently, cancelled gigs due to COVID cases. But the lifting of restrictions offers new opportunities to celebrate our live music scene, particularly in the inner west. On Sunday much-loved acts will perform, including The Moonlighters, Stitcher, The Juliets, Dial Denial and Higgins. In addition, a bar, cake stall, jumping castle and market stalls will provide fun for the whole family. I thank Pratten Park Bowling Club for creating such a positive, fun and engaging event, and for further showcasing the excellent musicians, performers and artists who live and work in Sydney's inner west.

COLYTON ST CLAIR COLTS CRICKET CLUB

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (18:19): I congratulate the Colyton St Clair Colts Cricket Club, which recently celebrated its great life members who have supported the club from its inception. Our local sporting

communities are part of the backbone of our broader community. They foster team-building, create an environment in which to make friends and encourage active lifestyles. Sometimes they can provide the environment for an individual to find their passion and go on to make a career out of their chosen sport. In particular, I thank the president of Colyton St Clair Colts Cricket Club, Adam Coleman, who has done a tremendous job in securing New South Wales government funding to help the club acknowledge appropriately the contributions of its life members. I congratulate the life members of Colyton St Clair Colts Cricket Club.

NSW SENIORS LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNER IAN JOHNSON

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:20): I congratulate Ian Johnson on receiving the 2022 NSW Seniors Local Achievement Award. Ian is a valued member of the Gosford Men's Shed, who willingly goes out of his way to help anybody in our community—even if he does not know them. Ian is a mechanic by trade, who built up a successful tow truck and wrecking yard business in Sydney. Since retiring to the beautiful Central Coast, Ian has joined the Rotary Club of Umina and the local Probus Club. He dedicates his time to those organisations, helping at local functions, barbecues, raffles and wherever he can be of assistance to the less fortunate in our community. Having been touched by cancer—and now fortunately in remission—Ian and his generosity and kindness make a true difference to the local community. I thank Ian and congratulate him on his well-deserved award.

STARS OF ARMIDALE DANCE FOR CANCER

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (18:21): I recognise the Stars of Armidale, local host Mr Luke Fahy, judges, businesses, dancers and all the backup support for this year's presentation of Dance for Cancer, produced by Cancer Council NSW. Dancers were asked to fundraise and commit to weeks of dancing lessons that were donated by dance teachers Jenny Wild, Colette Brazier and Dr Kanan Shah. Judges Bev Luxton, Gerard "Moose" Stephen and I chose Luis Mosquera as the night's winner. The highest fundraiser was Kirsty Blain and the people's choice was Rachel "Rocky" Leonard. Over \$75,000 was raised on the night, which contributes to reducing the impact of cancer on individuals, their families and the community. Welcome to country was given by Auntie Lesley Widders, and Kristian Sternbeck gave a didgeridoo performance. I congratulate all the Stars of Armidale on their superb performances: Dr Sharlene Marimuthu, Rachel Leonard, Deepa Salklan, Harry Williams, Charlotte Williams, Kirsty Blain, Sam Duncan, Zoe Herbert and Luis Mosquera. I commend the many individuals, businesses and organisations that supported Stars of Armidale Dance for Cancer to make it the success it was.

WE CARE CONNECT MOTHER'S DAY HIGH TEA

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (18:22): I congratulate the team and mothers at We Care Connect on the effort they put into this year's Mother's Day high tea to support kids in poverty. The high tea fundraiser invited locals to get involved and help the cause to support families with essentials for children such as cots, car seats and clothes. We Care Connect was founded in 2016. Since then it has continued to grow and has helped over 6,000 kids on the Central Coast. Currently, We Care Connect provides assistance to more than 200 children across the Central Coast.

MOST BLESSED NIGHTS STREET FOOD MARKET

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (18:23): Recently the Liverpool mall in Macquarie Street was home to the Most Blessed Nights Street Food Market. Many religious events occur in April. The Most Blessed Nights Street Food Market was hosted by the Liverpool City Council with the aim of bringing the community together and supporting local businesses. Each weekend in April from 5.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m. the mall was transformed into a wonderful food market, which showcased the incredible cuisines that our area has to offer. I visited the festival and tried some of the delicious food on offer and experienced the joy in the mall. After a couple of years of not being able to gather together as a community at events such as the Most Blessed Nights Street Food Market, it was fantastic for everyone to get out and about again. Over 120,000 people visited the market, which was a huge success. I thank Liverpool City Council for the Most Blessed Nights Street Food Market, and I look forward to more community events to come.

NURSE LOUISE MCCABE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (18:24): I take this opportunity to formally thank registered nurse Louise McCabe of Tallimba following her response to a medical emergency—and she has been recognised for her efforts—whilst off duty. By all accounts, Louise's quick thinking and application of first aid during an incident at a local rugby fixture ensured the young person involved could be stabilised until paramedics arrived. Alongside the broader community, I extend my gratitude to Louise for her efforts and for taking that unexpected opportunity to promote the importance of first aid. Although her experience as a nurse undoubtedly supported Louise on the day, anyone suitably trained in first aid can make a real difference to the outcome for those suffering a medical emergency.

I thank Louise once again for her life-saving efforts and for her leadership in spreading the importance of first aid to our small communities.

Private Members' Statements

RYDE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government) (18:25): Marsden High School students started term 2 in their brand-new school buildings at Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct. The new facilities are located alongside Meadowbank Public School and will cater for 1,500 secondary school students and a further 120 intensive English centre students. The facilities are truly outstanding and provide a great learning environment focusing on community and connectivity. The new flexible learning spaces support collaboration and personalised learning, with moveable furniture and adaptable room configurations, whilst the technical learning spaces teach students how to navigate the modern technological world. They encourage students to be lifelong learners and teach them valuable real-world skills.

The recreational spaces and facilities are second to none. There are a variety of outdoor areas, including covered and open-air spaces, with covered outdoor learning spaces on each floor, multipurpose sports courts, basketball courts, a school oval and an athletics track. Additionally, there is a triple-height-ceiling gymnasium to support a range of sports, complete with a full-size stage and production equipment such as performance lighting, stage curtains and a sound system. The new facilities include 71 new learning spaces, a new hall, a library, admin facilities and a variety of outdoor spaces, including play and recreational areas. This is the fifth new or upgraded school to open in Ryde since 2019, turning Ryde into a powerhouse for public education in New South Wales. We look forward to welcoming more students into the precinct.

There is also an upgrade to Denistone station. Keeping in line with the development of Ryde local schools, it is critically important that our public transport networks provide a positive experience for all commuters and ensure safe and easy transport to and from school, work and social events. I have been working hard to have Denistone station upgraded for our community and now, as part of the New South Wales Government's commitment, the construction of two new lifts and more accessible infrastructure is well underway. In 2019 I met with a constituent whose mother-in-law had a hard time using the stairs following hip surgery and who needed to go to Eastwood station despite living next to Denistone station. The upgrade will make the Denistone station precinct more accessible to those with a disability or limited mobility, parents and carers with prams, and customers with luggage. Other upgrades include the installation of canopies and benches, accessible paths, a kiss-and-ride bay, and family and ambulant toilets, amongst other things. I will keep the House updated on its progress.

Mother's Day has come and gone, but I thank all the mums in our communities, particularly the mums at Ryde. I was at a pre-poll the other day at Bennelong helping out Simon Kennedy, and one of the midwives came up to me and said, "I know that you were born in Ryde Hospital". I said, "Yes, I was". The mums at Ryde are very vocal and are very much looking forward to the rebuild of Ryde Hospital at close to half a billion dollars. We need to make sure that the mums at Ryde are appropriately catered for in that brand-new hospital. Apart from my mother giving birth to me at Denistone House all those years ago, the Premier's wife has had a number of kids at Ryde Hospital, such is its reputation. I thank all the mums in Ryde, and in particular the mums at Ryde Hospital, for all the great work they do.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (18:28): I publicly acknowledge the very hard work that the member for Ryde has been doing for his community for well over a decade. His very brief contribution in this place tonight has highlighted just a sprinkling of the significant changes for his community that he has fought long and hard for. While as a Minister he is transforming the technological environment in which we engage with government as citizens of this State, he has never once taken his eye off his local community. I also thank him for his constant selfies, which promote the great work of this Government in his electorate while also somewhat promoting himself. Those thanks are truly well deserved. The advanced learning and technological changes that have been delivered in local schools will help the next generation accelerate and become better members of the community than this generation. His mum also did a great job bringing him up.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): I also note the cooking of the mother of the member for Ryde, which looks amazing in his selfies.

NSW AMBULANCE SERVICES

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (18:30): NSW Ambulance response times were among the slowest in the country in January and were the State's longest wait times in a decade, even before Omicron added strain to our health system. The data speaks for itself: In the September 2021 quarter, Ambulance Newcastle response times were slower than the same quarter in 2020. It took paramedics one minute and 24 seconds longer to reach

emergency cases, a median time of 12 minutes and 36 seconds. For urgent cases the median wait was 22 minutes and 18 seconds—an increase of two minutes and 24 seconds. The percentage of emergency cases waiting 15 minutes for an ambulance was 52.4 per cent—an 8.1 per cent increase in a year. The median time it took the highest priority life-threatening cases to see an ambulance was up 36 seconds to eight minutes and 36 seconds.

The Productivity Commission's report says waiting time blowouts are squarely the responsibility of this Government. Funding was slashed and NSW Ambulance remains critically under-resourced per head of population. Health Services Union secretary Gerard Hayes said:

... Unprecedented pressure and fewer resources is a recipe for disaster.

...

Paramedics are at breaking point because there are simply not enough of them. The NSW Government needs to stop cutting funding to the service, employ more paramedics and also retain the ones we already have.

I have said before that in situations where every second counts, a single minute means a difference between life and death. Our paramedics are losing that precious time, and patients pay the price. When Hanna Scigala sat down to eat with her kids on 4 January, there is no way any of them could have expected what came next. The 31-year-old single mother of three entered severe anaphylactic shock and went into cardiac arrest in front of her children, Madden, aged 12; Leo, aged nine; and three-year-old Peyton. Hanna attempted to call 000 on a number of occasions but was disconnected due to issues with the phone system. After nine minutes of trying, an ambulance was finally dispatched to her home, arriving 11 minutes later. It took 52 minutes for an intensive care ambulance to arrive at Hanna's home, even after a code 1 call to 000.

It is due to large numbers of ambulances stuck in bed block at Hunter hospitals. She was not transported to hospital until 11.20, and by that time Hanna had suffered a hypoxic brain injury. Sadly, Hanna died several days later at John Hunter Hospital when her family made the impossible decision to take her off life support. This tragic incident could have been avoided if the State's ambulance services were adequately staffed and resourced. For years I have been trying for a stronger, more robust ambulance service. I have warned that the consistent failures to meet on-time targets and widespread reports of paramedic exhaustion and burnout would lead to tragedy. Hanna's death is exactly that tragedy.

Hanna's parents ensured that her tragic death had some positive impacts, donating her organs and potentially saving other lives. I thank the health Minister, who liaised with me directly over the past month about this issue. NSW Ambulance has spoken with Hanna's mother, Christine, and offered its apology and an explanation. But the fact remains that the ambulance required, with intensive care paramedics, did not arrive for 52 minutes due to bed block. We must address the chronic under-resourcing and paramedic shortage immediately. It is the least that we can do for Hanna

COOLAMON SHIRE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (18:35): The Coolamon Shire is located in the south-west of the Cootamundra electorate. This local government area encapsulates the towns and villages of Coolamon, Ardlethan, Ganmain, Beckom, Marrar and Matong, which all boast aspects of calm country living. The region is an agricultural powerhouse, consisting of picturesque rolling fields and crops such as wheat and chaff. There is plenty to see and do with boutique stores and cafes occupying many stunning heritage buildings that line the streets. I always encourage people to drop in to Coolamon—particularly to the fire museum, which retells history through its amazing displays of everything to do with fire services—or to visit Ardlethan, the home of the Australian kelpie, and see the bronze statue in Stewart Park. Visitors can explore wide open spaces through various walking and riding trails, including trails in the Kindra State Forest and others.

The region has plenty to offer its residents and visitors, which is only further enhanced through the incredible investments of the New South Wales Government. Recently I had the pleasure of catching up with the wonderful Coolamon Men's Shed to present it with a cheque for \$10,018 to install a 6.65 kilowatt solar power system. This new system will help lower its operating costs and ensure that this vital shed can continue for years to come. In addition to this, children can now get to and from school safely thanks to seatbelts being installed on every school bus in the shire under the New South Wales Government's Rural and Regional Bus Seatbelt Program. I had the pleasure of catching up with future leaders at a luncheon I hosted for school captains from schools in the Coolamon Shire. It was wonderful to see such motivated students with big plans for the future.

The New South Wales Government's Crown lands fund will deliver new lighting and accessible toilets and change rooms at Kindra Park in Coolamon through a \$622,761 grant. Ganmain Sports Ground will also be improved, thanks to a \$50,000 grant for fencing and lighting. I commend the wider community and the Coolamon Shire Council for their forward planning, which also covers disaster management and industry development.

Almost \$111,000 has been awarded to the council to carry out a flood and floodplain risk management study under the Floodplain Management Program, which will help reduce the impact of flooding in local communities. The \$1.9 million Coolamon Industrial Estate project is funded under the Government's Drought Stimulus Package, and is also steaming ahead with council currently in the process of finalising the plan. This development will see various business owners, such as mechanics and transport operators, establish their bases at the spacious site, which will hopefully lead to an expansion of operations and, furthermore, produce great returns to the town in multiple areas, including employment.

Community groups can continue to be the real winners thanks to the Government's ongoing commitment to rural and regional New South Wales through the Stronger Country Communities Fund. In the most recent round, over \$700,000 was delivered to community groups for their projects, including \$193,000 to upgrade the multipurpose netball and tennis courts at the Ganmain Sports Ground; \$193,000 for stage three of upgrades to the Kindra Park precinct, including refurbishing the football change rooms, constructing a new timekeeper, player and spectator seating area and the purchase of a new electronic scoreboard for the netball courts; \$182,000 for lighting and player change room upgrades at Langtry Oval in Marrar; and \$175,000 for essential upgrades at Ardlethan Recreation Ground, including female change rooms and accessible toilets.

It is great to see such a wide range of facilities being upgraded, particularly to increase participation in the growing sporting scene in the Coolamon Shire. Furthermore, the Community Building Partnership program is funding \$36,000 for a floor replacement project at the Ganmain Historical Society Museum and \$11,900 for court repair, fencing and a paving project at the Ardlethan Tennis Club. Each and every project that I have mentioned today is built upon the Government's vision to help make regional New South Wales the best place to live, work and visit. This exact vision has been embraced by the wider community, which has time and again put forward projects that will futureproof the region. When we all work together, it is unbelievable what we can achieve, and the collective efforts of residents, volunteers, sporting committees, local businesses, community organisations and the Coolamon Shire Council are a great example of that.

VOLUNTEERING

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:40): This week is National Volunteer Week, with the theme in 2022 being "Better Together". Volunteering brings people together, building communities and creating a better society for all. Volunteers are the backbone of our society, providing numerous social and economic benefits. They are everyday people who place the needs of the community above themselves in response to a variety of situations and crises. However, while volunteering is beneficial to the community, it is also beneficial to the individual. Volunteering strengthens ties to others in the community, broadening social and support networks and neighbourhood resources, as well as providing meaningful work for people of all ages.

In the wake of the unpredictable coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, as well as the 2019-20 bushfire season, the efforts of volunteers have only become more critical in my electorate of Davidson and across New South Wales. So I was pleased with the findings of The Centre for Volunteering's *New South Wales State of Volunteering Report 2021*, which revealed that more than 4.8 million New South Wales residents volunteered in 2020, contributing a combined \$127 billion in social and economic benefits. Compared with 2019, more people volunteered for more hours in 2020, and they made up 75.9 per cent of the adult population in New South Wales. Volunteers donated 1.5 billion hours in 2020 and, interestingly, 33.4 per cent of that was undertaken from home or online. That reveals how methods of volunteering are evolving through the utilisation of online platforms. Young people also make up a significant percentage of the volunteer population, with 41.8 per cent of organisations utilising people aged 18 to 24, who spent an average of 40.7 hours volunteering per month.

In the report, over 1,100 volunteers and 1,000 organisations were surveyed. The Centre for Volunteering CEO Gemma Rygate said the report highlights the positive impact volunteering has on all aspects of community life. Gemma importantly mentioned how the volunteer workforce is as big as the private sector, and despite the impact of the pandemic it continues to grow. Overall, the evidence reveals that the benefits of volunteering outweigh any cost to the individual, and there is a substantial social, cultural and economic gain in volunteering. I also acknowledge the volunteering efforts of all individuals and organisations in my electorate of Davidson who have contributed to my local community, as well as the broader community, over the past year.

For example, emergency services such as the Belrose, Davidson, Ku-ring-gai and Killara rural fire brigades have delivered an essential service to people in my local community and across New South Wales. Local governments such as Northern Beaches Council have launched initiatives, including Library2U, to provide items to residents in their homes during the lockdowns. Ku-ring-gai Council has also offered volunteer opportunities to young people in youth leadership, among many other programs.

The volunteer workforce has been critical to New South Wales and Australia more broadly. Therefore, it is vital that frontline workers are nurtured and valued for their important service to communities, particularly

during unpredictable times. Furthermore, as evidenced by both the report from the Centre for Volunteering and local communities across New South Wales, the overwhelming benefits reinforce the importance of continuing to support volunteering well into the future. Finally, I note that the 2022 Centre for Volunteering awards process is now underway. Nominations close on 17 June 2022 and I encourage people to participate in that process. I thank all our wonderful volunteers.

MASCOT TOWERS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:45): I again bring to the attention of the House the plight of the Mascot Towers residents in my electorate, who were tragically evacuated from their 132 apartment units almost three years ago on 14 June 2019. I was present on that fateful Saturday night when they were evacuated and my heart continues to go out to those residents. The building's strata committee commissioned an investigation into the cause of the failure of Mascot Towers. As reported in the *Financial Review*, it concluded:

The tower's investigation team has now confirmed the "cracking" of the building that led to the building's evacuation on June 14 was due to building work at its neighbour, the Peak Towers apartments at 27 Church Avenue, particularly the soil-filled water that has been leaking from Peak Towers into Mascot Towers.

The soil underneath the building is falling away, peer-reviewed investigations indicate.

"As advised ... the experts believed that the cause of the subsidence was the construction of the adjoining building and not any original construction defect" ...

That issue is currently being litigated in pending proceedings in the Supreme Court. However, I note that the conclusions reached by the strata committee's own investigations are consistent with the advice of the engineers I spoke to on the night of the evacuation. As this evacuation occurred shortly after the Opal Tower incident, there was considerable concern that Mascot Towers was a repeat of Opal Tower and there was something wrong with either the development application or certification process.

The former fair trading Minister agreed to government support for alternative accommodation for residents and continued to provide that support. On the change of Minister at the end of 2021, that support looked like coming to an end. However, following concerted pressure from the Leader of the Opposition and the Hon. Courtney Houssos from the other place, as well as the disastrous performance by the current Minister in an upper House estimates committee hearing, last week the Government agreed to extend that support for an additional 12 months.

Currently the problem that owners face is they have to continue to fund both this expensive litigation and the mortgage payments on their units, in which they cannot live. Funding litigation against cashed-up Chinese property developers is like funding a bottomless pit. I am told eight owners have already gone bankrupt. There is only one solution the Government should take, which would not amount to a precedent: acquire the site, compensate the owners and take over the litigation.

Last Thursday the Minister for Local Government told this House she had written to the departmental chief executive to request an inquiry under section 430 of the Local Government Act 1993 in relation to the decisions of the former Botany Bay City Council in dealing with the development application, alleged missing documents and other decisions of the council. The exercise of such a power by a Minister, including the power under section 430, must be for a proper purpose. It cannot be exercised for political purposes or because the Government is under pressure to support Mascot Towers residents, nor because it does not like the way in which I take points of order during question time. To do so is misfeasance; it is the wrongful exercise of lawful authority. It may be considered corrupt conduct pursuant to section 8 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988 and is most likely to be a breach of the Ministerial Code of Conduct, which requires the Minister to act to the exclusion of any other interest. It may constitute the criminal offence of misconduct in public office.

The development consent for Mascot Towers was a joint consent between the Department of Planning and the council on 21 July 2004. The Minister's department has the same documents as the council. The general manager tells me that all documents have been obtained, digitised and recorded and are in possession of the parties in the litigation, and that the Minister's assertion that the documents are missing is untrue. As I understand it, the Office of Local Government has not provided the Minister with material relating to a request pursuant to section 430 of the Local Government Act, nor has the department provided the Minister with a basis for her to exercise her statutory authority.

The Mascot Towers constituents are in a crisis. I have reviewed the development application reports. I have found nothing that might show an error by the elected council. I wish I could detect such an error; at least then the residents would be able to add the council as a party to the proceedings and have some prospect of a claim against the council's insurance company rather than relying on payment by Chinese property developers. Unfortunately, rather than focus on a solution for residents the Minister has chosen to act in a way that may well have resulted in

her acting in breach of her duty as a Minister of the Crown. I remind the House that Ian Macdonald is incarcerated for that reason.

TRIBUTE TO CORPORAL ERNEST ALBERT COREY, MM

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (18:50): Having commemorated Anzac Day just last month, today marks a significant anniversary for my electorate of Monaro. I acknowledge the military service rendered by so many by highlighting the service of a single World War I hero—and that is not a title I attribute lightly. On 17 May 1917, 105 years ago, Private Ernest Albert Corey of Cooma was awarded his first Military Medal for displaying "great courage and devotion to duty". Incredibly, he would go on to earn another three. While his name remains virtually unknown, Ernie is the only soldier to ever attain such a record. To put this into perspective, 115,000 Military Medals were awarded for bravery during World War I, around 5,700 recipients were awarded a second medal, or bar, and a mere 180 received a third bar.

There is just one instance of a fourth Military Medal recipient: Ernie Corey, who at 24 was working as a blacksmith's striker in Cooma when he joined the famed Men from Snowy River march that left Delegate in January 1916. In Ernie's own words, he earned his medals without firing a single shot in the line of duty. That is because Ernie, despite having joined the infantry, volunteered to act as a stretcher bearer in the field, with no training. He would go on to serve in that capacity in some of the most gruelling battles on the Western Front. In the very first of those battles, having barely arrived in the war zone and in the absence of trained stretcher bearers, he put himself forward with a small group of other soldiers to assist. Under direct enemy observation, Ernie rescued countless numbers of men over a 17-hour stretch without a moment's respite.

Ernie's skills in saving lives rather than taking them was well remarked upon by those with whom he served in the 55th Battalion. Although Ernie was not a big man—once declaring himself the shortest in his contingent—Private Bert Bishop would later write of him that "as a stretcher bearer, he was almost superhuman". Ernie's valour did not end after the first battle. He would earn the other three Military Medals in less than 18 months—the last two in the same month, September 1918—which is another remarkable milestone never seen before or since. It was stated that over the course of that relatively short period "scores of men of the battalion had their lives saved by Ernie Corey".

Shortly before the end of that unfathomable war, Ernie needed saving himself. Going to the aid of a wounded officer, he was almost killed by a high-explosive shell. After two operations he was sent home to Cooma. Thereafter, the details of Ernie's remarkable war record became as low-key as the man himself. He would go on to live a quiet life working as a cleaner and maintenance man, marrying a Queanbeyan girl and having a daughter. Incredibly, at the outbreak of World War II Ernie signed up at age 49. He served until 1943, though this time not leaving Australia. Ernie would be a founding member of some of the first RSLs in our region.

His final years were spent in the Queanbeyan nursing home where his medals were pinned to his chest for the last time on Anzac Day 1972, four months before his death on 25 August. Today, they are found at the Australian War Memorial. As for Ernie's story, it is one that has been waiting 105 years to be fully told. I was fortunate to be introduced to some of Ernie's history a few years ago by a Queanbeyan-based lawyer, Peter Hohnen, and I have researched and written about him since. Cooma has also marked his extraordinary feats with a striking memorial in the heart of town. It is well worth taking a moment to stop and reflect when you are in that great part of the world. Here today, in this place, we will remember the service of Ernie Corey and so many others between that time and this. Lest we forget.

BLUE MOUNTAINS ELECTORATE ROADS

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (18:54): I recently reported to the House the shocking inadequacies of Blue Mountains rail services. Today I raise the ongoing challenges in my electorate by focusing on the parlous state of roads. In recent months my office has been inundated with concerns from local residents despairing about the state of key arterial roads in the Blue Mountains, such as the Great Western Highway, Hawkesbury Road, Bells Line of Road and the Darling Causeway. The distressing stories I have received reveal how dangerous and decrepit those main roads in the Blue Mountains have become, due in part to recent rain and flood events but mainly due to the lack of adequate repair and infrastructure support from the Government over many years.

The overwhelming volume of disturbing accounts, the serious accidents and the tragic loss of life of a young woman serve as a litany to the Government's years of neglect. The serious nature of the accounts has prompted me to collate them into a report to present to the roads Ministers in a formal submission. I will let some of my constituents speak for themselves. Michael said, "The state of the highway is rapidly reaching breaking point. The road surface now resembles a patchwork quilt and the regular delays are totally unacceptable. Years of indifference and neglect have doomed us to a Third World transport disaster. The future is bleak for long-suffering

residents." A nurse wrote in March this year, "I work at Katoomba hospital. I know of a nurse who is on call tonight and has been forced to stay at a friend's place in Katoomba instead of going home to Blackheath because of the 2½-hour delay in traffic. What if there was an emergency? What if an ambulance needed to get to Blackheath from Katoomba?"

Christopher wrote, "Like many, I was horrified at events recently on a Friday where school children were unable to get home for three hours." Katie wrote to me and said, "Yesterday my kids took the 8705 from Katoomba High School to Blackheath. In Blackheath it hit a pothole so deep and big that the bus door fell off its hinges. The roads definitely need repair. I'm wondering why we are the ones who have to stay off the road when we pay taxes to have the roads maintained and repaired. Clearly they do nothing about it." Finally, Peter's words sum up the sentiments of many. He said, "Everyone has a right to get home safe to their loved ones, every day, with no exceptions." I have also met with Tracy, the mother of a young woman, Mackenzie, who was tragically killed in November last year when a truck driver mounted the footpath at Blaxland along the Great Western Highway and hit her. Motivated by a mother's heartache, Tracy has come up with recommendations that aim to prevent this kind of tragedy happening again. Those include stronger penalties to deter offenders, stricter requirements around owning and registering trucks, and better protection for pedestrians along the Great Western Highway at Blaxland.

My submission to the Ministers includes several recommendations, including that a safety audit on the entirety of the Great Western Highway be conducted as a matter of urgency; that a long-term plan for remediation and maintenance of Blue Mountains roads be developed and immediately implemented to ensure their stability in the face of future heavy rains; and that additional funding be granted immediately to Blue Mountains City Council for urgent repair of dangerous potholes and other damage. We should not need a fatality to remind the Government of the need for an urgent safety audit of the Great Western Highway. We should not need a teenager to be hit by a car on Hawkesbury Road to remind the Government that it needs to provide a time frame for the safety review of Hawkesbury Road and let us know what steps are being put in place to ensure the safety of all pedestrians. We should not need to argue that the Government support Blue Mountains City Council financially to address urgent road repairs and issues relating to flood damage and drainage.

As for the Government's pipedream proposal for a tunnel from Blackheath to Hartley, that will bring a myriad of new problems. The Great Western Highway should not be viewed just as a motorway for trucks to and from Bathurst. It is a local road for residents of the Blue Mountains and this proposal opens the door to thousands of 23- to 26-metre-long B-double trucks to traverse the lower and middle sections of the highway between Katoomba and Glenbrook. While those trucks are presently prohibited through the lower and mid mountains due to the tight bends near Mount Victoria, The Nationals' plan for the upper mountains is all about getting larger and longer trucks to drive through the entire Blue Mountains. The massive traffic flow of giant trucks induced by the tunnel will get stuck at the traffic lights in Wentworth Falls, Lawson and Springwood during busy weekends, and take longer and longer to clear. The Government does not want to admit that. I urge the Ministers to carefully consider the voices of my constituents and take action on the recommendations. Keeping people safe on the roads should be beyond party politics and announcements of ridiculously expensive fantasy tunnels.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN RAYMOND NETHERCOTE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (18:59): It is important to recognise and appreciate those who have served our democracy and its institutions over long periods of time and have made remarkable contributions to civic life. In that spirit, I pay tribute to one of Australia's great political historians, public servants and experts on parliament, J. R. "John" Nethercote. Sadly, John died in Canberra on Tuesday 3 May, aged 74. To me he was a friend, mentor and colleague and to so many he was an inspiration. John Raymond Nethercote was born in Sydney on 1 March 1948. After graduating from the University of Sydney in 1969, John embarked on a long, successful career in the Australian public service and in academia, where he attained the rank of a professor. His career included stints as a committee secretary in the Senate and as a panellist on several public service reviews. Those included his contribution to the Coombs Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration. The Coombs report was published in 1977, with J. R. Nethercote and Cameron Hazlehurst as coeditors.

In addition to his public servant role, John served as an adjunct professor at the Australian Catholic University. In that capacity, he distinguished himself as a historian of Australian politics. John was the editor of numerous books and journals on political institutions, government and politics. His publications included *Liberalism and the Australian Federation*, *The 'Whig' View of Australian History: And Other Essays*, *Menzies: The Shaping of Modern Australia* and *Road to Freedom: The Origins of Australia's Greatest Political Party*. With his writing reaching a wider popular audience, John penned articles for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and appeared as a guest on ABC Radio. As his friend and mine Julian Leaser, MP, noted after his passing, "John was a font of historical knowledge about Australian government."

While possessing a commanding familiarity with all sides of Australian politics, John's intellectual contribution to Australian liberalism was singularly noteworthy. His edited volumes on Menzies and the Liberal

movement dating back to Federation offered fresh insights and filled a hole in the existing literature on Australian politics. Like his close friends and fellow scholars Graeme Starr, David Kemp and David Furse-Roberts, John enriched our understanding of what it meant to be an Australian Liberal. For a party that has not always celebrated as well as it could its history—its heroes and its folklore—that was a defining achievement.

Living life to the full, John was always fond of a good red wine, a hearty Chinese meal and a classical concert at the Sydney Opera House. Sporting a bow tie and often his classic maroon jacket and trilby hat, he was a lovably eccentric, larger-than-life character who was never afraid to stand out from the crowd. In person, John was gregarious and engaging, the ideal dinner companion who loved nothing more than a great yarn. I first met John about five years ago and recall a long conversation with him in Canberra at the Dame Enid Lyons dinner at Old Parliament House, hosted by the Menzies Research Centre [MRC] in August 2018. With red wine flowing and a bevy of famous faces from Australia's political past and present, John was in his element. After that we shared a warm association, particularly when I joined the Menzies Research Centre in 2019 as its executive general manager. We worked together on many projects and events, including two of the MRC's annual John Howard lectures, featuring John Anderson in 2020 and Brendan Nelson in 2021.

I worked with John on the publication of his 2019 book *The Road to Freedom*, which he co-authored with the executive director of the MRC, Nick Cater. *The Road to Freedom* chronicled the founding of the Liberal Party of Australia in 1944 and was released to coincide with the party's seventy-fifth anniversary. In my previous role at the MRC, I made appearances from time to time on the ABC's current affairs program *The Drum*. John would always ring me afterwards with feedback, advice and tips, and I was always very grateful for his call. When I went on to successfully contest the preselection for the vacant seat of Willoughby in January 2022, John was kind enough to provide me with a generous reference. When we last spoke, he warmly congratulated me on my election as the member for Willoughby and lent me his counsel.

As everybody who met him would attest, John was always generous with his knowledge and time. In his long association with the Menzies Research Centre, John helped mentor a number of its young interns and staff with his extraordinary knowledge of Australian liberalism and prodigious proofreading capacities. He invested heavily in people as a great friend of many organisations, helping to foster their interests in political history and develop their writing skills. We are indebted to his intellectual talent and personal kindness. Australia is in his debt for helping the broader public to better understand our political past and the workings of government. Vale, a great Australian and friend, J. R. Nethercote.

COST OF LIVING

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (19:04): The humble working-class economist returns for the May sittings. Tonight's focus is on the rising cost of living and its impact on working people. We know the then Treasurer's and now Premier's fondness for Bon Jovi's music. He even referenced Tommy and Gina in last year's Budget Speech. Those of us who are familiar with Bon Jovi classics would know that "Tommy used to work on the docks" and "Gina works the diner all day". They are solid hardworking folk, much like those in my electorate. But life for those like Tommy and Gina is harder than ever. The cost-of-living crisis is biting very hard. Petrol prices, power and the cost of food and housing are all up. Under this Liberal Government residents have had to endure increased tolls, fines and taxes and record inflation—all up—except for wages, of course. Wages growth has flatlined year on year.

Only under the Liberal Government do we hear about going forward by having lower wages and increasing costs. Living standards are going backwards, and fast. We can and must do better. Working people like Tommy and Gina know the cost of picking up the ever-increasing bills with less money to spare. Working people like Tommy and Gina can no longer rely on "livin' on a prayer" to see them through the tough times. They need a Government that is committed to real action and ending the attack on their household budgets. People like Tommy and Gina are rising up saying, "It's my life." The Premier might recognise these Bon Jovi lyrics too:

And I ain't gonna be just a face in the crowd
You're gonna hear my voice when I shout it out loud.

Because working people are fed up. Our nurses, teachers and frontline workers are taking to the streets, demanding more than the Government's insincere thanks, platitudes and political spin.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order—

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: There are no points of order during private members' statements.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Yes, there are.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Members will resume their seats while I confer with the Clerk.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: Can we stop the clock?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Yes. The Clerk will stop the clock. There are no points of order during private members' statements.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Madam Speaker, if I may, there is the ability to take points of order during private members' statements. I note previous Speakers' rulings about ensuring that private members' statements are related to people's communities. Members are able to take a point of order. I think what we are hearing about is Jon Bon Jovi and the Premier's interest, rather than the electorate of the member for Macquarie Fields.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for Macquarie Fields will continue.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: I reject that interjection.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member will resume his seat. I am aware that it has become a longstanding custom that at some point an issue or matter pertaining to a member's electorate is mentioned during a private member's statement. I am sure that the member for Macquarie Fields will do that. The member can lead up to it in the same way that questions are answered in question time.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: The rising cost of living affects every electorate and every member in every community. The idea that it does not is an absolute furphy. Our nurses, our teachers and our frontline workers are taking to the streets, demanding more than the Government's insincere thanks, platitudes and political spin. People in my electorate, and in every electorate, have never had it tougher. The pandemic saw record job losses that have not been seen since the depression, which came on the heels of our country's worst bushfires. Just as we were turning a corner out of the pandemic, the New South Wales economy was hit by devastating floods. We have had blow after blow.

Families are struggling to make ends meet and people are having to make difficult choices—medicine or food, power bills or new shoes for the kids. At the same time, taxes in this State have gone up by 10 per cent in one year. That makes New South Wales the highest taxing State of any jurisdiction in the entire country. Under this Liberal Government, fees and charges are increasing by 4 per cent each year. The Premier continues to deliberately jack up living costs, while keeping wages low. As if it could not get any worse, the New South Wales Liberal—

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I remind the member for North Shore that no points of order—

Ms Felicity Wilson: I am sorry, points of order—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I have conferred with the Clerk. The member for North Shore will resume her seat. The member for Macquarie Fields has referred to his electorate.

Ms Felicity Wilson: I am sorry, but the member did not refer to his electorate.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for Macquarie Fields will continue to refer to his electorate. The member has the call.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: The Premier continues to deliberately jack up living costs while keeping wages low for many people in my electorate and every electorate across the State. As if it could not get any worse, the Government now wants to introduce a never-ending annual land tax on family homes. That will result in higher property prices in my electorate and every other electorate, higher rent and indeed lower savings. Increased taxes and unstoppable rising living costs with real wages going backwards is economic management Liberal Party style. If Tommy and Gina are listening to the Premier wax lyrical, they are not impressed. What is more, the people in my electorate and across New South Wales are not impressed either. Year after year, my community has been left begging for funding for much-needed infrastructure projects. If not for the political rorts and pork-barrelling, those infrastructure projects would have been funded years ago. Given the interjections, I have lost a minute. With the budget around the corner, this is the time for things to be made right. [*Time expired.*]

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:10): I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Macquarie Fields and I encourage him to look into the funding that is available for western Sydney. WestInvest is a \$5 billion program. The member is concerned about funding in his community. This Government is getting on with investing across western Sydney. I recommend that the member for Macquarie Fields think about the investments available in Macquarie Fields. There has been a huge rebound through the extensive COVID support programs and initiatives for small businesses and for individuals across areas, including the electorate of Macquarie Fields. I encourage the member to look into that. It seems that he is a little bit confused because he

was talking about AC/DC and Guns N' Roses musicians rather than what the people of Macquarie Fields and New South Wales want—that is, to get on with their lives and get back to the brighter future we can all expect in New South Wales. They want to make sure that they can earn the incomes that they want to earn in the great jobs that they are looking to have.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I will pay very close attention to ensure that all private members' statements relate to members' electorates.

AVALON

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (19:11): Late last year the suburb of Avalon in my electorate of Pittwater celebrated its centenary. Arthur J. Small, a local businessman and property developer first named the place Avalon because it was, "An earthly paradise, truly a most appropriate name for such a beautiful spot". The brochure for the Central Estate, one of his developments, showed large lots facing Avalon Parade. They were 66 feet wide, connecting Avalon Beach to Pittwater's eastern shore. Public recreation reserves and sheds were set aside at either beachfront and there was a regular motor bus service connecting Avalon Beach to the tram terminus at Narrabeen. The tram may be gone but the other important public facets of this development still feature at Avalon today. Mature trees now cover the landscape, helping to cool the homes and streets below on hot summer days. Avalon and Clareville beaches remain public egalitarian places where anyone can be at leisure.

For a place as remote from the city centre as Avalon, there is a remarkable cultural acceptance and embrace for the use of public transport. If you stand at the intersection of Avalon Parade and Old Barrenjoey Road, you will see wide thoroughfares, bustling with pedestrians hustling between shopfronts. In the lead-up to last year's council election, local candidates agreed that lowering the speed limits in the Avalon village centre would not only slow rat runs but also make the place more attractive and productive. Lowering speed limits to 30 kilometres per hour in appropriate locations was one of the major recommendations of the Committee for Sydney's research last year to reinvigorate high streets, which is particularly relevant during this National Road Safety Week.

The New South Wales Government is backing the vision in the Northern Beaches Council's Avalon Beach Place plan, with half a million dollars through the Streets as Shared Spaces program. It will trial a much-anticipated closure of Old Barrenjoey Road. The trial will create wider footpaths, new landscaping and greater open space for people to relax, dine and move about. We need to apply this long-term view when we plan new places today. In many new developments, it can be difficult to see how the design decisions we take today will stand 100 years from now. High streets and public squares are uncommon in most postwar urban development. Mature trees are cleared, with very small plots for new trees to take their place. Footpaths and street verges are treated as optional luxuries and house designs do not always consider the context of their location, leaving them dependent on expensive and unsustainable air conditioning to make them habitable. How will local communities 100 years into the future look upon the places we build today?

The Federal election campaign has correctly focused on making it easier for families to buy homes, but we also need to think about the investments we can make today to make homes valuable beyond their ticket price. Many planning interventions that some call red tape or unfeasible today reap huge benefits over the long term. Unlike hard infrastructure, which depreciates in value over time, investments in trees and public spaces as part of new development are worth more to the community as they grow. However, we pile these all together as singular development costs that supposedly make housing unacceptably expensive.

Too often in the debate over urban development we take an expansive view of costs and a reductive view of benefits. A local doctor recently mentioned to me how we only care about our health once we become sick. We do not pay enough attention to the actions we can take today to prevent future maladies. This applies equally to our urban environments. While the market could potentially build more housing than it does today if we paid less regard to the housing and urban design standards we choose to uphold, we know that is a recipe for failure not only for building substandard housing today but also for creating poor-quality investments over the long term.

Pittwater is a healthy community by New South Wales standards, and the local natural and built environment is a significant factor in attaining those outcomes. Places with ample open space that facilitate active lifestyles let people live longer, healthier, happier and more fulfilled lives. As the recent Netflix hit *Old Enough!* shows, cities that make it easier for children to walk safely to school, to friends' houses and to shops, so commonplace in Japanese cities, enforce good, healthy habits that young people will carry throughout life. Amid the challenges in the housing market we face today, let us make sure that we keep at least one eye on the long view. As parliamentarians, we have responsibilities not only for our communities today but also for those who will live in our communities in the future. Like Arthur J. Small envisioned 100 years ago for Avalon, let us make our local communities earthly paradises for centuries to come.

AMBULANCE WAIT TIMES

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (19:16): There is no doubt that the Hunter and Central Coast health system is experiencing a crisis. Time and time again, I have raised in this House the lack of safe staffing levels, and extensive emergency department and elective surgery wait times, as well as the impacts that the closure of the Calvary Mater GP Access after-hours clinic and the halving of the weekend operating hours of the Belmont Hospital clinic have had on our local community. However, today I will discuss the significant ambulance wait times that Hunter, Central Coast and New South Wales residents are experiencing more broadly.

Only a couple of weeks ago, I was contacted by a constituent who advised me that her mother, Margaret, waited for over eight hours for an ambulance to arrive at her home. Margaret was enduring significant abdominal pain, so her friend called the ambulance, first at 11.20 a.m. After an hour and a half, no ambulance had arrived, so Margaret's friend called 000 again. Around 2.00 p.m. they called again and were told that they were next in line for an ambulance. Four hours had passed and the ambulance still had not arrived. When they called back, they were told that the ambulance was just around the corner and the operator apologised profusely. The ambulance arrived at 6.45 p.m. and Margaret was admitted to Belmont Hospital at 7.45 p.m. Tragically, Margaret passed away within 10 minutes of being admitted to hospital. This experience has been traumatic for Margaret's family and friends. No-one should have to lose a loved one in this way. They want answers as to how this was allowed to occur and action taken so that other families do not have to endure such events.

It distresses me that residents from the Swansea electorate are dying while waiting to get the medical assistance they so desperately need. However, Margaret's case, unfortunately, is not an isolated one. Ambulance wait times have blown out statewide. Just last month, a Sydney man died on an ambulance stretcher after waiting for an hour for a bed in the Concord hospital emergency department. New South Wales has a chronic shortage of hospital beds and health staff shortages, which, mixed with increasing 000 calls, has led to this crisis.

This crisis has been echoed in the Bureau of Health Information's quarterly report for October to December 2021. For priority cases, the median call to ambulance arrival time increased from the year prior, from 12.2 minutes to 14.1 minutes. The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has known about ambulance staffing levels being stretched to breaking point in the Hunter and on the Central Coast for some time. I constantly hear of instances of local ambos being relocated to different stations. For example, I know that many have been relocated from the Belmont station, which is in the Hunter area, down to the Wamberal station, just north of Terrigal, on the Central Coast. I am sure that this issue is occurring across the State. Not only are we seeing paramedics being shuffled from station to station to cover staffing shortages, but also we are seeing ramping occurring at hospitals across the State. We are simply in a health crisis.

Given these dire circumstances, ambos have been doing their best to support the health and wellbeing of our local communities. However, when they are burnt out from working hours on end due to staff issues, do not have the resources to keep up with the increased demand and the Government fails to act on this, patients like Margaret and their loved ones continue to suffer. It is time for the Government to realise the severity of this crisis and the impacts it is having not only on the Swansea community but also on people across the State. I urge the Government to act now by launching an immediate investigation into Margaret's case.

Madam Temporary Speaker, I know that you can personally attest to these shortages we are experiencing across the State, leading to increased ambulance wait times. Unfortunately, last week we were not in a position to debate a very important motion you brought to this House. I commend you for showing such an interest in the health of the people we represent in our electorates. We cannot let Margaret's situation happen to anybody else. We need the Government to act as soon as possible to ensure that people can use our public health system, feel safe and receive the health care they need. I do not want to have to come back here and talk about people dying while waiting for ambulances.

MALPAS DAM PROJECT

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (19:21): Looking out at the magnificent vista of the rolling green hills, with luscious and long grass and native pastures and full farm dams, it is really hard, especially for visitors, to fathom that just over 24 months ago the Armidale and Guyra regions were in the grip of the worst drought anyone had ever experienced. Armidale, a city of 25,000 people, was literally months away from running out of water completely—a scenario never experienced by the local community and business leaders and, indeed, never anticipated. Armidale's sole water supply is Malpas Dam, located north-east of the village of Black Mountain. At that time, it was depleting rapidly. It was at the lowest level it had been since it was built in 1968.

To the north of Black Mountain, there was something even worse. The two dams supplying water to the community of Guyra—some 2½ thousand people—had been bone-dry since mid 2019, prompting the council, with the support of the State Government, to truck water each day to Guyra to keep it alive. Pre-empting that

eventuality earlier, in the midst of the drought, and at the urging of the community, the State Government and the council quite smartly invested \$12.8 million on a 19.6-kilometre emergency water pipeline connecting the dwindling supplies at Malpas Dam to Guyra and essentially supplementing its bone-dry dams. It was commissioned in October 2019 to make sure that the Guyra community did not run out of water. It was indeed a lifeline. But it was obvious then, as it is now, that, with continued population growth, business expansion in Guyra and Armidale, and the predicted frequency of drought conditions and increasing unpredictability in the weather, current water infrastructure and supplies will not deliver water security for Armidale, Guyra, Uralla or for anywhere in the region. Without that water security, we cannot grow with certainty, and we cannot expect to attract people to relocate and businesses to expand.

Malpas Dam was completed in 1968, when Armidale's population was around 18,000 people. Fast-forward 60 years to today and the water storage capacity of 13 gegalitres has not changed, but the population that relies on the dam is now well over 30,000 people, nearly doubling the drawdown of drinking water. Malpas Dam was built, though, with population growth in mind. The designs at the time accommodated a future expansion to 26 gegalitres capacity. Armidale Regional Council, with the support of the Government and under the leadership of Mayor Sam Coupland and General Manager James Roncon, have developed detailed plans and costings for the Malpas Dam expansion. If we lift the dam wall by 6.5 metres, at a cost of \$27 million, we can more than double the existing 13-gegalitre capacity and easily fill it, gaining an extra 17 gegalitres of water and transforming it into a true regional drinking water storage. The project is at a critical juncture and we cannot afford to take our foot off the accelerator and be lulled into a false sense of security because of the good seasonal conditions that we have now. This project is too important to sit idle, it is too important to delay and the time to act is now.

Recently Mayor Coupland and I met with the Minister for Lands and Water to impress upon him, now that the costings have been done, the critical importance of this project to the community and to request the capital funding right now so that council can get cracking on this important expansion. If we have learnt anything from the drought, it is that we must take action to ensure the water security of the region, Armidale and Guyra. The future economic and social viability of our region relies upon us learning these lessons. We cannot afford to wait another four or five years; we must act now while momentum is with us. On behalf of the community, I call upon the Government to allocate the required funding for this project in the upcoming June budget. There is no better time than now to push this project along.

We must be as bold and visionary as the region was in the 1960s when they built the dam. This ambitious project must be the positive legacy of the worst drought on record. The cost of doing nothing at Malpas Dam is far too great for our future and our region. The council is ready, the community is ready and now we need the Government to be ready to act, to show us the money and let us get on with this critical water security project to ensure that our region can thrive and grow, and safeguard the future generations of the Armidale and Guyra communities.

HOLSWORTHY ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (19:26): I speak about the infrastructure upgrades that have commenced or been completed across the Holsworthy electorate since just the beginning of the year. It is rewarding to see some more of my election promises being delivered, and it is fantastic to see construction on other projects progress. I have been lucky enough to announce some major projects that will bring significant benefits to our community. A number of local commuter car parks have recently been upgraded, and I had the pleasure of opening Edmondson Park South commuter car park earlier this year with the Minister for Transport. There are now 1,250 new car parking spots available, which will make the lives of local residents so much easier. These car spots will also ease the pressure and parking demands at other train stations, like Holsworthy.

Works have now also started on the Edmondson Park North commuter car park, which will deliver even more spaces for commuters and further alleviate parking pressure. I also visited Casula Station and saw the newly finished 60-space commuter car park—another win for local residents, who now have the option of a closer car park. Just last month I opened the Warwick Farm commuter car park upgrade. I announced that project in 2019. Thankfully, construction was able to continue throughout the COVID pandemic, so it was fantastic to be able to unveil the plaque and see people use it and benefit from it already. There are now an extra 250 car parking spaces available, making this a multistorey car park with around 740 spaces.

In and around my electorate I think we have got about 10 per cent of the new car parking spaces created by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government since 2011. I think that is pretty cool. These upgrades to commuter car parks around the local area will obviously not only improve access for commuters but also make their morning routine much smoother and easier. I also had the pleasure of marking another exciting milestone with the Minister for Education and Early Learning when we turned the sod on a brand-new primary school in Edmondson Park. The New South Wales Government announced this project in late 2020, so to see construction

well and truly underway is very exciting. The new primary school will deliver 44 teaching and learning spaces, four support classrooms and two preschool rooms early next year.

The school will accommodate up to 1,000 students and there will be 40 preschool places for the community to use. This school will benefit many young families who are choosing to live locally and will be welcomed into the growing area. The benefit of that—something I am learning—is you can drop the preschool child off and the primary school child off at the same time, which is much easier than doing a double movement. The primary school is one of the many local schools that have been built or upgraded since 2019. Prestons Public School is one of the schools that had a fantastic upgrade, which we opened in 2020, with \$11 million spent, and Liverpool West Public School is another school to benefit.

In March we welcomed the Minister for Health to Liverpool Hospital to turn the sod marking the beginning of construction on the six-storey hospital tower. The tower is part of the \$740 million upgrade of the Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct, which will significantly transform access to healthcare services for our local area. This major project is really exciting, and it is special seeing it start to come together. I have been part of the process of securing the funding and seeing various stages start construction from the beginning. It was great to show the Premier yesterday how far progressed it was. We know that this upgrade will make a huge difference to our community, and it is essential as south-west Sydney's population continues to grow. The construction on the upgrade has provided 850 jobs and employment opportunities along the way, with 70 per cent of them being in about a 30-kilometre radius. It has been a great job provider for our local area, and I cannot wait to see it. The new 500-space hospital car park will also be ready to be opened very soon.

In February we had the soft opening of the brand-new Service NSW centre in Ed.Square at Edmondson Park. This is another election promise that has now become a reality. The Service NSW centre will be the State's 111th centre. I know it will make a huge difference to our community, because the Liverpool centre is one of the busiest in the State. That is why I made sure that this was an election promise. Our locals are finding this centre, which is located in the shopping centre and opposite the train station, convenient and helpful, and I know that they are able to better access the cost-of-living savings as well.

Upgrading local roads and easing congestion for motorists is very important, so I was really happy to mark the milestone of commencing stage two of the Heathcote Road upgrade with the Minister for Metropolitan Roads recently. After years of advocating, investigations, planning and early works, having construction finally begin is very exciting for me and for the community. I look forward to being able to announce what is next very soon.

PEACE PARK

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (19:31): As its name would suggest, Peace Park in Ashbury is a tranquil oasis in the tangle of suburbs that make up Sydney's inner west—a spot where families picnic, children play, birdwatchers observe the beautiful species that thrive along the Cooks River and locals gather for regular games of bocce. The peace, however, has been broken by the recent sale of 30 Trevenar Street, a 1.65-hectare property adjoining the park, by Ausgrid to a private developer. The land was sold under the cover of the COVID lockdown last year, robbing the local community of a once-in-a-generation opportunity to expand Peace Park and establish access from King Street. The sale contravenes the wishes of the local council, which is in the process of rezoning the land for recreation. Importantly, the sale has opened up land for residential development that residents are concerned is not safe for habitation on account of contamination and flooding.

This is a story familiar to communities across our State—a State entity, privatised by the Liberal-Nationals Government in 2016, selling off public land for private profit. It is residents who are now paying the price. But Ashbury residents refuse to take this lying down, and on Saturday 30 April they held a rally at Peace Park, with over 100 people in attendance. I take this opportunity to put their concerns on the public record. Residents are concerned about whether the plot of land is suitable for residential development in the first place. Residents who have lived in Ashbury their whole lives reminded the rally that, like so many of Sydney's parks, Peace Park was once a brick pit and was used for generations for dumping. They are concerned that the land is contaminated and will pose a risk to new residents, who will disturb and build on it, and indeed to the whole community.

Residents also spoke passionately about concerns regarding flooding, noting that even with light rain the land in question floods and the drains in the area overflow. We cannot continue to build residential development on land that we know is potentially unsafe and unsuitable. Residents noted that the inner west has some of the lowest ratios of open and recreational green space in our city. Too often, the critical open, green, recreational space in our suburbs is an afterthought, with suburbs jam-packed with high-rise residential development. The tiny suburb of Ashbury, which is entirely contained within a heritage conservation area, is under renewed pressure from high-rise development.

The development of the former Chubb and Tyres4U sites on Milton Street is underway, with hundreds more dwellings on the way. Just down the road, a cloud hangs over the future of Canterbury Park Racecourse, with developers champing at the bit to develop this massive landmark site. Ashbury is a suburb with scarce public infrastructure; there is just one local primary school and little to no transport connections. With the development pressure they are facing, Ashbury residents know they cannot afford to give up any opportunity for new, quality open space, including that presented by 30 Trevenar Street.

The opportunity is not lost on the local council. The City of Canterbury Bankstown Council is working to rezone the parcel of land from R2 low density residential to RE1 public recreation zone so that it can be incorporated into the park. The council recently closed a public exhibition on the rezoning proposal. I understand that 60 submissions were received, with the responses overwhelmingly in favour of expanding the park. Prior to the sale, the Mayor of the City of Canterbury Bankstown wrote to the real estate agents to inform them that the council intended to rezone the land for recreational purposes. The mayor also moved a mayoral minute on 25 May 2021 clearly commencing the process of a planning proposal to rezone the land. Despite these clear warnings, the real estate agents pressed ahead with the sale and now the applicant has submitted a development application to divide the land into seven lots.

In October last year an appeal was filed in the Land and Environment Court contesting council's deemed refusal of the development application. The matter continues to be subject to conciliation. Council is due to receive and deliberate shortly on the exhibition report for the planning proposal to rezone the land. It will then be up to the State Government and the Department of Planning and Environment to approve and gazette that rezoning plan. It is clear that the State Government and Ausgrid have a responsibility to buy back the land for the community. Not only were they clearly aware of the risks of selling the land, given council's stated interest in rezoning it, but also there are significant questions as to whether they should have sold the property in the first place.

Residents and the Protect our Peace Park action group have noted that the land was initially gifted by Crown Lands to the Sydney County Council back in the 1980s for public use. Initially, the land had been gifted for the purpose of building electricity infrastructure. However, it has sat disused since. Residents argue it was never intended for private sale and that Ausgrid and the State Government should buy it back and return it to those who actually own it—the citizens of Ashbury.

COVID-19

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (19:36): It has been said that we are learning to live with COVID. Yet it is increasingly hard to say this when so many of us are dying from it, according to Dr Jim Newcombe, an infectious diseases physician and clinical microbiologist at Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology, Sydney, whose article "We are dying from COVID-19, not living with it" was published on the AusDoc website last week. It is a concern shared by members of my community. It has been noted that Australia has one of the highest rates of COVID in the world, with an estimated 40 per cent of Australians having been infected. One pundit said, "If you have not had COVID it might mean you don't have any friends."

The high infection rate by comparison with other countries is exaggerated because many countries do not record cases and data is not reliable. But what is not exaggerated is the death rate. In Australia the death rate remains high: nearly 40 deaths a day, which could mean 14,000 to 15,000 deaths by the end of the year. This could make COVID the second highest cause of death in Australia. In one report, epidemiologist Mike Toole has described the death toll as the equivalent of a Boeing 737-800 crashing every week. Sadly, since July last year there have been almost 3,000 deaths in New South Wales—there had been just 56 prior to that. In the Murrumbidgee Local Health District, where my electorate is situated, sadly, 63 lives have been lost since July 2021. Prior to July 2021, only one life had been lost to COVID.

It is a startling increase in deaths and a huge toll on our community. The associated high number of cases is a huge burden on our health system and the healthcare services in my electorate. Once again, I acknowledge and thank our health workers and all frontline and essential workers for what they have done for our community during the COVID pandemic. But, sadly, there may be no time for a well-earned rest for our health workers. In rural areas the COVID burden comes on top of the significant challenges already facing the rural health system, which were well documented in the committee report from the upper House. Now, with winter approaching, there is a very real chance that the burden on our health system will get worse. Influenza cases in New South Wales more than tripled between March and April, as experts warn the State is headed for a "significant flu epidemic" after the pandemic.

Our health system could be stretched to the limit and our care for the sick compromised. As I have said, this is a concern shared by members of my community who are worried that the Government is looking the other way. A constituent wrote to me:

This epidemic is not over and won't be if we are not cautious; but we certainly cannot dismiss the rights of the elderly and the young to safe passage. I may be totally wrong but I believe authorities are not advising our citizens to take reasonable precautions and not to go looking for trouble.

Surely there is more that we can do. Clearly, it is difficult to go back to lockdowns. I admit the community will not go there again easily. Just this week, pharmacists in Wagga Wagga have reported "needle fatigue" as they try to get people to have their influenza vaccines. But we seem to be ignoring the situation—not just the Government, but we as a community have become complacent. So today I sound an alarm bell. I add my voice to the growing number of voices that are saying we need to do more.

What can we do? To begin with, we could encourage a greater uptake of the third dose of the vaccine. In the Murrumbidgee Local Health District only about 63 per cent of those aged over 16 have had a third dose. State figures are not much better. We should be providing clear advice on a fourth dose, especially for those over 50 or with compromised immunity. We should be paying better attention to the quality of our ventilation systems in public buildings. We should have clear messages reinforcing the need for those with symptoms to get tested early—especially the elderly and those with comorbidities—so they can get treatment with antiviral medications, which have been shown to be effective. We have done well, but the fight to protect our community from COVID is not over. If we do not act, the good work and sacrifices of the past two years could be wasted. Let us do what we can to protect our vulnerable and support our healthcare and other essential workers.

EL KHAIR FLORIST

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (19:41): Small and family businesses are the lifeblood of our communities and our economy. I am proud of the heritage and entrepreneurial culture embedded within the culturally and linguistically diverse communities of western Sydney, and especially in my electorate of Lakemba. El Khair Florist is one of many businesses that was severely hampered by COVID-19 restrictions and had to close. As one of its income streams, weddings play a large role in its business model. Overnight, the entire wedding industry shut down and the hardworking staff at El Khair Florist were left with no work, little income and no certainty of when they would reopen. Established in 1981, El Khair Florist started as a general florist. After their wedding, Sal and Dina Khair took over the family business with a vision to work in the wedding industry. Sal and Dina have always seen themselves as florists who make people's dreams a reality.

I have known this business, and Dina and Sal, from well before my time as a member of Parliament. When I was a school principal, I would often buy flowers for staff whom I had upset. I have purchased many bunches of flowers from El Khair Florist and I have often observed the business' community involvement. Staff taught me how to best balance a bunch of flowers. I even made my own arrangement for Valentine's Day a few years back when I had forgotten to place an order. Suffice to say, I was not offered a job. During the difficult times of COVID restrictions, I met with Dina and discussed how the business and the wedding industry was affected by the Sydney lockdowns. I remember clearly that Dina said:

No matter what happens, we will stay standing. We will keep these doors open, no matter what it takes. Even if I am at a loss every single week, I will keep these doors open because these are the doors that gave me everything that I have today. For me, I will be servicing this industry and this community until they take me to Rookwood.

The resilience she demonstrated is a testament to her character. Over the years, Sal and Dina have worked at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Sydney Royal Easter Show exhibitions, as well as teaching floral art at multicultural ladies' community colleges. They have been involved in international weddings in Fiji and Bali and, of course, many local weddings held in and around Lakemba. They are often the first to assist the community, donating their flowers, resources, expertise and goodwill in acts of generosity and kindness.

On Wednesday 20 April 2022 Australia's top wedding professionals watched the eleventh National Designer of Dreams Awards, which was held online. The event was hosted by the Australian Bridal Industry Academy [ABIA], Australia's largest wedding review directory. The ABIA awards are like the Grammys or the Oscars of the wedding industry in Australia. Despite two years of devastation to the wedding industry, over 100,000 married couples ranked, rated and evaluated the quality of product, quality of service, value for money and attitude of staff across 4,613 wedding businesses. A total of 326 finalists, including El Khair Florist, went on to compete for Australia's most prestigious wedding industry awards. Only 35 winners were announced during the awards ceremony, again including El Khair Florist, which was voted Australia's number one for flowers and bouquets, and wedding planners and coordinators. El Khair Florist also came third in the decorations and styling category.

If members ever met Dina they would know that she is an absolute style master. Her husband, Sal, on the other hand, just makes a good assistant for her. I can attest to their amazing flower arrangements, understated elegant designs and absolute professionalism. Their flowers are the best in the business. I frequent their store when I want flowers for my loved ones as well as the many bouquets we as MPs often take when we visit people. At all times they are well received, although I must say my wife, Erin, is not so keen when I ask Sal and Dina to add

that little bit of sparkly spray stuff in the bunches that I buy her. At the awards ceremony ABIA Weddings managing director Natasha O'Meara said:

El Khair Florist should be extremely proud of their accomplishment which honoured the pride, passion and professionalism with which they delivered their product and service to their wedding couples.

Dina, Sal and El Khair Florist have been recognised with many other awards. Dina has received the 2007 Business Woman of the Year Award, along with the 2015 and the 2017 Local Business Award for Most Outstanding Florist in Canterbury-Bankstown. In 2017 she received awards for the most outstanding floral designer and most outstanding international wedding consultant. Sal and Dina are unstoppable and their drive to be the best for their customers makes them the best in the business. I congratulate Sal and Dina on building a successful family business and on their great work supporting our community.

I congratulate all the couples who tied the knot while navigating the many challenges of changing restrictions—as well as the usual stresses—over the past two years. I hope they enjoyed their special day and have a lifetime of joy together. Nothing brightens a day like flowers. Nothing says "I am thinking of you" during a difficult time like a bunch of flowers. Flowers are for every occasion. I am proud of Dina and Sal from El Khair Florist and once again I congratulate them on this outstanding achievement.

LEVEL CROSSINGS SAFETY

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (19:46): I speak about the shocking lack of level crossings across regional New South Wales and how the New South Wales Government is putting rural lives in danger to save a few bucks. I have personally been impacted by level crossing accidents when one of my school mates in my electorate was killed at a rail crossing. He was just 17 years old, an inexperienced driver on his Ps. In my area of Murrumbidgee a local middle-aged man did not see the train on a foggy winter's morning as he attempted to make his way to his farm. Tragically, his life was cut short. Our safety should never be compromised, not in the city and not in the bush. That is something the Government could change with the stroke of pen, for less money than it wastes every day on pork-barrelling. Instead, we see posturing.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The Clerk will stop the clock. Members will take their conversations outside the Chamber.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: One Government MP, the member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke, tabled a petition on level crossings. That is bizarre. Why the hell is a Government Minister petitioning her own Government members who sit next to her every day? Steph Cooke can fix this problem now, without the need for petitions or debates. Ms Cooke has been splashing around millions of dollars on far less important projects across regional New South Wales. Why does she not just write a cheque to pay for level crossings now? Why does she need to bring a petition as if she is in opposition? In August 2020 the member for Cootamundra argued against a supervised zebra crossing at Canowindra along the Lachlan Valley Way. That busy highway passes by two primary schools. Steph Cooke argued in this Chamber against the most sensible and practical safety solution for Canowindra children, put forward by the member for Orange.

After all of that and years of reckless neglect the Government finally gave in and installed the supervised zebra crossing in Canowindra, which permitted a trained adult supervisor to escort schoolchildren, including infants and five- and six-year-olds, across that busy highway. The Government did everything it could to avoid doing what now has been done and what should have been done years ago. The member for Cootamundra initially suggested teaching the children the road rules, modifying the crossing and repainting the posts on which the warning flags were placed—almost everything at great cost except for the most practical and effective solution, which was to have a supervised zebra crossing. Eventually, after sustained pressure, this was done.

There is no doubt we can afford this. But the waste from this Government's mismanagement is astonishing and beyond belief. There is example after example, and this is just for rail. In 2018 this Government bought South Korean trains that were too wide to get through Sydney's tunnels. That cost us hundreds of millions of dollars to rectify. Before the 2019 election hundreds of thousands of New South Wales taxpayers' dollars were spent on slapdash rail feasibility studies, which were never intended see the light of day. It was another example of raising the hopes of rural constituents with hollow election promises never to be honoured. And now the newly purchased 12 Spanish-built trams have cracks in their bases.

This Government needs to take care of our hard-earned taxpayers' money and spend it responsibly. It should never compromise safety, not for a minute, especially for the bush, which is continually overlooked as we fight over the crumbs from the many disastrous and misspent projects. The cost of avoidable deaths, both emotionally and financially, borne by family, friends and the community, far exceeds the costs for the New South Wales Government of the construction of warning lights and bells at railway crossings. After all, it is our money. Let us spend it wisely.

ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (19:51): The spirit of Anzac is something we recognise and celebrate as Australians all year round. Anzac Day is a special opportunity to reflect on that spirit and the bravery of the Anzac soldiers who demonstrated it to protect their country. As in previous years, I commenced my Anzac Day commemorations with the Rose Bay RSL Sub-Branch. This year, on Sunday 10 April, we were able to march along New South Head Road, Rose Bay, from Club Rose Bay to the Rose Bay War Memorial in Lyne Park after a two-year hiatus because of COVID. I made the march with Wentworth MP, Dave Sharma, deputy mayor Isabelle Shapiro, Rose Bay RSL Sub-Branch president Charles Gallagher, our HMAS *Watson* naval base personnel and the amazing The Scots College Pipes and Drums. I thank Charles and honorary secretary Peter Hickson for hosting this year's commemoration as an early Anzac event for my community.

On Friday 22 April I joined our Jewish community at Emanuel Synagogue, Woollahra, for their Anzac Shabbat Eighth Night Pesach Service in memory of those who served in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. I thank Senior Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins, OAM; Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio; Rabbi Rafi Kaiserblueth; Rabbi Cantor George Mordecai; Rabbi Dr Orna Triguboff; and Reverend Sam Zwarenstein for hosting the service. On Sunday 24 April 2022 our Jewish community came together for the 2022 NSW Association of Jewish Service & Ex-Service Men and Women [NAJEX] Anzac Ceremony, with over 100 attendees at the National Council of Jewish Women Australia Hall in Woollahra. Military historian Colonel David Wilkins, OAM, shared his story about what Anzac means to him and we paid tribute to those Jewish servicemen and servicewomen among those who gave their lives. It was lovely to also share the commemoration with the 3rd Rose Bay (Judean) Scout Group led by Leon Waxman.

That evening the Royal Sydney Golf Club, Rose Bay, held an Anzac Day service for their members. I thank president Chris Chapman for hosting the occasion. It was a solemn outdoor twilight service set against the beautiful golf club grounds, with a lone bugler set atop the historic club building. On Anzac Day the whole community was back together for the first time in two years. The commemorations began at the crack of dawn with thousands of residents at our iconic Bondi Beach for the North Bondi RSL Sub-Branch dawn service. It is always a ceremony that captures the solemnity and bravery of the Anzac story. The Australian Army catafalque party do an exceptional job, and this year we had piper Ben Guiney and trumpeter Winston Kloster from The Scots College contribute to the service. An extra special addition was the national anthems performed by the Bondi Public School choir. I thank the North Bondi RSL Sub-Branch, including President Rob de Graaf and office manager Victoria Raymond, who do such a great job.

Shortly after that dawn service we made our way to Waverley Park for the Waverley Anzac ceremony, which was co-hosted by Waverley Council, the Bondi Junction Waverley RSL Sub-Branch, the Bronte RSL Sub-Branch and the Eastern Suburbs Legion Club. Despite having to hold the ceremony indoors because of rain, the catafalque party and flag raisers from Waverley College did a great job. It was good to have the Eastern Suburbs Police Area Command there, represented by Superintendent Martin Fileman, along with Bondi Brass and Waverley councillors Sally Betts and Angela Birrell. Woollahra Municipal Council's Anzac service was the last one on Anzac Day, held at the Double Bay First World War Memorial in Steyne Park. Again, it was fantastic to have so many from the local community come along and stay for the ceremony, with dogs in tow. Students from the nearby Double Bay Public School contributed to the ceremony, as well as our local Waverley and Woollahra State Emergency Services.

I acknowledge the attendance of Dave Sharma, MP, who attended all of the morning's events with me, along with Senator Andrew Bragg; Woollahra Deputy Mayor Isabelle Shapiro; Mayor Susan Wynne; and councillors Mary Lou-Jarvis, Sarah Swan and Richard Shields. Over the course of the three weeks that I commemorated the Anzacs, I observed that the Anzac tradition and spirit is as strong as ever in my local community, amongst both those who are old enough to remember and those who have only read or heard about the brave sacrifices. It is gratifying to be amongst our veterans at those services, serving members of the Australian Defence Force, their families and other members of the community—from the diverse corners of activity in schools, sailing clubs and sporting clubs—remembering their service to our country and paying tribute to their sacrifice on our behalf. Lest we forget.

NSW AMBULANCE SERVICES

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (19:56): In recent months my office has heard from many constituents who were left stranded by our health system, either waiting for an ambulance or waiting in an ambulance for emergency health care. The member for WallSEND, who is currently in the chair, spoke earlier this evening about issues with paramedics and ambulances in her electorate. Our paramedics are being pushed to the limit in a health service that is understaffed and under-resourced. I have previously told a story in this place of a 96-year-old cancer patient who was refused an ambulance because his condition was deemed not life-threatening. Tonight I add the experiences that have been shared with me since then.

I have heard the story of an 86-year-old constituent who waited five hours for an ambulance following a suspected stroke. Once the ambulance arrived at John Hunter Hospital, she was forced to wait for hours before seeing a doctor. My office has also heard about a small child in my electorate who was dangerously close to death after suffering anaphylactic shock. The 000 call service initially failed to connect, causing a delay in the ambulance arrival. Fortunately, a neighbour with an EpiPen and a local medical professional came to their aid, administering doses ahead of the ambulance's arrival. Without the quick intervention of nearby community members, this could have been a tragedy for the family, as the member for Wallsend would know.

I have also heard from the family of a local man who suffered a stroke. Luckily for him, it was a minor stroke and he was taken to John Hunter Hospital, where a CT scan was carried out quickly. After his CT scan, this man was not taken to a hospital bed but back to the ambulance bay, where he waited for a monitored bed in the stroke ward to become available. He sat there for 12 hours in increasingly cramped conditions, as more and more emergencies were brought into the hospital. The man's wife contacted my office not to complain about the services of the paramedics who tended to him but to question what was going wrong in the system to delay the handover of patients and prevent emergency crews getting back on the road. She said that he was well looked after by the paramedics, was comfortable and his needs were minimal.

She described the area becoming increasingly overcrowded with patients, staff, paramedics and CareFlight crews. They were literally shoulder to shoulder, bumping into each other as the evening wore on. While all the people there did a fabulous job, struggling in this hectic space, she wondered why they were being required to do so. She said it did not seem efficient to have the highly trained ambulance crews waiting around and babysitting patients. Her assessment is supported by figures from the Bureau of Health Information, which paint a bleak picture. From October to December last year, the median time it took an ambulance to reach urgent cases in the Lake Macquarie East area, which covers most of the Charlestown electorate, was 25.2 minutes. That is up more than three minutes from the same period in 2020. For emergency cases, the wait was 14.3 minutes, which is up 1½ minutes. In the most life-threatening emergencies, it took ambulances 9½ minutes to reach patients, which is an increase of one minute.

They are the worst ambulance response times we have seen in a decade. This data, which comes from before the full extent of the Omicron wave hit, fits into an overall upward trend in waiting times, which have only been accelerating for more than five years now. The responsibility for this collapse does not belong with the paramedics and health workers. New South Wales urgently needs another 1,500 paramedics just to bring staffing ratios in line with other States.

It is unacceptable that in 2022 people in life-threatening situations are being left to wait longer and longer. It is unacceptable that the situation has been allowed to deteriorate for years now, when quarter after quarter we see the raw figures painting a picture in stark black and white. It is unacceptable that paramedics are being pushed to their breaking point and beyond. It is unacceptable that paramedics do not have the resources they need to do their important work. In the end, it is the patients who suffer from this lack of action. The way that we treat people in the most dire situations says a lot about our community. We are leaving people who are sick and in need of help and assistance in very unsafe situations and at risk by not properly resourcing paramedics.

SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (20:01): First held in 1823, the Sydney Royal Easter Show is Australia's largest annual ticketed event, attracting over 828,000 attendees on average. The show is a celebration of Australian culture, from our rural traditions to our modern-day lifestyles, providing a unique experience to everyone. Today I am proud to recognise and congratulate some of the success achieved by Camden electorate schools at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Elderslie High School was awarded first, second, third and seventh place in the Youth Poultry Showmanship Competition. I congratulate Logan Ockers from Elderslie High School, who was awarded young poultry judges State champion. Logan will now represent New South Wales in Tasmania next year.

Camden High School also had some success in the poultry industry, in the Sydney Royal School Meat Bird Pairs Competition. The male pair placed ninth and the female pair placed tenth. Day three of the Sydney Royal Easter Show saw the national young judges poultry finals. Former Camden High School student Olivia Broughton won the State final in 2019 but, due to COVID, the nationals had been continually rescheduled. After several hours of judging three different varieties of poultry, Olivia placed a highly commendable third in the 2021 championship. I congratulate the year 10 Camden High School agricultural students, who won the Great Backyard Pumpkin Challenge in the under 50 kilograms class.

The St Gregory's College show team produced some great results in the cattle pavilion. Well done to Massimo Pisciueri, who placed third in the school paraders division; Thomas Anderson, who placed first in his heat; Macs Rubain, who placed fourth in his heat; and Riley Keogh, who placed third in his heat. In the Simmental

youth paraders competition, Massimo Pisciueri placed first in his class and is the champion 11- to 14-year-old parader; Jack Gotts placed third; Vincent Pisciueri placed fifth in the 15-year-old class; Joel Offord placed third and Adam Fordham placed fourth in the 16-year-old class; and Riley Keogh placed fifth in the 17-year-old class. In the purebred steer judging, exhibit "Reiland Bushwacker", led by student Massimo Pisciueri, received a highly commended ribbon in a very tough class. He was also the highest placing Angus on the day. I congratulate Massimo on that achievement.

Well done to the St Gregory's College students who participated in the Sydney Royal Sheep and Fleece Show. In the State and national sheep judging finals for entrants up to 25 years of age Patrick Davis was awarded national champion merino sheep judge; Thomas Anderson, reserve State champion meat and dual-purpose sheep judge; and Adam Fordham, third in the State merino sheep judge competition. In the sheep handler competition finals, Adam Fordham placed second overall and Zane Weston placed fifth overall. In the Corriedale judging, which is a sheep-judging competition between industry studs, St Gregory's received awards for grand champion Corriedale ewe, champion Corriedale group, champion Corriedale ram pair, best headed Corriedale, Corriedale ram of show, and most successful Corriedale exhibitor of the show.

In the sheep judging competition between schools, St Gregory's results were reserve champion schools ram, reserve champion schools ewe and the most successful school of the show. That is an outstanding outcome for the students, staff, college and sheep. Evelyn from Elizabeth Macarthur High School placed fourth in the school paraders competition and was highly commended in the lightweight school steer class. I congratulate Evelyn on doing a great job in representing her school with such success. The Macarthur Anglican School show cattle team also had great success at the show. I congratulate Ethan, who placed fourth in the heavyweight steer class, and Bryce, who was highly considered in the trade steer class.

I congratulate student Megan Baker, who won the State meat breeds sheep young judges competition. Later the same day Megan was announced the 2022 runner-up in the national final, which is a wonderful achievement. The show sheep team of Macarthur Anglican School came away with some good results: two seconds, three thirds, and one fourth place in the interschool competition. Christine placed second in the State in the under 14 years paraders. They are fantastic results from all students, staff, schools and animals involved.

FOOTBALL 140TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (20:06): This year the sport of football in New South Wales celebrates a milestone in its history—the 140th anniversary of organised football in New South Wales. For 140 years organised football has been played at local fields right across the State. During that time New South Wales has developed 51 per cent of Socceroos and Matildas players, which is an achievement that no other State can claim and an achievement of which we can rightly be proud. I am proud to say that many of those elite athletes have come from local football clubs, schools in the Fairfield electorate and the Southern Districts Soccer Football Association: Paul Okon, Harry Kewell, Mark Schwarzer, Heather Garriock, Ellie Carpenter and Catherine Cannuli, just to name a few. At the height of their careers, all of those players have played at national and international level.

Football has contributed greatly to the social and sporting fabric of our State. Football is truly a unifier of the community—whether through playing, coaching, managing, officiating, administering, committee volunteering, sponsoring or supporting a favourite team. Undoubtedly, if I travel around my electorate on a weekend, I will come across many games being played on our local fields. There is something special about park football matches here in New South Wales. We know it is the weekend when we take our children to play. The smell of the barbecue reels people in as families come out for a day of football. In Fairfield, football is one of the main social events that bring the community together. It is not only a fun day out for the family but also an instrument of social cohesion and community interaction. The beauty is that football is also a social equaliser. When it comes to talent, there are no boundaries. Anybody can be plucked from obscurity to reach infinite heights. Many of my constituents come from war-torn countries in the hope of a better life for their families in Australia. It is wonderful to know that the possibility of advancement in the sport for themselves or their children can become a reality.

In my dual capacity as local MP and the proud patron of the Southern Districts Soccer Football Association, it was a pleasure to be invited to the 140th anniversary of organised football in New South Wales held at New South Wales Parliament on Wednesday 4 May 2022. I congratulate chair of Football NSW, Mr Gilbert Lorquet, and chair of Northern NSW Football, Ms Helene O'Neill, on hosting the event and marking the code's achievements. The evening would not have been possible without the presence of football commentators Mr Andrew Paschalidis from Heartbeat of Football and Mr Simon Hill, who added a genuine football feel to the evening's festivities. It was also a privilege for all present to have heard from two of the oldest Socceroos—96-year-old Mr Kevin O'Neill and 92-year-old Mr Ron Lord—who honoured us with their personal stories of their time in the football arena.

As part of the 140th anniversary celebrations, Football NSW CEO, Mr Stuart Hodge, launched The Great Save initiative, which seeks to formalise the code's efforts to recognise the people and clubs that have contributed to its history. It is widely acknowledged that so much history is currently sitting in boxes in homes, garages and storage facilities. The aim of the project is to archive, preserve, recognise and celebrate the game's proud history. For example, the Marconi Stallions, Sydney United and Bonnyrigg White Eagles have not only years of history in football but also chapters of migration stories that have shaped the character of New South Wales. That is all the more reason for The Great Save project to commence in earnest. Unfortunately, due to the closure of many clubs over the years the football fraternity has lost a lot of valuable history. Saving and preserving history for the next generation is vital to enable our descendants to understand their past and the football foundations that have been laid in the community for their benefit. Football is life.

I congratulate Mr Greg Werner, Mr Greg Stock, Mr Noel Donna, Mr Ian Holmes, Mr Travis Faulks, Mr Phil Mosely and Northern NSW Football CEO, Mr David Eland, for supporting The Great Save. The mammoth task will now commence. Historians, associations, clubs and individuals will collect, record, log and archive documents, trophies, team sheets, photos and other football memorabilia.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Before I call the member for Newcastle, I concur with the comments made by the member for Fairfield. I remember all the wonderful football players from the coalfields of the Hunter, particularly Reggie Date from West Wallsend and Barnsley.

TAFE NSW

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (20:11): TAFE has traditionally been much more than simply a place to receive a trade or a certificate at the end of study. TAFE is a journey to the next stage of people's lives, providing opportunities to learn new skills, make new social connections and have new experiences. Getting the most out of one's time at TAFE often comes from more than arriving, sitting in a classroom and returning home. For many, it involves having a little extra support or having a place to go to get more information or to ask a question. The people who do not stand at the front of the classroom but who take some of the workload off the teachers help students achieve the most they can. It is so helpful for students to have someone who can point them directly to the research materials they need, organise assistive technology so they can complete assessments or help them put a plan in place to manage stress or anxiety.

The people who do that work are extremely valuable, which is why it is so disappointing—yet not surprising—that the assault on the TAFE workforce through the OneTAFE reform continues. I say it is not surprising because we have seen it before. In the past decade a third of TAFE's teaching workforce has been slashed. Only last year we were rallying in Newcastle against cuts to positions in areas such as security and the help desk. I acknowledge the great work of the Public Service Association, which is fighting for those workers and their jobs. But again we are facing a restructure and a reduction of positions in TAFE, which is affecting libraries, counsellors, disability support and student associations. This is happening in a couple of ways. Some jobs are simply disappearing. Some positions are being reclassified, which changes their grades.

Libraries, for example, will lose 33 positions across classifications such as library assistants, library technicians and mid-grade librarians. There will be 33 new positions as a grade 1 librarian, which sounds great. But we lose 26 grade 3 and 19 grade 2 librarians, so are we really getting new grade 1 positions, or have the higher positions just been downgraded? What is important, though, is to not look at the latest changes in isolation. Let us look at the library resource management services. The tranche two restructure proposal puts an additional 4.1 full-time equivalent positions into western Sydney, up to 66 positions. In isolation that sounds great, but that is still 9½ fewer full-time equivalent positions than in 2010. The south region is down 27 per cent from 2010, and Sydney is down 40 per cent.

Mr Justin Clancy: Point of order: This statement is not relating to the member's electorate. I ask that you bring the member back to his electorate, Madam Temporary Speaker.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I bring the member for Newcastle back to his electorate, remembering that members are allowed a great deal of latitude when giving private members' statements. Members must refer to their electorate but it does not have to form the entirety of their statement. That is a standing order.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP: As I said, we had a protest in Newcastle about all those positions going, which makes it very relevant to Newcastle, but it is also very relevant to the whole State. I was recently contacted by a former constituent who is now a TAFE teacher in the west region. He will survive the restructure, but he is concerned about the loss of counsellors in that region. He is very aware of how important counsellors are for the wellbeing of students and how much students can achieve when they are supported. In regional areas particularly,

the loss of face-to-face counselling services hits hard. If students are required to move to virtual counselling, they could be speaking to someone anywhere in New South Wales.

Those students are far more adversely impacted by events such as droughts, bushfires and floods, for example, and it would be hard to relay that experience to a counsellor in a metropolitan area. Those people work hand in glove with teachers to ensure students are properly supported. Without them, teachers' jobs become more demanding and they have less time to do their own core work. All the loss of those wraparound support services does is move TAFE further away from being an educational facility and towards treating the teaching of students as a business transaction. TAFE should be a haven for people with a disability, for people for whom English is not their first language or for those who may have low literacy skills. It should be a haven because the support is there. TAFE is much bigger than just the classroom.

ALBURY-WODONGA HEALTH SERVICES

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (20:17): I begin by thanking the communities of Albury and Wodonga for coming together at a rally last Sunday in support of a new hospital for border communities. Alongside clinicians and other community leaders, I have been fighting to bring visibility to the issue since coming into Parliament in 2019. As the incoming member for Albury in April 2019, I was briefed by the Albury Wodonga Health executive of the time. The master plan at that time called for investments in the emergency department and the intensive care unit, all funded by the New South Wales Government. The briefing I received did not include acute mental health facility upgrades, something I fought for and was pleased to see a commitment to by the New South Wales Government in 2021. Nor did the briefing detail additional car parking. The one element in the older plan yet to be funded was the move of obstetrics back to the Albury campus. It was my concern and that of others that Albury Wodonga Health's master plan at that time was outdated, hence the round table in 2019 that Bill Tilley and I called the first step.

The late Michael Kalimnios, CEO of Albury Wodonga Health, recognised that any push for major renewal of the infrastructure at Albury Wodonga Health needs to follow a process and that this process takes time. Michael's actions funded a clinical services plan internally, and that second step put us on the right track at last. The New South Wales Government followed that by funding the master plan that follows a clinical services plan, the third step, which we are told remains in ongoing finalisation. Those two documents are critical to the planning process.

There is much that we can glean from the clinical services plan that is instructive. We should be able to give consideration to what the clinical services plan contains, even if we do not have visibility of a completed master plan. The clinical services plan already puts governments on notice that significant infrastructure is required and funding should be directed accordingly. It is my view that there is no valid reason why funds should not already commence flowing. I have confidence that New South Wales will commit funding and make the first instalment in this year's budget. I also urge NSW Health Infrastructure to examine potential sites, whether they be brownfield or greenfield, in consultation with other stakeholders and in particular local governments to identify the most appropriate site. There should be no further delay in constructing the already-funded emergency department. A push for a new hospital should not take away from scrutiny over ongoing delays.

Clinicians and community are voicing an urgency to the infrastructure question, and the stress on urgency has my support. But the absence, yet again, of any capital funding in the 2022 Victorian budget raises a concern for me that urgency and Victorian Government intentions are not compatible. It is my view that if either Victoria or the Commonwealth is unable to respond to the call for funding then the New South Wales Government will need to plan accordingly. All of that impacts on the operational model. Make no mistake: In my view, the absence of funding of substance from the Victorian Government puts the cross-border agency at risk. Can the New South Wales Government continue to write cheques to Victoria when Victoria does not make a similar contribution—and worse, when nothing gets built? It is my firm belief that at a minimum NSW Health Infrastructure should be engaged for capital projects, particularly when so significantly funded by New South Wales. Operationally, should New South Wales take over the operations of Albury Wodonga Health? Does New South Wales need to go its own way? Budgets in black and white are more definitive than words in a press conference. I believe there is no alternative but for New South Wales to examine its position in response.

I acknowledge the challenges experienced in this cross-border health agency and the inherent peculiarity of having infrastructure funded by the New South Wales Government but managed by Victoria. I urge the New South Wales Government to work with Victoria to ensure that there is the most appropriate operational model moving forward. Repair work not just in terms of infrastructure but also of organisational culture and morale will take time, as that has undoubtedly been impacted. I thank the Premier, Deputy Premier, Minister for Health and Minister for Regional Health. They have all visited and witnessed the challenges firsthand. A consolidated health campus for Albury-Wodonga enables our community to receive the outcomes it needs and

deserves. This is the moment to be stepping forward and making clear the intentions, the plans and the actions for Albury Wodonga Health.

Community Recognition Notices

GEORGES ESTATE HEALTH & AGED CARE COMMUNITY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—I recently had the privilege of visiting Georges Estate Health & Aged Care Community for their ANZAC Commemoration Service 2022. Located in Penshurst, Georges Estate provides an innovative and care-focused approach to aged care in a safe and lovely environment. They aim to deliver outstanding health outcomes for local residents and the wider community. After the two years of disruptions and restrictions, it is wonderful to see the return of events coming back to life in our community. The ANZAC commemoration service paid tribute to this important Australian Date, showing respect to those who fought for our freedoms. It was a very heartfelt service, getting to meet residents who may have personally been touched by the war. I thank Georges Estate Health & Aged Care Community, Amber Haywood, The Kogarah Concert Band, along with all those who contributed to the planning of the service. I am very grateful for the invitation and the time I spent at the centre.

GEORGES RIVER COUNCIL HISTORICAL MARKERS PROGRAM

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—I take this opportunity to advise that applications are now open for Georges River Council's Historical Markers Program for 2022. This Program was launched in 2018 to highlight and recognise people and places of historical and cultural importance, as guided by recommendations from the local community. The aim of the Program is to create awareness of the history, heritage and cultural identity of the Georges River local government area through marking historically important places in the area. Each year Council will install up to 5 new historical markers. Markers have been installed in recent years recognising the Lugarno Market Gardens, Isaac Peake's Farm, John O'Grady's residence in Oatley and the Kogarah Steam Train Terminus. Nominations of a historical person or place in Georges River are welcome and in keeping with the theme of History Week 2022, can focus on ways that residents have worked, played and created while living in the Georges River area. Nominations close on 15 May 2022.

HELLENIC LYCEUM OF SYDNEY 70TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—I congratulate the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney on its 70th anniversary celebrations, which were held at the Grand Roxy in Brighton-Le-Sands earlier this month. The Hellenic Lyceum has for over 70 years been pioneering women's rights and promoting Greek culture and traditions in this country. The official guests on the night included the Greek Consul General in Sydney and State MPs Sophie Cotsis and Steve Kamper. The past and present committees of Hellenic Lyceum, Sydney have worked constantly to promote Hellenic culture as part of a multicultural Australian society. Special mention goes to Marina Efthimiou, the longest-serving President of the Hellenic Lyceum, and to Dimitri and Stavroula Papapetrou for their 30 years of service as dance instructors. The Hellenic Lyceum established the very first dance group performing traditional Hellenic dances in Sydney, and over the years they have performed at National Day Celebrations and concerts to represent Hellenic culture in Sydney.

BINGARA CENTRAL SCHOOL – 100 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Mrs Kath Groth, Mrs Judy Mack and Mrs Ros Goodwin who together, have given 100 years of service to Bingara Central School. Mrs Groth started teaching at Bingara in 1973, a staggering 49 years ago. Kath is known for her wealth of knowledge, genuine care for children's learning and getting children to improve their reading. While Kath is semi-retiring, Bingara is fortunate she will continue on for the remainder of this year as part of the infants teaching team. Mrs Mack started in 1994, 28 years at Bingara as an administration officer after attending the school herself. Judy is known as the office lady with blonde hair and infectious smile, recognised for her customer service which was always second-to-none. Mrs Goodwin commenced in 1999, 23 years at Bingara also as an administration officer, playing a vital role in organising many traditional events such as the swimming carnival, orange picking and Thomson Cup. Ros' love for the young children, especially the infants' students, bringing joy to her life. I congratulate Kath, Judy and Ros on their dedicated service to Bingara Central School.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IMAMS COUNCIL IFTAR

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On 19 April 2022 I was delighted to attend a Ramadan Iftar at Sydney Olympic Park hosted by the Australian National Imams Council [ANIC]. ANIC was established in 2006 as an umbrella organisation consisting of a Council of Imams, representing each Australian State and Territory and is the only central, Islamic body that holds key representation from Australia-based Muslim clerics. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and the holy month of fasting. The Iftar is the evening meal with which

Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast at sunset. I was delighted to join the leaders, Imams as they broke their fast at the time of the call to prayer (Adhan). It was a great honour to join with my parliamentary colleagues, community leaders and representatives from Government and Non-Government agencies. I was also pleased to catch with many friends at this special occasion. Thanks to Imam Shadi Alsuleiman, President; Imam Tahar Mechraou, Vice President; Imam Jalal Chami, Treasurer and the other NSW-based members of the ANIC Executive Committee for their kind invitation.

GLEN BOWES

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney)—My congratulations to Penrith local, Mr Glen Bowes has been appointed Head Coach of the NSW Wolverines U19 State Team and the Wide Receivers coach for the U20 Australian Outback national team. Glen has a longstanding connection with gridiron since starting out as a player in 1998 which led him to play for NSW in 2003 and 2005 then representing Australia in 2005. Glen started coaching at a club level in 2009, at a state level in 2010 and then at a national level since 2011. I have no doubt that Glen's knowledge and experience have him well positioned to guide and inspire the players as they compete across the state and the country.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IMAMS COUNCIL

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—The Australian National Imams Council (known as ANIC) held a National Muslim Community Annual Iftar Dinner for 2022 on Tuesday 19 April, at Sydney Olympic Park. Speakers at the event included the Grand Mufti of Australia, Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohamad, Sheikh Shady Al Suleiman, President of ANIC, Her Excellency Governor Margaret Beazley, AC, QC, and Ramia Abdo Sultan. The MC, who also made closing remarks, was Bilal Rauf, the ANIC spokesman. A Quran recitation was delivered by Imam Osman Boyaci and a final prayer by Imam Ibrahim Dadoun. The event was supported by a large number of Muslim community organisations. There was a large and diverse range of guests, including Diplomats, Federal and State Parliamentarians, local Councillors and many others. Iftar events have become a regular annual feature of New South Wales and especially Sydney. They are a practical demonstration of our community's multiculturalism. It is also important that a broad range of community members attend in a clear rejection of islamophobia.

MAX HAZELTON

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to acknowledge the milestone 95th birthday of Orange-based regional passenger aviation pioneer and icon, Max Hazelton. Aviation connectivity between regional Australia and our metropolitan cities is presently well serviced by Regional Express Airlines, better known as REX. This country-city connectivity we now benefit from is owed to the former crop-dusting pilot, Mr Hazelton, who in 1954 established and headquartered a new regional airline transport business, Hazelton Airlines. Mr Hazelton's business initiative supported the growth in the regions by providing a reliable airline service for the country communities, facilitating people's access to cities for business, services, international travel connections, family and friends. We owe much of our region's success to the service Mr Hazelton forged, and its ongoing legacy now with REX - which purchased the airline from Mr Hazelton in 2002, along with Kendell Airlines. On Friday 6th May 2022 Max celebrated his 95th birthday. On behalf of a community grateful for all he has done to help grow and support Orange and the broader regional NSW, I wish him a wonderful birthday celebration and thank Max and his wife Laurel for establishing a passenger airline transport service which continues to help make country NSW prosper.

CHRIS TREMAIN

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to recognise Chris Tremain, hailing from Yeoval. Recently Chris was awarded the Steve Waugh medal, the highest honour in men's cricket in New South Wales. Previous to being awarded this prestigious medal, he was named the NSW Sheffield Shield player of the tournament. In spite of challenges he faced in the lead-up to and during this past season, Chris' performance throughout for the NSW Blues in the 2021/2022 Sheffield Shield tournament was remarkable. The right arm medium fast bowler took 24 wickets at an average of 15 while he also averaged 24 with the bat, a highly notable all-rounder performance which ultimately led to his fellow players, coaches and match officials voting to nominate him for the coveted annual Steve Waugh Medal. Chris now joins a growing list of cricket talent from the Central West of NSW. He is a sporting role model to many young and emerging country-based cricketers, and a credit to his home community of Yeoval and the broader Central West. I congratulate Chris on his achievements and this accolade. I look forward to watching his career progress. Well done.

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF NSW CENTENARY CELEBRATION

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to recognise the Country Women's Association of NSW's 100th year. The Association began with the Bush Women's Conference at the Royal Agricultural Show, Sydney in April

1922, organised by Dr Richard Arthur MP and Miss Florence Gordon. Its birth resulted from calls by Dr Arthur to improve conditions for rural women while Miss Gordon developed a plan to establish a Country Women's Union of Help. From there a committee was formed, with the election of the foundation president, Mrs Grace Munro from Bingara. The Country Women's Association of NSW has organically grown, and have been the backbone of country communities across the state ever since. They've been heavily involved in improving access to education, medical services, helping their communities during times of hardship such as war, drought, floods, bushfires, and much, much more. I'm proud to have supported this great and historic community organisation and advocacy group as the Member for Orange. In the electorate of Orange there are presently 13 active branches; Bogan Gate, Borenore, Canowindra, Cumnock, Eugowra, Forbes, Molong, Nashdale, Orange, Parkes, Peak Hill, Trundle and Tullamore. I congratulate the CWA of NSW on this momentous occasion. Happy centenary.

ST MARK'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, GRANVILLE, 140TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On 1 May I joined the congregation of St Mark's Anglican Church in Granville to celebrate the 140th anniversary of worship at the church. The incredibly beautiful neo-gothic church was one of the last designed by former colonial architect Edmund Blackett, who died in 1883. The western windows contain a record of all those from Granville who served in World War I and are an official war memorial. The church is located on a prominent site on Jamieson Street adjacent to the Granville CBD. The Congregation continues to grow in size and in addition to English language services also holds Chinese services every Sunday morning from 11:00-12:15 in the church hall. The special guest for the day was Rt Rev Gary Koo, Bishop for Western Sydney. My thanks to Rector Rev Dr Hung-En Tien, Assistant Minister Rev Titus Tam, Honorary Assisting Ministers Rev John Hebblewhite and Pastor Eric Lo, Church Wardens Mr Bill Palmer, Mr Neil Smith O'Brien and Ms Jennie Lo for the kind invitation to attend this special occasion. I congratulate St Mark's on its 135th anniversary and wish the church well for many more years to come.

BAPS CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF PRAMUKH SWAMI MAHARAJ

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On 23 April I was delighted and honoured to celebrate the centenary of the birth of His Holiness. Pramukh Swami Maharaj. Pramukh Swami Maharaj was born on 7 December 1921 in the village of Chansad, Gujarat, India. He is the fifth successor in the illustrious spiritual tradition of Bhagwan Swaminarayan (1781-1830), who established the Swaminarayan Sampradaya. His life and work inspires devotees to helping others and promoting harmony and peace in our community. His life and work fostered charity, goodwill and harmony and his life's credo was "In the good of others lies our own." This is a worthy principle to which we as Members of this Parliament can all aspire. In 2022 year this momentous celebration was held at Sydney Opera House, starting with a grand parade near Circular Quay station and ending with a spectacular fireworks show. I was truly grateful to be part of this special event and to have the opportunity to join hundreds of BAPS community members. I thank the many BAPS staff and volunteers for hosting and inviting me to join this remarkable celebration.

WARIALDA - CARINDA HOUSE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Warialda's Cultural Community Centre, or as it's commonly known, Carinda House. The volunteers from Carinda House recently gifted an ankle-brachial index testing machine worth \$4,100 to Dr Di Coote and the team at Warialda Family Practice. The machine offers a quick, non-invasive way to quickly check a patient's risk of peripheral vascular disease and give an indication for coronary disease and stroke. By attaching a strap to the ankle, the device can detect a blockage or narrowing of arteries in the legs, all of which be tested locally and bulk billed. The Warialda Cultural Community Centre has been supporting the community through raising funds through Carinda for 45 years. Since the purchase of Carinda in 1977, Carinda House have supported many causes and organisations including Naroo Home for the Aged, Blaze Aid, Smiling Faces Helping Hands along with annual donations to local schools. I want to congratulate President Elizabeth Albert, Vice Presidents Lanna Hockley and Fay Cains, Secretary Marilyn Stubbins, Treasurer Carmel Stevenson and the committee on donating the largest single donation the group has made all for the health and wellbeing of the community.

DR ANTHONY BENNETT

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—On Saturday 14 May 2022, I attended the memorial service for Dr Anthony Eric Bennett. Anthony was a dedicated servant of our community through his passionate expertise as a veterinarian. Anthony's unique sense of humour combined with his alacritous embrace of his larrikin nature made for a unique but incredible character. Anthony was masterful toward anything he turned his mind. He was a talented sportsman and a renaissance man in every sense. Blessed with powerful intelligence and humility, Anthony was admired and loved by every corner of our community. Anthony genuinely cared. He would quietly but confidently assist those in need; I was witness to this generosity on so many occasions. On behalf of the

Parliament, I express our deepest sympathies to Anthony's loving parents Rod and Pam, his sister Jacqueline and his family. Vale, a great mate and a wonderful friend. May you rest in peace.

THURGATE OVAL DOG PARK FUNDING IN BOMADERRY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—On Sunday 15 May 2022, I was delighted to join with Kylie Knight and other representatives from Bomaderry Community Inc, Mr John Druce and Shoalhaven City Ward One Councillor Serena Copley to inspect stage 1 of the revitalisation of Thurgate Oval in Bomaderry. I was extremely pleased to secure \$25,000 funding for this outstanding local project under the Community Building Partnerships program. This new dog park located in Thurgate Oval in Bomaderry is a great community-led initiative for companion animal lovers and local residents alike. Thank you to Kylie Knight for her hard work, dedication and energy into driving this project to become a reality, Shoalhaven City Council, Councillor Serena Copley for her support and the local Bomaderry community who are embracing this wonderful open space with their various breeds of dogs including my own Oscar who thoroughly enjoyed himself.

NICK RHEINBERGER AND TIA WILSON

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Partners in life and on stage, today the Parliament of NSW recognises Nick Rheinberger and Tia Wilson. Rheinberger and Wilson are looking forward to bringing their first full-length cabaret show 'A Love Odyssey' to Kiama's pop-up venue The Kazador later this week. Nick Rheinberger is well known to many local residents across our region for his regular day job as a popular host of ABC Illawarra's morning radio show for the past sixteen years. Tia was one of the founding members of musical comedy group 'Cheeky Tzatziki' and recently performed at the Adelaide Fringe with 'The Church of the Clitori'. The couple are a unique Australian cabaret and comedy act. They will be performing live together at The Kazador this Thursday 19th May 2022 for an hour from 7:30pm – 8:30pm.

NORTHERN SYDNEY DISTRICT COUNCIL OF P&CS

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—The Northern Sydney District Council is an independent volunteer organisation made up of representatives predominantly from local P&Cs from Metropolitan Sydney north east. The District Council helps support P&Cs on specific issues or problems, advocates for improvements to public education, and provides opportunities for networking and collaboration. I acknowledge the important work the District Council Executive undertakes and thank all those who valuably serve in various capacities, including the following people from schools in my electorate of Davidson; David Hope, President, from Davidson High School; Keith Oliver, Vice President, from St Ives High School; Alan Gardiner, Treasurer, from Killara High School; Jason Wong, Executive, from Lindfield Learning Village. District councils are vital for an informed and progressive education system serving the interests of our children.

ROSEVILLE COLLEGE LEARNING FESTIVAL

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—Roseville College in my Davidson Electorate will hold a Learning Festival on Saturday 21 May after a two year break due to Coronavirus. The event will showcase the College's approach to learning, with an interactive and festive day for the local community. This will include drama, sport, history, science, art, along with food and coffee stalls. A petting zoo will provide fun for those attendees in Junior School. Friends and family are invited to this wonderful showcase in order to explore the variety and the breadth of the K-12 Learning opportunities at Roseville College. I commend the College's Acting Principal Lisa Montgomery and others involved in this wonderful initiative, and wish everyone attending an enjoyable educational experience.

OXLEY'S JOSIE CLARKE TAKES TOP PRIZE

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley)—Last week Bellimbopinni local Josie Clarke won the 2022 AgriFutures Australia NSW/ACT Rural Women's Award for her outstanding work and dedication to improving inclusivity for people living with disabilities in agriculture. Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW Dugald Saunders MP, and NSW Minister for Women Bronnie Taylor, joined in congratulating Josie when she was awarded a \$15,000 Westpac grant during this special event at NSW Parliament House in Sydney. This is an outstanding achievement and provides Josie with due recognition for starting the conversation about disability in agriculture and giving a voice to those with disability working, or wanting to gain employment, in the industry. Josie said she will use her grant to register her not-for-profit organisation Ability Agriculture to develop support resources, including a podcast series, and scope the development of a leadership program for those living with disability. I'd like to congratulate Josie on this outstanding achievement, she is making a tangible difference in the lives of many regional and rural Australians. The 2022 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award is an AgriFutures Australia program, delivered in collaboration with the NSW DPI and supported by the Country Women's Association of NSW and Westpac.

DR KAT TAYLOR

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to acknowledge Dr Kat Taylor, who is one of two recipients of Terrigal Electorate's Community Service Awards for this year. Mister Speaker, Dr Taylor played a key role in the Central Coast Local Health District's response to COVID-19 in her position as Director of the Public Health Unit. The Central Coast community was in good hands with Kat's 10 years of experience in public health. Dr Taylor provided leadership for health care staff and oversaw the Public Health Unit's contact tracing efforts during the Delta outbreak of COVID-19 last year. In addition to contract tracing Kat and the Public Health Unit worked to respond to the outbreak with vaccine roll outs, understanding local epidemiology of the outbreak and public health research. I am told that Dr Taylor also provided regular COVID-19 updates to community members and health care providers and has particular interests in Aboriginal Health, emerging infectious diseases and public health risk communication. Dr Taylor is a worthy recipient of this recognition and I would like to thank her for keeping the Central Coast community safe through a difficult few years.

RAY CRAWLEY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to acknowledge Ray Crawley who I recently presented with one of Terrigal Electorate's two Community Service Awards for 2022. Ray has been the Zone Coordinator for 16 Mens Sheds on the Central Coast since 2020 and is a founding member of the Terrigal Mens Shed. I have been told that Ray also recently volunteered to help coordinate sheds in Sydney's Northern Beaches as well as joined the NSW Mens Shed Association Management Committee. During COVID-19 lockdowns Ray engaged in the fantastic community service of actively checking on the physical and mental welfare of all his members. Projects that Ray has been a part of include travelling to the North Coast to rebuild fences that had been burnt during the Black Summer bushfires and rebuilding the Wisemans Ferry Mens Shed after it was flooded. Another notable project was the 'Great Possum Box Project' where Ray joined with members from Mens Sheds across the NSW coastline, WIRES and ARC to produce 1,000 boxes to house possums whose habitat was damaged from fires. Ray is well deserving of this recognition, an asset to the community and an inspiration to people across the Central Coast.

HEAD HERE FOR HEALTH

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—They may look like simple wristbands, but these colourful pieces of silicone are aiming to make a big difference to youth mental health. Developed by the Wagga Wagga Local Health Advisory Committee, the Head Here for Health wristbands, designed to be worn by school students, each feature a QR code, which is linked directly to the Federal Department of Health website, where a range of resources are available. The committee began working on the plan in May 2021 after receiving \$2000 in funding from the Murrumbidgee Local Health District. According to committee chair, Garth Hungerford, members discussed various project ideas, before settling on a youth mental health initiative to address the concerns felt by committee members around the long term impacts of the drought, bushfires and then COVID on young people in our region. The Wagga Wagga LHAC consulted with Mental Health Drug and Alcohol, Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network, the Local Response Group, and Headspace Wagga Youth Group. Launched at Wagga Wagga's Mater Dei Catholic College in March 2022, the bands have been distributed to students in other high schools, public and private. These simple, fun and colourful wristbands could change young lives.

LOCKHART 125 YEARS

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—It was great to be able to celebrate 125 years of the Lockhart township last night, at an event organised by the Lockhart Progress Association, with the Lockhart and District Historical Society. This strong community treasures its rich history as it looks into the future, and it was a pleasure to be there for the celebration as community members reflected on the history of the township. Today's Lockhart is said to have developed from what started as a shanty grog shop on the local stagecoach route. Green's Gunyah, as it was then known, was run by a Mr Green from a small, temporary shelter made from bark and tree, a gunyah. Lockhart was renamed in 1897 after C.G.N. Lockhart, a commissioner for Crown Lands in the Murrumbidgee River area during the 1850s. More recently, with the restoration of the historic town verandas in the 1990s, the installation of the heritage pavers, a growing sculpture trail, and the redevelopment of Green's Gunyah Museum, Lockhart continues to support residents and welcome visitors. Congratulations to members of the Lockhart Progress Association and Lockhart and District Historical Society for ensuring this special milestone was celebrated.

MARTIN BUTCHER

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I wish to commend Martin Butcher on his many years of dedicated service to assisting people with a disability. Mr Butcher has recently decided it is time for a change and announced that he is moving on from his role as executive officer of the Regional Disability Advocacy Service. The Regional

Disability Advocacy Service [RDAS] is a not-for-profit organisation that assists people with a disability living in the Murrumbidgee district of southern NSW and the Ovens-Murray district of north-east Victoria. The service provides free and independent advocacy and information to anyone with a disability, of any age to ensure equality of rights and increased integration into the community. Mr Butcher has devoted five years of dedicated service dating from the beginning of Regional Disability Advocacy Service, and prior to that, more than seven years' service to Disability Advocacy and Information Service. His passion for the rights of people with disability, hard work, and constant dedication has seen the growth of the organisation from one small office with only a few staff, to the current structure over multiple sites. I wish Mr Butcher well for his future endeavours and thank him for his help and advocacy over many years.

KURNELL RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I commend the work done by the Kurnell Brigade of the Rural Fire Service in response to the flood recovery effort in the Sutherland Shire and Sydney region. With other frontline services, Kurnell RFS played a significant role in the initial flood response and the clean-up effort across March and April. The Kurnell RFS team worked to pump out flooded properties and assist with the hydrocarbon leak from the Ampol fuel storage facility in Kurnell. Kurnell RFS also assisted and hosted a multi-agency taskforce in addition to their response efforts. I thank the following Kurnell RFS team members for their efforts — Captain David Hinshelwood, Rebecca Hinshelwood, Scott Goodhew, Kylie Perrie, Adam Sorensen, Craig Chantler, Michael Cooper, Donald Catallo, Sarah McMillan, Nick Russo, Megan Horsman, Brandon Galwey, Colin Moore, Trent McFarlane, Worsby Shikakhwa, Jeff Potauaine, Joshua Macey, Andrew Green, Adam Daly, Craig Byrne, Ben Sarkis, Sarah McMillan, Danni Edwards, Ryan Pidduck, Bernard Hanrahan, Dave Redmond and Cianan Fitzgerald.

ELOUERA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate competitors from Elouera Surf Life Saving Club on their participation and success at the 2022 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships. The championships, affectionately known as the "Aussies," were held on the Gold Coast from 2 to 10 April. Scarlett Salib, Amelia Kirby, Sabina Rogers and Molly Fitzpatrick of Elouera Team A placed first in the U17 Female Beach Relay. In the Open Mixed Beach Relay, Hudson Berry, Michael Hanna, Sophie McGovern and Ella Randazzo of Elouera Team A placed third. With more than 7,200 competitors going head-to-head across nine days of competition, Elouera demonstrated an outstanding display of lifesaving skills. I also thank everyone at Elouera SLSC for their efforts this patrol season.

CRONULLA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate competitors from Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club on their participation and success at the 2022 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships. The championships, affectionately known as the "Aussies," were held on the Gold Coast from 2 to 10 April. Cronulla had success in both the land and water events. Cronulla Team A scored silver in both the Open Male Surf Belt Race and the Open Male 2 x 1km Beach Run Relay. Nathan Breen placed third in the Open Male 2km Beach Run. Cronulla did well in the Male Shortboard events, with Jeremy Knott taking second place in the 30-39 slot and John Lavers with third place in the 60-69 slot. I also thank everyone at Cronulla SLSC for their efforts this patrol season.

BIRRONG BOYS' IFTAR DINNER

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I congratulate our Muslim community on the important celebration of the holy month of Ramadan and I am pleased to acknowledge Birrong Boys High School & Community Iftar Dinner on Thursday 7th April at Himalaya Emporium, Bankstown. This year's Ramadan runs from April 1st to May 1st. My electorate of Bankstown is home to one of the strongest Islamic communities in Australia to which this special occasion is one of the most important celebrations of the year. Ramadan is a special time for many Muslims, it is a time for praying, spiritual reflection, family and community bonding. At the end of every Ramadan day after the sun has set, the fast is broken with the traditional Iftar dinner. The Iftar dinner is a unique cultural experience and an important community moment. I take this opportunity to congratulate Birrong Boys High School on a successful Iftar Dinner. In particular I would like to thank the Principal of Birrong Boys High School, Mr Darren Stevens, Community Liaison Officer, Ms Souhair Afiouny Harris, teachers and administrative staff. I hope everyone observing Ramadan across my community had a happy and blessed month.

MS LINDA SPENCE'S FAREWELL

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—On Friday 1 April I had the pleasure and honour to attend Ms Linda Spence's farewell from Hopepoint Christian School at Georges Hall. Linda Spence served as the

Principal of the school for over a decade, commencing her tenure in January 2011. Ms Linda Spence as Principal embodied many of the leadership qualities expected from principals but Linda's engaging and caring approach helped nurture a spiritually strong and family orientated school environment. Ms Spence ensured that all staff, students, families and the broader community were part and parcel in delivering outstanding education and solid grounding in the Christian ethos. The farewell event included every year group presenting unique performances, speeches and prayers from parents, board members, teachers and her beloved students. I, too had the honour of addressing the assembly. Many distinguished guests were in attendance the Senior Lead Pastor of HopePoint Church Warren Mortmore, members from the school board and representatives of the Bass Hill RSL Sub Branch. Ms Spence is an accomplished, well respected educator and friend. Our community was blessed by her time as Principal. Once again, I congratulate and commend Ms Linda Spence on her tenure as Principal.

EL MARADA AUSTRALIA – ANNUAL GALA DINNER

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—On Saturday 2 April I had the honour of attending the El Marada Australia Annual Gala Dinner held at the Grand Vaudeville in Condell Park. The Annual Gala Dinner offers the Australian Lebanese community an opportunity to recognise and reflect on the many important contributions made by El Marada to our community. El Marada Australia was founded in 2007 as the Australian chapter of the El Marada Party of Lebanon. The community organisation is focused on providing an opportunity for its members to socialise and interact. It also champions many charitable purposes, most recently helping its members recover from the financial impacts of COVID-19. The Annual Gala was attended by many distinguished guests, among them the Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism and Member for Rockdale Mr Steve Kamper the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane MLC, and the Member for Granville Ms Julia Finn MP. I too as the Member for Bankstown was also pleased to attend. I take this opportunity to acknowledge El Marada Australia's Coordinator Fady Al Mallou, Vice Coordinator Elie Bouharoun and Secretary Badawi El Hage on a successful evening.

EDNA SMITH 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It is with great pleasure that today I acknowledge M/s Edna Smith on her 100th birthday which she will celebrate tomorrow 18th May 2022. I am sure Edna will celebrate this momentous occasion accompanied by her closest friends and family. I take this opportunity to again extend my sincere congratulations to Edna and wish her good health and happiness for the future.

KIRRILLY SALVESTRO - GRIFFITH

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise Kirrilly Salvestro, Deputy CEO of Linking Communities Network, for her determination and commitment in addressing homelessness and domestic violence within Griffith and surrounding areas. Kirrilly is extremely dedicated to her work, spending 23 years at LCN in a number of roles. She is very passionate about regional issues and is committed to helping vulnerable people. Kirrilly advocates for accommodation for vulnerable youth, women and children escaping domestic violence. She has spent the last 15 months pushing hard for approval from governing bodies to establish housing for struggling youth in Griffith. This has recently been approved and will offer a safe, secure place for vulnerable young people in our community. Kirrilly has been part of a number of committees for domestic violence, refugees in isolated communities and housing supply, creating innovative programs and thinks outside the box to fix any issue she comes across. The Griffith community is extremely lucky to have such a dedicated worker advocating for equal rights, safe housing and safe lives. Kirrilly, it is my pleasure to honour you today.

BRENDA NORMAN, DENILQUIN

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the achievements of Brenda Norman, a P.E teacher at Deniliquin High School and a record breaking long distance swimming. Brenda began with a crossing of the English Channel, at the time holding the record for fastest time of a female swimmer. In the lead up to this race, Brenda founded the charity "Channel for Change", a local charity that aims to raise awareness for youth mental health, and providing funds for mental health support and initiatives. Since then, Brenda has competed in a range of long distance swimming races and solo endurance swims, and has been awarded the Australian Triple Crown in an endurance swimming challenge Brenda recently became the first person to ever attempt and complete a double crossing of the Derwent River Swim, with her first crossing being a record breaking time, and still being the fastest time for a female swimmer. I would like to congratulate Brenda for her athletic success, her dedication to education, and her work in raising awareness for youth mental health.

BRUNSWICK PICTURE HOUSE

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I recognise the commitment to their community and the performing arts of Chris Chen and Brett Haylock, owners of the Brunswick Picture House. The two men took over the iconic but sadly abandoned venue six years ago and have fought a range of battles – including COVID-19 lockdowns – to re-establish the Picture House as a staging site for cabarets, concerts, film festivals, Bollywood

dance classes, community choir rehearsals, circus acts, and theatrical shows of every description. In doing so they have helped to pull the community and its performing artists together to bring laughter and joy, things that have been sorely needed in recent times. A recent renovation has seen the Brunswick Picture House fitted out with world class facilities, including full wheelchair accessibility – amenities that enhance the theatre's presence in this small community, and give it pride of place among locals, as well as providing a world-class performance destination. I applaud Chris and Brett's resilience, imagination and community engagement.

CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN MAYORAL IFTAR

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—The Islamic holy month of Ramadan has just concluded. It is a time in which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. It is a month of spiritual reflection, empathy with the less fortunate and togetherness, as families, friends and the community gather to break their fast, known as iftar. I had the pleasure of attending several iftars that celebrated our unity as a community as well as our shared humanity. In particular I would like to acknowledge the Canterbury Bankstown Council for hosting me at their iftar on 14 April. The food was amazing, the sweets divine and the company even better. It is an honour to be part of and represent the Canterbury-Bankstown community. I deeply value the relationship I have with a fantastic council. I thank Mayor Khal Asfour for the invitation. Regardless of a person's religious background, the coming together of people, rekindling old friendships and making new ones whilst breaking bread, is something that we can all appreciate. We are better as a society when we are together and when we respect and value our differences. Eid Mubarak.

GIANTS IFTAR

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—The Islamic holy month of Ramadan has just concluded. It is a time in which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. It is a month of spiritual reflection, empathy with the less fortunate and togetherness, as families, friends and the community gather to break their fast, known as iftar. I had the pleasure of attending several iftars that celebrated our unity as a community as well as our shared humanity. In particular I would like to acknowledge the Greater Western Sydney Giants for hosting me at their iftar on April 7. The food was amazing, the sweets divine and the company even better. The Giants are more than an AFL team. They contribute and give back a tremendous amount. It is an honour to be part of their community. I thank Tony Shepherd and David Matthews for the invitation. Regardless of a person's religious background, the coming together of people, rekindling old friendships and making new ones whilst breaking bread, is something that we can all appreciate. We are better as a society when we are together and when we respect and value our differences. Eid Mubarak.

GOOD FRIDAY

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—On Friday 15 April 2022, Catholic and Protestant Christians around the world commemorated Good Friday. Good Friday is the holiest and most sombre day on the Christian calendar and this year was the first time in a while Christians in Sydney were able to commemorate with their family and friends at Church and at home. I joined the Saint Charbel's Parish Maronite Church community in Punchbowl with many community and faith leaders, for a service officiated by his Grace, Bishop Antoine Charbel Tarabay. For immigrant communities in Australia, faith and religion is sometimes the only thing retained from one's homeland. The amazing feeling of a whole community coming together to pray, sing hymns and break bread is beautiful because no matter what life they lead now in Australia, they all come together in an act of remembrance. My wishes are that Easter was a fulfilling and meaningful commemoration for the entire Christian community no matter where or how you celebrate. I hope the year ahead is full of peace, goodwill and kindness for all mankind.

STARS OF NOWRA

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast)—I was very pleased to hear Stars of Nowra Dance for Cancer raised a NSW record breaking \$300,000.00 which is an outstanding and massive achievement by our generous community. The money raised will certainly go a long way in supporting those affected by cancer in the Shoalhaven and contribute to our world-class research working towards a cancer free future. What an achievement this is a very inspiring moment from our community and a record breaking moment that will always be remembered by the community. Congratulation to all dancers / competitors and members who took part and played a role in making this all possible and for the incredible amount funds raised, this large contribution will work wonders for those in need and the community will forever be grateful for all the hard work, time and dedication that was put into this fundraiser.

KINETH EKANAYAKE

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—The number of talented musicians that have either grown up or spent time in Campbelltown and the wider Macarthur region, is enormous. Think the Rubens, Jay Seeney, and of course, guitar extraordinaire, Nathan Cavaleri. Now teenager Kineth Ekanayake can his name to that list. The

year nine student from Broughton Anglican College in Menangle Park was recently awarded a place in the 2022 Sydney Youth Orchestra. Places in the orchestra are highly sought after with only 530 being invited to join. It is an incredible achievement that not only speaks volumes for Kineth's talent, but also his dedication. Like anything, music is not something you master without practice. Sure some are naturally talented but to get to that elite level and earn a place in the prestigious Sydney Youth Orchestra, you have to be dedicated. You have to spend countless hours each week fine tuning your craft to make yourself stand out from the rest. That is certainly what Kineth did. Congratulations to all those that awarded a place in the Sydney Orchestra – in particular Kineth. All of Campbelltown is incredibly proud of your achievement.

FLEECE TO FASHION GALA AWARDS

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise local Uralla wool growers, Lachlan Fulloon, chairman of Fleece to Fashion and Liz Foster, board director and representative of the impressive organisation that annually presents the Fleece to Fashion Gala Awards. This event allows emerging fashion designers to showcase their wares while demonstrating the diversity of Merino wool. A new category called Diversity in Wool attracted the most entries celebrating culture through design. Uralla Central School student Dechen Kandro was the overall winner and also awarded the Winterbourne Pastoral Company Secondary School Award. Dechen not only created a stunning design but she is refining her skills by taking sewing classes with a professional dressmaker. The iconic woolshed at Uralla's Deeargee Station was the perfect setting to showcase the path from Fleece to Fashion, attracting entries from across Australia. I congratulate Lachlan and his committee, sponsors and volunteers on presenting an incredibly successful Fleece to Fashion Gala Awards night after a two-year COVID-19 hiatus. I commend the Fleece to Fashion concept for promoting Merino wool and giving an opportunity for fashion designers to display their innovative creations.

ORDER OF AHEPA ANNUAL CONVENTION LUNCH

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—Today I acknowledge an important multicultural group in my local area, the Order of Australasian Hellenic Educational Progressive Association. The Order of the AHEPA is part of the world's largest Hellenic organisation and they do some fantastic work here in New South Wales. The AHEPA family promotes Hellenism, education, philanthropy, civic responsibility and excellence throughout all of their teachings and work in the community. Speaker, I late last year had the pleasure of attending their annual convention where I learnt more about the important grassroots work that they have been doing to support Hellenic communities throughout the pandemic. I also had the honour of presenting Kiki Konstantinopoulou, Ioanna Diamadis, Irene Anestis and the AHEPA Hunters, Fishers and Shooters Club with a 2021 St George Community Award. These awards recognised their outstanding contributions to the local area from individual excellence to sporting achievement. I want to thank the Order of AHEPA for having me and wish them all the best in their future endeavours. I would also like to thank their hardworking Secretary Dr Panayiotis Diamadis for his role in organising the convention.

CONNECT CHURCH AUSTRALIA

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—Today I recognise the outstanding work that Connect Church Australia is doing in my local community. Last year, I attended an online session and spoke with church members where they highlighted to me their involvement in supporting a variety of local, national and international missionary activities. Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing lockdown has meant that traditional in-person church services have had to be curtailed. However, through digital means the community's connection with their faith has proven to be incredibly important in supporting people through these challenging times. It is essential that local residents continue to have strong links with local organisations and churches who provide people with a sense of community and togetherness. Speaker, I would like to thank Senior Pastor Phillip Webb and Yang Yang for having me. I would also like to thank all the members of Connect Church who continue to do great things in our community every day.

LUGARNO PUBLIC SCHOOL AIR-CONDITIONER UPGRADE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—Today I acknowledge an important upgrade to a fantastic school in my local area. I recently had the pleasure of congratulating Lugarno Public School on receiving \$14,000 to purchase a series of air-conditioning units which will be placed in their school hall. The funding for this upgrade was facilitated by the New South Wales Government's Community Building Partnership Grants. This important upgrade will improve the comfort of students and teachers when events such as school assemblies are held in the hall. Speaker, I also had the pleasure of presenting P&C members Jo Galea, Michelle Ametson and Louise Cuthbert with a 2021 St George Community Award to recognise their outstanding service to the Lugarno Public School community. I would like to thank all the teachers, students and parents at Lugarno Public School for all of their hard work and dedication, with a special mention to Principal Justine Williams who does a fantastic job over at Lugarno.

DOROTHY PRYOR – EAST MAITLAND CWA STALWART

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—The Country Women's Association of NSW [CWA NSW] has been supporting women, children and their communities for a century. I am so pleased to recognise East Maitland Branch of the CWA's Mrs Dorothy Pryor, now in her 90s, who can boast 63 years' involvement with the organisation. Dorothy began her membership in Manilla where she held many positions at both branch and group level, attending and contributing to numerous state conferences in that time. Mrs Pryor has given so much of herself during those years, both with her time, cooking, handicraft and knowledge of international countries while writing and performing in skits. President Doris Bates recently said she was honoured to read a book Dorothy wrote, about her life on the land and how she managed to run her home as well as working. It is a tribute to her commitment to community that Dorothy always made time to contribute her friendship and work to the CWA. She is truly an inspiration to the East Maitland branch and the CWA in general.

LUSKINTYRE LANDCARE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—A huge debt of gratitude must go to Luskintyre Landcare who recently put its bushfire recovery grant to good use. The conscientious volunteers planted more than 16,000 trees and shrubs to help ease the impact of drought, fire, flood and urbanisation on native species. The Landcare-led Bushfire Recovery Grants, funded by the federal government, saw \$14 million go to regions impacted by the black summer bushfires on 2019 and 2020. The Luskintyre Landcare community worked hard to help restore habitats and vital wildlife corridors. They planted in excess of 60 different species local to the Maitland area alone. Only a few months ago, the crew spent over 300 hours planting trees and shrubs on and around nine farms to assist threatened birds like the critically-endangered Regent Honeyeater. Well done to president John Schultz and his diligent team for their fantastic efforts to enhance our local environment.

DAN MURRAY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—The Hunter Valley is home to a new national champion after Beresfield boxer Dan Murray recently captured the Australian super middleweight title in Canberra. The owner of C&D's MMA Boxing Fitness slugged it out with local hero Brian Roberts over the full 10 three-minute round contest at the Hellenic Club Woden in the ACT. In the end, Dan secured a unanimous points decision from the judges. Twelve months earlier, he won the NSW super middleweight (76kg) belt, too. With the support of wife Jen and gorgeous daughters Abbey and Olivia, Dan only returned to the sport in 2019 after a lengthy hiatus – and has made every post a winner since. A tremendous role model, he's also passionate about helping youngsters throughout the community at his gym, claiming they actually "lit the fire in his belly to fight again". I'd like to congratulate Dan on his terrific achievement.

NORTHBRIDGE ROTARY CLUB FIREWORKS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—After a three-year hiatus, the annual Northbridge Fireworks finally returned with a bang, and I would like to commend the Northbridge Rotary Club for staging this fantastic community event. Attracting hundreds of locals including the Member for North Sydney, Trent Zimmerman, the Mayor of Willoughby, Tanya Taylor, the former Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, and myself, this spectacular sound and light show was warmly received by the crowds present at Northbridge Oval. Featuring a variety of food stalls and other amusements, the event provided a festive, carnival-like atmosphere for families to enjoy, including my two daughters who simply loved it! An initiative of the Northbridge Rotary Club, the Northbridge Fireworks are a 35-year community tradition generously supported by local sponsors. I particularly want to thank the Northbridge Plaza for their generous sponsorship of this year's event. The annual Northbridge Fireworks are just one of the many activities of Northbridge Rotary, and I am grateful for the Club's ongoing contribution to our community life.

ARTARMON VILLAGE INCORPORATED

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to draw attention to the important role of Artarmon Village Incorporated [AVI] in my electorate. AVI represents the business community of Artarmon and is dedicated to creating a wonderful connection between the residents and businesses of Artarmon. It is well led by local pharmacist Nick Logan and an active committee. The Artarmon community is close to my heart having grown up locally and in my view the character of Artarmon is special. In contrast to the commercial metropolis of Chatswood, this local suburb offers residents and visitors a precious local 'village' atmosphere. Instead of boasting multi-story shopping malls, Artarmon features traditional high-street shops and small businesses. It is these smaller, family-owned enterprises that the AVI represents and desires to see thrive and flourish. These businesses range from pharmacies, newsagencies and florists, to cafes, restaurants, butchers and grocers. Small businesses are the great lifeblood of any local community and I commend the AVI for championing these engines of enterprise in Artarmon.

BICYCLE NSW

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—When it comes to promoting the benefits of exercise and environmentally-friendly transportation, I would like to commend the work of Bicycle NSW. As a member-based organisation, Bicycle NSW is the peak advocacy group for bike riders in NSW and has represented their interests since 1976. With its objective of "creating a better environment for all bicycle riders", Bicycle NSW advocates for improvements to infrastructure to allow a bicycle to be used as a viable and safe form of transport. I recently met representatives of Bicycle NSW, including President Phillip Hart and local residents Steph Croft and Carolyn New. Cycling is not only a fantastic form of physical recreation but also an affordable and efficient form of transportation. With our cities and urban centres affected by traffic congestion, cycling is an important alternative mode of transport for our communities. For more people to take up cycling however, they need to be assured of safety with fit-for-purpose routes and paths. I thank Bicycle NSW, its leadership and local members for its commitment and assistance to this valuable area of policy and community.

BIGGEST MORNING TEA

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—The 2022 Biggest Morning Tea was in full swing at Smithfield Friday 13th May 2022, thanks to the NSW Cancer Council volunteer Mrs Jan Dhu. For the past 14 years Jan and her dedicated team of volunteers have raised over \$50,000 in aid of the NSW Cancer Council. This year Jan and her family have committed to host three separate events in her home on 10th May, 13th May and 24th May. Due to COVID-19 Jan limited the number of attendees for each event however this did not stop Jan and her team raising funds. The morning tea had the usual fun associated with a Jan Dhu event, lots of laughter, plenty of delicious morning tea, novel fundraising strategies and the in memoriam envelopes honouring those that have passed due to cancer. The 13th May morning tea \$1031.00 was raised through the sale of all donated prizes, with a total of 1,631.00 raised so far. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jan and her wonderful supporters and friends for their dedication towards fundraising for the Biggest Morning Tea.

CARRAMAR PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—Carramar Public School recently took part in the Cooling the Schools Program in an effort to increase tree coverage which will offer shade and cooler temperatures in summer. Students got busy and helped to plant the trees themselves. Carramar Public School is the 50th school to complete their tree plantings and more than 36,000 trees planted in NSW schools by the end of the year. I commend Principal Mr Anthony Mazzitelli, staff and students for their efforts to increase tree coverage at Carramar Public School and thereby cooling their school in this manner.

FAIRFIELD POLICE RECRUITS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I wish to congratulate the six new recruits from the NSW Police Force's Class 352 who have completed their training and have now joined the Fairfield City Police Area Command. I welcome probationary constables Matthew Williamson, Isaac Amaru, Gabrielle Linder, Damian Kalatziz, Bailey Faulkner and Chelsea Weidner to the Fairfield area and wish them all the very best in what I hope will be a very rewarding career in the NSW Police Force.

MICROBES FUEL MACRO GAME

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge New Edge Microbials, an Albury business leading the way in supplying high quality formulations of microbial cultures for use in agriculture. Founded in 2000, New Edge Microbials turns bacteria into products that aid crop production. Managing director Ben Barlow and the team will be expanding the plant and taking it closer to the Albury Airport. NEM has their own Research and Development Team who have partnered with major scientific agencies within Australia. With business doubling in the last three years, the business has gone from 12 to 42 staff, with major growth due to exports to the USA and Europe. New Edge Microbials is providing farmers with a solution to improve their productivity in the future, whilst giving them a direction to sustainable farming practices.

VALE MAX KIRWAN - MULWALA SKI CLUB

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge the late Val Max Kirwan OAM, founding member and inaugural president of the Mulwala Water Ski Club from 1982 to 1995 who passed away on March 23, aged 96. Through those years Max played a significant role in the Water Ski Club's success and growth. In 1996 Max founded the Mulwala Ski Club, with what has become one of the world's most successful water skiing parks. He assisted in the first business plans and with his incredible drive he steered the club through the early years of its development. In recognition of his life-long support and leadership he was appointed a life member of the Club, with this great honour presented by then president Robert 'Possum' Purtle. The outstanding water ski facilities have been named the Max Kirwan Water Ski Park, named in his honour. Vale Max Kirwan.

RETURN AND EARN - BRUCE FORBES AND HEATHER GOESCH

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—On 3 May I was invited to the opening of Albury's newest location for the return and earn automated depot operated by owners Bruce Forbes and Heather Goesch. The newly opened automated recycling depot in Lavington is delivering economic, social and environmental benefits making it easy to return your drink containers whilst helping the environment. The depot accepts any volume of bottles and cans which are recycled and in turn the community is rewarded for their efforts. As for growing the business, Heather and Bruce have set their sights on expansion and growing the business in our region. They collect from local charitable organisations for no fee, and aim to employ people living with a disability. Well done Bruce and Heather for your contribution in making our future more sustainable!!

MS STEPHANIE STANHOPE

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—On behalf of the Bega Electorate, I congratulate and recognise Ms Stephanie Stanhope, resident of Bega for her commitment and tireless work in her role of President of the Country Women's Association [CWA] of NSW. Ms Stanhope ushered in the Centenary of the NSW CWA at its annual conference at Royal Randwick this month and has been exemplary in upholding the core values of improving the lives of women and children in rural areas. Just recently the association contributed half a million dollars to support the flood relief efforts in devastated communities across the state's Northern Rivers. I highly commend and thank Ms Stanhope for her service and commitment.

BEGA-ANGLEDAL CRICKET CLUB

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—On behalf of the Bega Electorate, I congratulate the Bega-Angledale Cricket Club after being announced as winners of the NSW Volunteer Cricket Club of the Year at the NSW Cricket Annual Awards night in Sydney on 7 April, 2022. The award recognises the work of the volunteer committee of the Bega-Angledale Bulls to increase participation over the last two years, where the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the numbers of participants across many different community sporting clubs. The Bega Angledale Cricket Club is the largest club in the Far South Coast Cricket Competition [FSCCA] and enter teams in every age group offered by the FSCCA, as well as the Senior Women's and Senior Men's Competitions. They also run the Woolworths Blast program that focuses on getting 5, 6, 7 & 8-year-olds an opportunity to discover and fall in love with the game of cricket. I would also like to recognise the upcoming year with the community celebrating their 25th anniversary of the amalgamation of the Bega and Angledale clubs. A massive congratulations too all Bulls players, coaches and officials for all their efforts.

COBARGO QUAAMA RFS

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—I would like to congratulate the Cobargo and Quaama volunteer firefighters who have recently been acknowledged for going above and beyond during their time battling the Black Summer bushfires. During the early hours of New Year's Eve 2019, fire ravaged the historic Cobargo Village and surrounding district levelling over 300 homes. Although tragically 4 lives were lost during this horrific natural disaster, the brave and stoic actions of these volunteer firefighters are to be rightfully celebrated. Volunteer firefighters from both Cobargo and Quaama Rural Fire Brigades joined a combined National Medal presentation, with numerous National Emergency Medals awarded by His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC [Retd]. From both brigades, 18 Cobargo and 11 Quaama firefighters were presented with National Emergency Medals, recognising their sustained or significant service during a nationally-significant emergency. I commend and honour all members for their commitment to saving the lives and livelihoods of the residents of Cobargo, Quaama and surrounding localities.

CALLUM ROBSON

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I offer my congratulations to Callum Robson from Evans Head who has recently winning the Gold Coast Pro Surfing Competition. This follows on from him finishing second at Bells Beach and having three "Round of 16" finishes this year. The North Coast of NSW is a wonderful nursery for competitive surfers and this is a wonderful achievement for the former carpenter and I wish Callum continued success with his surfing.

TERRY ROBERTS

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police)—Terry is an accomplished Ironman triathlete having competed and finished no less than 35 events around the world in the long course distance. This includes having qualified for the most prestigious event on the global Ironman calendar, the World Championships in Kona, Hawaii on no less than seven occasions. Terry has also competed in 41 half Ironman events in international competitions; and represented Australia at the Olympic triathlon distance, competing in 12 of these events. Terry is a founding member of the Bathurst Wallabies

Triathlon Club and was instrumental in bringing the sport to Bathurst. He is described by those who know him as a quiet achiever in his chosen sport and never seeks accolades for his feats. While competing at Ironman, Terry has used to sport to raise more than \$30,000 for the John Maclean Foundation, a charity which raises money to help children who are wheelchair users, with funds raised staying locally to support three Bathurst-based recipients. Terry and his business partner Mark Booth started Metalco in Bathurst in 1989, a business which injects millions of dollars into the local economy through wages and flow on benefits from local contracts.

SR MARY THERESE COMER

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police)—Sr. Mary, a Sister of the order of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart, founded and established Centacare Bathurst in 1988 to provide access to services for the disadvantaged across the region. She served as the first Director and Psychologist and during her 17 years as Director was instrumental in nurturing and expanding the service across the Central West. Sr Mary organised and oversaw a range of seminars, workshops and conferences for Centacare staff and other professionals across the region. She was also instrumental in launching a range of programs to support many different groups where she identified specific needs. Sr Mary's involvement reached beyond Centacare, sitting on boards and management committees for a range of organisations including St Vincent's Hospital, the NSW Catholic Social Welfare Committee and the National Advisory Council on Suicidal Prevention. Sr Mary was the congregational leader of the Sisters of St Joseph (Perthville Josephites) from 2006 – 2011. In all her varied capacities, Sr Mary's years of service can be viewed as one aspect of her life as a Sister of St Joseph, dedicating herself to the service and welfare of others.

BUDGEWOI PUBLIC SCHOOL LEADERS 2022

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge Fenix MacPherson, Stephanie Wall, Tara Holani, Boston Aird, Kye Goldie, Poppy Gill, Zoe Palmer, Cleo Chidgey, Thomas Walsh and Charlie Trkulja on being named as the Budgewoi Public School Captains, Vice-Captains and Leaders for 2022. I also congratulate Ava Myers, Kurt Sharpe, Riley Gough, Shelby Wensley, Scarlet Sharpe, Benjamin Wallis, Cody Hall and Callum Thomas on being announced as the School's Sports House Captains for the year. Each of these students consistently demonstrate a strong work ethic and represent the Budgewoi Public School community with pride. They have been involved in various school activities and events and act as positive role models for their peers. Being named as the Budgewoi Public School 2022 leadership team is a testament to these students. I am sure they will carry out their new leadership roles with great pride and develop skills that they will find useful in the future. I congratulate each of these students on their special achievement. I also wish them all the best with their final year of primary school and future endeavours.

CHARLOTTE DOBSON

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge Charlotte Dobson of the Catherine Hill Bay Surf Life Saving Club who has been selected to participate in the Surf Life Saving New South Wales Youth Opportunity Makers workshop. The workshop is due to be held in Sydney next month and aims to work towards creating greater awareness of opportunities and individual abilities in 15 to 17 year old surf life saving club members. The workshop runs alongside the Junior Lifesaver of the Year program, which acknowledges the excellent contributions young lifesavers make to their clubs and local communities. I know that Charlotte is highly committed to Catherine Hill Bay Surf Life saving Club and will represent the club with great pride at the event. I congratulate Charlotte on being selected to participate. I also thank her for her efforts in keeping beach goers safe and wish her all the best with her future surf lifesaving endeavours.

JACK PATERSON

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge Jack Paterson of Swansea Belmont Surf Life Saving Club who has been selected to participate in the Surf Life saving New South Wales Youth Opportunity Makers workshop. The workshop is due to be held in Sydney next month and aims to work towards creating greater awareness of opportunities and individual abilities in 15 to 17 year old surf life saving club members. The workshop runs alongside the Junior Lifesaver of the Year program, which acknowledges the excellent contributions young lifesavers make to their clubs and local communities. I know that Jack is highly committed to Swansea Belmont Surf Life Saving Club and will represent the club with great pride at the event. I congratulate Jack on being selected to participate. I also thank him for his efforts in keeping beach goers safe and wish him all the best with his future surf lifesaving endeavours.

HAILEE STRAWNS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I want to commend Dubbo's Hailee Strawns who is halfway through a two-year traineeship with the NSW Government! Hailee had worked casually in the retail sector but when she finished high school, she decided

she wanted something a bit more "stable". Hailee applied for the NSW Government Infrastructure Trainee Program after a role involving project management caught her eye. The program is a collaboration between government and approved industry partners, with participants completing office-based rotations between government agencies, contractors and consultants. Now one year in, Hailee is "loving it". She's already worked on an upgrade to the Newell Highway – the major inland route linking Melbourne and Brisbane! Hailee is enthusiastic about the future and, at the conclusion of the traineeship, hopes to gain a full-time role with one of her host employers. I commend Hailee for choosing to work to improve the lives of people in NSW, and I would urge other young people to explore the opportunities of working for the NSW Government. Great work Hailee, I wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

THE PROPERTY SHOP MUDGEES

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I want to congratulate the entire team at Mudgee's The Property Shop for being recognised recently with a couple of industry awards. First, at the Australasian Real Estate Results Awards, Wendy Box was announced as the National Property Manager of the Year, while Alyse Pilley was named NSW Sales Agent of the Year! Then a few weeks later, David Goldring was named the National Sales Agent of the Year for Regional Australia in the 2022 Real Estate Business Awards. All three were incredibly humbled by the recognition at both state and national level. All three say their win is a reflection not only on them and their work, but the entire Property Shop team. Wendy told the Mudgee Guardian: "This wouldn't be possible without the dedication and hard work put in by my team. We have all worked so hard through what can only be described as a very turbulent couple of years". Well done David, Wendy and Allyse. You're right when you say it's the whole team that drives success, but all three of you are incredibly deserving of these prestigious accolades – well done!

GARRY ROBINSON

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I congratulate Garry Robinson of Camden who was awarded a Silver Medal at the 2022 World Archery Para Championships in Dubai recently. Garry won the prestigious award alongside his teammate Jonathon Milne. Garry suffered serious injuries in 2010 following a Black Hawk helicopter crash in Afghanistan that claimed the lives of four others. Garry then spent two and a half years in recovery in a military hospital from his severe injuries leading to his left leg being amputated. Garry now competes from his wheelchair, shooting a compound bow using a shoulder harness. What a fantastic effort with some incredible shooting from our athletes. Congratulations Garry and Jonathon.

MRS GEORGINA WATTS 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—Congratulations to Camden resident Mrs Georgina Watts who will celebrate her 100th Birthday next week on Thursday 26th May. The events in our history that Georgina has experienced and seeing our nation become one of the world leaders over the past 100 years is certainly something not all of us can witness. I am sure you will look back and wonder at how quickly the years have gone by. May this be a very special birthday as you look back on all the happy memories and immense joy you have shared with your loved ones over the years. Happy 100th Birthday Georgina.

MIRACLE BABIES FOUNDATION THANK YOU MORNING TEA

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—Last year I had the honour to attend along with the Hon. Melanie Gibbons MP, Member for Holsworthy at the Miracle Babies Foundation 'Thank you Morning Tea'. The Miracle Babies Foundation work to provide vital services and resources to families with a premature or sick baby. I take this time to thank all those who donate to the Miracle Babies Foundation as well as members and volunteers who much the foundation such a success.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—This month is Domestic Violence Awareness Month – an initiative launched in 1987 to connect and unite individuals and organisations working on domestic violence issues and raise awareness. Thank you to all the individuals and organisations who work to put an end to domestic and family violence in all of its form – physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, financial, and technological. Domestic and family violence comes in many different forms and can happen to anyone regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or socio-economic status. The one thing that is constant is the harm and danger to the victims and the community. This month by standing together to raise awareness and take responsibility for prevention we can make a difference. Thank you to all the members of the community who have engaged with events this month to raise awareness and pay your respects to the victims of domestic and family violence. The first day of the Month was Domestic Violence Remembrance Day. I joined many across the country by lighting a candle to honour the victims of domestic violence. It is this type of collective community action makes me believe that together we can end domestic and family violence.

RANDWICK CITY COUNCIL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VIGIL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—This month I was able to commemorate Domestic Violence Remembrance Day along with many members of the community by attended a vigil hosted by Randwick Council. Randwick City Council and the Eastern Suburbs Domestic Violence Network will place a permanent memorial in High Cross Park to the victims of domestic violence. This will give families and the community a place to mourn and pay respects. Together we lay 52 roses at the base of the memorial in memory of the victims of domestic and family violence. On average 1 Australian woman dies each week due to domestic violence. Thank you to everyone in the community whose work and support ensure that we are shining a light on domestic and family violence and providing a safe spaces for the community. Thank you to the council for creating a permanent memorial and for organising the vigil. It gives me hope that by raising awareness, taking responsibility for prevention and standing together we can put an end to domestic and family violence.

BRIDIE MURPHY

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—A big moment for Glenmore Park local as later this year she will be moving to the United States on a Softball scholarship. Bridie Murphy is a talented softball player who has previously represented NSW, picked for the Under 17s Australian team and will now attend the well-known Ball State University in the State of Indiana. Whilst there, she will be studying a Bachelor of Biology majoring in Zoology while playing in the NCAA Division 1 College Softball competition. Bridie has come a long way to achieve this moment, playing softball since she was 8 years old all the way to being awarded NSW Junior Softball Women's Player of the Year. I wish Bridie all the very best in her future in America as she makes not only her local Glenmore Park community proud but as well as the nation proud.

JOSEPHINE BORG

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—I want to take the time to recognise the outstanding and generous work that Josephine Borg has put in every year to raise money for the Cancer Council through Australia's Biggest Morning Tea. Her first morning tea managed to raise one thousand three hundred and eighty dollars. Since, then Josephine has managed to raise on average thirty thousand dollars a year and to date has raised over four hundred thousand dollars. Josephine has garnered the support of local clubs, businesses and farmers in her efforts to raise funds and was recently named Mulgoa's Local Woman of The Year. She is most deserving of that award and most deserving of recognition for all the hard work she puts in to that of helping others.

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE SPIRIT WEEK: MARRICKVILLE WEST

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—I congratulate Marrickville West Primary School on hosting Autism Acceptance Spirit Week. Over the last few decades, there has been considerable progress in ensuring people with autism are acknowledged, included and empowered to thrive, and I thank Marrickville West for working to ensure our schools are even more inclusive of people with neurodivergence. During Autism Acceptance Spirit Week, Magnificent Mind Monday saw students wear a fun hat to encourage an understanding of the impacts autism has on the brain. The rest of the week followed with similarly themed days celebrating and acknowledging neurodiverse in ways that were fun, informative and affirming; Neurodiversity Tuesday, What's Your Passion Wednesday, Thursday Autism Acceptance Day and Sensory Friendly Friday. The week was all about awareness and encouraging students to embrace diversity and neurodivergence. I warmly thank and congratulate the students, teachers, staff and families of Marrickville West Primary school on marking Autism Acceptance Spirit Week and acknowledge all young people in the Inner West who live with autism or are neurodivergent.

CONNECT INNER WEST WINTER SOCIAL CALENDAR

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—I acknowledge and thank Connect: Inner West for their hard work and initiative in organising a calendar of social gatherings and outings for local seniors to enjoy over the upcoming winter months. We know social isolation and loneliness are amongst the most significant challenges facing older people in our community, particularly over the past few years of COVID lockdown. For older and vulnerable people in our community, a lack of access to quality, affordable transport only serves to deepen social isolation, as well as access to essentials like food and medical care. Not only does Connect: Inner West provide door to door transport to those who need it most, by creating this calendar, it is also proactively working to connect and engage older and vulnerable people across the Inner West. The winter calendar includes a range of events including the fit and fabulous walking group, lunch at Inner West institution Hawke's Brewery, or an essential Bunnings trip! I warmly thank and congratulate all those at Connect: Inner West for all they are doing to ensure everyone in our community has access to quality and affordable transport.

ADDI ROAD WRITERS FESTIVAL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—I congratulate the Addison Road Community Organisation on the 2022 Addi Road Writers' Festival. The theme of the yearly festival for 2022 was 'New Lines', a timely reminder of the need to look forward and start something new. The artistic directors of the festival, Sheila Ngoc Pham and Mark Mordue, said their aim was to "reboot the whole idea of what a literary festival can be". While some writers festivals might include sit down panels and Q&As across a number of weeks, instead, the Addi Road Writers' Fest was an action packed day featuring more than 30 writers, artists, poets and journalists appearing on over 10 panels across two venues, both at the Addison Road Community Centre. Guests included incredibly inspiring names; people like Safdar Ahmed, Michael West, Felicity Plunkett and Ethan Bell inspired the crowds who were lucky enough to hear their insights into the literary world. Arts and culture make up so much of the identity of the Inner West, and it's largely due to community events like these. Without the dedicated organisers and all attendees, we wouldn't have such a terrific and accessible arts, literature and culture community.

WARNERS BAY SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Anyone who visits the Warners Bay area can see the extraordinary work of the Warners Bay Sustainable Neighbourhood Group. I've mentioned them and their tireless efforts to regenerate and beautify Warners Bay in the Parliament before, and I'm so pleased the Sustainable Neighbourhood Group has also been recognised by the City of Lake Macquarie! Warners Bay Sustainable Neighbourhood Group was one of seven finalists for Lake Mac Environmental Leader at the 2022 Lake Mac Awards. Lake Mac Environmental Leader recognises outstanding demonstration of leadership skills and contribution to the Lake Macquarie environment, and in delivering exceptional opportunities for community connection and facilitating environmentally sustainable behaviours, the Warners Bay Sustainable Neighbourhood Group has more than earned their nomination. Their Repair Café initiative has helped mend more than 300 items, diverting them away from landfill—and the Sustainable Neighbourhood Group has delivered more than thirty public events since 2017. This all comes down to the thousands of volunteer hours members have put in. Great work, guys.

KOTARA VENTURER LILLIAN HARDING

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—The Queen's Scout Award is the highest honour that can be earned by a Venturer. Venturers are Scouts aged 14-17, open to all regardless of gender, with a focus on community involvement, personal growth, leadership development, study/life balance and, of course, adventure and responsible risk taking. Kotara Venturer Lillian Harding's journey to the award included taking on physically demanding challenges and designing changes for a sustainable future. It was my pleasure to help celebrate this amazing young woman's achievement with her troop on April 6. Some of the highlights of Lillian's achievements on her way to her Queen's Scout Award, include leading a 3-day expedition along the Six Foot Track, mountain biking in the Snowy Mountains and caving in New Zealand. Lillian has also been involved in a STEM Defence and Innovation project designing green power technology, which she is keen to continue to develop. I met Lillian and was blown away by an extraordinary young woman who has already achieved so much. This is a well-deserved award, and I am sure Lillian will continue to make our community so proud.

ULANDA AND CAROLI DE VILLIERS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Creativity is such an important outlet, but can often feel inaccessible for many. Tingira Heights mother and daughter team Ulanda and Caroli de Villiers want to create a world that empowers people from all walks of life to unleash their inner artist. They founded Kwas Studio in Warners Bay—in a nod to their South African heritage, the name "kwas" is the Afrikaans word for "paintbrush". Fittingly, Ulanda and Caroli run acrylic painting workshops for everyone, regardless of age. Their commitment to sharing the joy of creativity is amazing, and they were recently named Lake Mac Art Leaders at the 2022 Lake Mac Awards. Ulanda and Caroli were named among the four finalists in their category, which is awarded for outstanding demonstration of leadership skills and contribution to the arts. With more than 90 per cent of attendees having no past painting experience, they are rightly proud that their studio is able to showcase hidden talents and overcome insecurities. Congratulations to Ulanda and Caroli! Very well deserved.

MITTAGONG STATION SCULPTURE

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—On 14 April, I had the privilege of cutting the ribbon for a new sculpture at Mittagong Railway Station. Sydney based artist, Joel Adler, created the statue as a testament to an important time in the history of the town, using pieces of the past to provide a connection into the future. The old railway bridge is gone, and two new lifts have been installed in the existing heritage-listed footbridge. Elements of the old bridge were salvaged, and Joel Adler's design proposal was chosen as a reflection of the station's beginnings, as it creatively repurposes material and shapes from the old overbridge. The statue reads

'1867', an important year for Mittagong when the railway station first opened connecting Mittagong to surrounding areas. It is well known that I am passionate about all things heritage rail, and I hope to eventually see the Picton Colo Vale Loop Line extended all the way to Mittagong. The new sculpture ensures that while we will continue to improve facilities, our connection to the past is not lost. So, take a train ride to Mittagong, check out the new artwork, and support local businesses while you're there!

FRENSHAM AGRICULTURAL TEAM

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—A wonderful part about growing up in the Southern Highlands are the opportunities to learn about agriculture, traditions and our connection to the land. Frensham Girls' Secondary School had 11 students competing at the Sydney Royal Easter Show representing their school and The Highlands in various agricultural competitions. Along with their Coordinator of Agriculture, Leonie Mutch, and led by Judith Hopkins and Maggie Waldren, the Frensham show team competed in parading cattle as well as preparing and presenting steers and carcasses to the judges. The students' efforts were rewarded when they won the Herdsman Competition Best Maintained Team with their stall of historical equipment and photos, celebrating 200 years of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW. The team also placed in the F002 Parader State Final, the Heavyweight School Led Steer, the School Paraders, the Simmental Middleweight Led Steer, and the Middleweight Open Led Steer competitions. Well done to the Frensham show team - an outstanding effort, showcasing what agriculture in The Highlands has to offer.

GAIL FRASER JIM NEELY - BOWRAL BOWLING CLUB

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—I congratulate the winners of the Bowral Bowling Club mixed pair championship, Jim Neely and Gail Fraser. The pair played a tight match on Easter Saturday against Julie Hayden and Kevin Stafford, but in the end the star duo pulled ahead with some beautiful bowling. Jim and Gail are not new champions, as this is the fourth time their names will appear on the championship shield. I am very glad to see our community once again gathering and engaging in some friendly competition. The Bowral Bowling Club is a fantastic community space not only for bowling, but it also has a family friendly bistro, a new kids' play section, and a fantastic live music scene. They support the community by sponsoring local sporting teams and charities. A great spot for your next social, corporate, or family event!

ZOO2ZOO RIDE

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to the Novocastrians who undertook the Zoo2Zoo ride from Newcastle to Dubbo, contributing to the over \$100,000 that has been raised for the Black Dog Institute this year. Starting at Newcastle Beach and finishing at Western Plains Zoo, the team rode almost 450 kilometres in just three days via the Hunter Valley Zoo, Denman and Gulgong, taking on pouring rain and many flat tyres. Founded by Andrew McKay, over almost two decades the event has raised over \$2 million for important mental health research that has no doubt changed many lives. Congratulations to all involved. You've earned a rest!

NEWCASTLE ROWING CLUB

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Newcastle Rowing Club, who have been named Rowing Australia's 2021 Club of the Year. The club was recognised for their efforts in increasing rowing participation, through innovative club events like The Bustle and ERGtober, and growing their junior development squad, rookie rowing and indoor rowing programs. With the challenges of the last two years, Newcastle Rowing Club's dedication to their sport has not just seen the club survive, it has also thrived. Congratulations on this much deserved award and recognition.

YOUNG HARNESS RACING CLUB

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I take this opportunity to thank those involved with the Young Harness Racing Club following their recent fundraising efforts in support of a much loved local family. With the blessing of Club President Dave Micallef, I understand committee members Tahlia, Eliza and Lucy pieced together an auction and raffle as just two examples of various ways in which they worked to raise funds for the family across a five week period. The committee was positively shocked by the incredible support shown for the cause, from both local and those from nearby tracks at Temora, Parkes and Menangle for the "Miracle Mile" in Sydney. The outstanding and selfless efforts taken by the Young Harness Racing Club is admirable, as is the support and generosity from the general community and those embedded within the industry. Those involved ultimately raised just shy of \$29,000, with Harness Racing NSW making a further contribution to the cause. Thank you to all involved.

TANYA CHAFFEY - BOWLS NSW WOMEN'S STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I congratulate Ms Tanya Chaffey of Temora following her participation in the 2021 Bowls NSW Women's State Singles Championships held recently in Tamworth. At this event I understand Tanya came very close to being crowned the NSW Women's State Singles Champion after a stellar performance in the semi-finals. Although she was unsuccessful in her pursuit of the title, I understand Tanya gave her absolute best at the competition, of which Temora Ex-Services Club and the local bowls community are extremely proud. Those who play bowls competitively or socially already know of its benefits as a game, and so it is when local players like Tanya go on to excel in competition that the broader community is encouraged to get involved in this fantastic sport. Congratulations once again to Tanya on her success and thank you for representing our local community so well.

TONY LOPES

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)—I acknowledge the exceptionally talented Tony Lopes of Sylvania who won 'Best Comic Strip' at the Australian Cartoonists Association's 2021 Stanley Awards. Tony's passion for cartooning emerged as a child, developing his skills by studying Warner Bros cartoons and doodling in the margins of his school books. At the age of sixteen, he sold his first cartoon to the Sky and Space magazine before going on to earn a diploma in fine arts with a major in photography through St George College. After his studies, Tony worked as a photographer before developing the idea for 'Insanity Streak' in 1992 and sending out countless samples. It wasn't until the year 2000 though that Australian Provincial Newspapers picked up 'Insanity Streak' turning Tony's passion into a career. Today, 'Insanity Streak' reaches an audience of more than five million people each day and appears in more than 60 newspapers in 15 countries. I congratulate Tony Lopes on receiving this award and extend my best wishes as he continues to use his art to bring joy to the lives of so many people.

DANDELION SUPPORT NETWORK

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)—I acknowledge the wonderful work of Dandelion Support Network ("Dandelion"). Established by two mothers who noticed an opportunity to make a difference, Dandelion is a not-for-profit organisation that is dedicated to supporting families in need and ensuring that babies and children have access to nursery items essential for their safety, well-being and development. The wonderful team at Dandelion accept, sort and safety check children's clothes and nursery items and work closely with over 200 hospitals and community support agencies. In fact, in 2021 Dandelion helped over 1,900 families and 3,500 children. On 26 March 2022, I was delighted to attend Dandelion Support Network's High Tea to help celebrate their achievements and raise funds to support families in need. The incredible high tea raised over \$20,000 which is more than any other year. I thank the team at Dandelion for their ongoing efforts in supporting vulnerable families and children. I recognise Kathryn Brennan, Philip Whyte, Michael Barker, Tracy Edwards, Dominique Brown, Deepti Mishra, Craig Berger, Gabrielle Humphreys, Brenda Lavender, Saskia Duncan, Kaylene Pring and Katrina Lonergan. I commend everyone at Dandelion Support Network for the invaluable work they do in our community.

JANNALI BASKETBALL CLUB

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)—I recognise Jannali Basketball Club who are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year. Founded in 1972, Jannali Basketball Club is the longest serving basketball club in the Sutherland Shire and was originally based at the then Jannali Boy's High School. To raise funds for the formation of the Club, the students at Jannali Boy's High School played a basketball game for some 105 hours – a then World Marathon Basketball record. Since then the Club has continued to grow, adding junior girl's programmes in the eighties. Throughout the Club's 50 years, Barrie and Kay Meadows have devoted countless hours with Barrie still coaching two teams and helping several others with a focus on teaching the fundamentals of the game. None of this success would be possible without the Club's hardworking volunteers. I commend the Executive Committee including Dianne Murtagh, Lauren Peterson, Tim Bath, Kelly Merchant, Kirsten Meadows, Anna Cornwall, Jo Slater, Matthew Ismay, Jasmin Peake, Selma Osse and of course Barrie and Kay Meadows for their work to promote and grow basketball in the Sutherland Shire. I congratulate Jannali Basketball Club for reaching this milestone and extend my best wishes for the future.

WHALEBONE WHARF – BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I congratulate Nathan Tomkins and staff from Whalebone Wharf in Port Macquarie for his success with major accolades at the 2021 Coastline Credit Union Greater Port Macquarie Business Awards held on 13th May at Panthers. A restaurant recognised for its resilience and community spirit, proud owner Nathan Tomkins was presented with the revered Business of the Year and the

Excellence in Business Award from over 225 entries. Acknowledged for outstanding cuisine and exceptional service, Nathan has certainly raised the benchmark by sourcing the region's highest quality, local produce while training the next generation of hospitality professionals. Rocked by the devastating 2021 March floods, Nathan and his staff at Whalebone worked unrelentingly for four weeks to rebuild their renowned waterfront restaurant which oversees the beautiful Hastings River. During this time members of the community chipped in to help an iconic business recover from the extraordinary flooding event. Today, Whalebone Wharf is back bigger and better than ever offering premier venue catering for all occasions, serving fresh seafood and modern fusion cuisine which promises to tantalise everyone's taste buds. Congratulations Whalebone Wharf on this milestone and well-deserved achievement.

NATE CASTELLI

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise Hastings Secondary College student Nate Castelli for his sensational results in the Australian Little Athletics Championships held on 23 to 24 April 2022. Described as a shining College star with extraordinary sporting ability, Nate Castelli is setting the bar in a range of athletic sports, impressing selectors and beating the toughest of rivals to win a stash of accolades at the Australian Little Athletics Championships. In Melbourne, Nate won Gold in the Shot Put, Silver in the 200 metre and the 100 metre races, Silver in the long jump and bronze in the Discus. Among these achievements Nate scored three personal bests at the National Championships and beat some of highest ranked young sportsmen in the country. It is undeniable that 2022 has been a stellar year for Nate as he quickly rose through the State selection process to compete for NSW. To be selected in the Little Athletics NSW side is seen as major milestone for any young sportsman and all credit to Nate he excelled even beyond the State level, earning a place on the National team. A role model and young champion of athletics, I congratulate Nate on his achievements.

EXCELLENCE AWARDS – HASTINGS PHYSIO & HEALTH & DPH HANDYMAN YARD MAINTENANCE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise the leading businesses in handyman and physio health who were acknowledged at the 2021 Coastline Credit Union Greater Port Macquarie Business Awards on 13th May at the Panthers Port Macquarie. Triumphant in the Excellence in Small Business category was Principal Physiotherapist Guy Terkelsen and his team at Hastings Physio and Health for delivering high quality healthcare which encompasses a multiplicity of services since being established by Paul Seward in 1986. Hastings Physio and Health specialises in physiotherapy, exercise physiology, massage, occupational therapy, women's health, lymphoedema management, pilates and Tai Chi from large purpose-built rooms. Their mission is to strive to achieve the best results in healthcare. Claiming the Excellence in Micro Business Award was Daniel Parry-Hawkins, owner of DPH Handyman and Yard Maintenance for always focusing on keeping it local by sourcing from local suppliers coupled with his innovative style of servicing residential, acreage and commercial sites. An industry player for nearly four years, Daniel is setting a high quality standard in maintenance and is even sharing his expertise on YouTube to help his community. I congratulate these wonderful businesses for their remarkable achievements.

HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT TO ASSIST TONGA DISASTER RECOVERY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I would like to acknowledge the incredible staff at Royal North Shore Hospital who will be sending equipment to Tonga following the devastating volcano eruption in January. This equipment will be sent to Vaiola Hospital in Tonga's capital city Nuku'Alofa which was destroyed during the eruption. A special mention to Professor Bruce Robinson, an endocrinologist at Royal North Shore, and Northern Sydney Local Health District Chief Executive Deb Willcox, who organised the charitable project in under 24 hours. The equipment includes 25 beds and mattresses, 40 over-bed tables, four medication trolleys, one bariatric wheelchair, one standard wheelchair, three sets of crutches and one electric examination table. Professor Robinson has a special connection with the people of Tonga as he was the team doctor for the Tongan athletes during the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. This equipment will be essential for patients and staff and so I congratulate Professor Robinson and Deb Willcox, along with all the staff at Royal North Shore Hospital for this charitable donation. I look forward to seeing the equipment collected and delivered to Tonga in the coming weeks.

NORTH SYDNEY BEARS WIN KNOCK ON EFFECT CUP

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Last weekend North Sydney Oval or more affectionately known as Bear Park dazzled in the autumn sun as families watched the North Sydney Bears deliver an outstanding win against Manly in the Knock on Effect Cup. With an absolute thrilling 56-18 win against Manly the day was also complimented with sausage sandwiches, meat pies, families enjoying the game from the Doug Walters Hill, and kids running around with footballs in hand. Congratulations to Josh Bergamin, Kevin Naiqama, Adam Keighran, Billy Smith, Tom Carr, Jesse Marshcke, Sandon Smith, Tuku Hau-Tapua, Ben Marshcke, Terrell May, Jordin Leiu, Jacob Preston, Egan Butcher, Keiran Hayman, Ben Thomas, Jerry Key, Michael Fenn, Regan

Hughes, and Jason Taylor on a spectacular win. It is days like this at North Sydney Oval with the overwhelming support of fans and locals for the Bears that highlight what rugby means to our local community. I look forward to seeing the Bears continue to build an impressive proposal for a return to the NRL, and I look forward to joining them at their next home game. Go the Bears.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 20:24 until
Wednesday 18 May 2022 at 9:30.**