



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament  
First Session**

**Tuesday 7 June 2022**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Tuesday 7 June 2022**

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

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

### *Visitors*

#### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER (12:01):** I acknowledge the presence of survivors of the Stolen Generations and their families, friends and supporters in the galleries and in the Chamber today. On behalf of the members of the Legislative Assembly, I thank you all for being here. I acknowledge other special guests, including the family of Auntie Nancy de Vries, who attended and addressed the House in 1997; the President of the Legislative Council, the Hon. Matthew Mason-Cox, MLC; the New South Wales Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon. Ben Franklin, MLC; former Premier the Hon. Bob Carr; and former Leader of the Opposition Peter Collins. Ms Linda Burney, the Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, will also be joining us.

### *Announcements*

#### **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS**

**The SPEAKER:** I inform the House that a Legislative Assembly staff member and media representatives have been authorised to take still photographs and to film on a pool basis during the commemoration of the apology to the Stolen Generations.

### *Commemorations*

#### **STOLEN GENERATIONS APOLOGY TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY**

**The SPEAKER (12:02):** Today is a very special day. The usual routine of business has been changed to allow this House to acknowledge the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to survivors of the Stolen Generations. We will be hearing directly from a number of survivors. We have Uncle James "Michael" Welsh, also known as "Widdy" or Number 36, Auntie Lorraine Peeters and Uncle Richard Dawes. After we have heard from the survivors, the Premier will move a motion and speak to it, followed by the Leader of the Opposition and then other members of the Legislative Assembly.

I draw the attention of members to the message stick on the table before us, just above the Clerk. The message stick was presented to the Parliament in 2017 to commemorate the introduction of the Aboriginal Languages Bill 2017. It is a reminder of the ongoing two-way dialogue between Aboriginal communities of New South Wales and this Parliament. The message stick is usually displayed in the Legislative Council Chamber but it is also used for special occasions. Today is certainly one of those occasions.

Before I call on the first of our speakers today, I remind members and visitors about the *In Living Memory* exhibition on the Reconciliation Wall of the New South Wales Parliament in our Fountain Court. The exhibition shows some of the places where our speakers this afternoon were taken. It is a powerful reminder of that time, a reminder of the importance of remembering and a reminder of the importance of listening. I now invite Uncle James Michael Welsh, also known as "Widdy" or Number 36, to address this House.

*Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.*

**Uncle JAMES MICHAEL "WIDDY" WELSH:** Thank you. First of all, I have got to say I am so proud to be here today, to be in this very special moment that is about to happen for myself and the storytelling, and to be able to make the future lives of our children and grandchildren a better place. All my brothers from the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation know I am a sook and I shed a few tears now and then. I would much rather get out and have a dust-up rather than talk, but I thank you.

Good afternoon aunties, uncles, brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, Premier, Leader of the Opposition, Ministers, parliamentarians and all other guests here today. I make all excuses for myself; this is the first time I have read something out. It is really important that we get this here so that we can put things into place to make for a happier island we are all living on. I start by acknowledging country and the traditional owners of the land

that we are meeting on, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. I pay my respect to Elders past, present and those of the future. This was, is and always will be Aboriginal land.

I ask those of us who are able to please stand as we take a moment's silence. This moment is to remember the other brothers and sisters, Elders, mothers, fathers, aunts and uncles who we have lost and whose spirits are in us and still with us today. During this moment of silence, I ask that you think of the family of brother Jesse Barker of the Kinchela Boys Home, who passed away last week. He will be buried on Thursday. Our heartfelt condolences are with his wife, Aunty Ann Barker, and their daughters.

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

**Uncle JAMES MICHAEL "WIDDY" WELSH:** Thank you very much for that moment of silence. My name is James Michael "Widdy" Welsh or Number 36. I was "James" in the courts. I was "Michael" or "36" in Kinchela Boys Home. "Widdy" is what my people named me when I returned home. I am a survivor of the place they called Kinchela Boys Home. I hate to use the word "home", as it was never a home to any of us boys. I am a proud Wailwan man. My country is out near the Macquarie Marshes, in a little place called Coonamble. I was eight years old when I was taken from there. Seven of us were taken, ripped away from our mother. My sisters, brothers and I were taken to the training home, and our family, what we knew, ended then.

I stand here today not to share my story. I am not here to share the story of my eldest son, who, as a baby, was separated from his mother. A pillow was put between them so mum and bub would not see each other. That removal happened in 1971, only two years after the New South Wales Aborigines Welfare Board was rescinded by an Act of this Parliament. I stand here today to reflect on what has happened since former New South Wales Premier Bob Carr first apologised to the Stolen Generations survivors. I reflect too on the Bringing Them Home report and those Kinchela Boys Home brothers who shared their truth-telling at that time. Sharing their stories in the Bringing Them Home report let all Australians know what happened to us once we stepped through the gates of Kinchela. We were continuously abused in that place. Those brothers were some of the first survivors who were able to name our abuse and explain the pain those abuses have left on us, our children and our families.

Sadly, I do not remember Premier Carr's apology. To be honest, it is unreal that I am here today, talking like this. I used to never be able to talk. I would feel it in my gut, and yet I could not bring it out of my mouth, so it came out through my fist. In that journey of pain, I did not know that I was traumatised. I did not know that the trauma was making me act like that. I might put my reading glasses on, hey?

I did not even know that I was living in a world of trauma. It had become my reality. It felt normal. It would take me almost 15 years after the Premier apologised to start my own journey of healing. The journey started because I needed to find the gates of the place that they locked us behind when we were in Kinchela. I was not going to accept the lie that I had been sent to a training home to be trained. Seeing those gates again, which I remembered identified the place only as Kinchela Boys Home, would prove me right.

As I stand at this podium you see me—the face of a survivor. You might even feel my pain. But what you will not see are the silent victims of the pain and suffering of the intergenerational impact of my trauma. My parents, my children, my grandchildren, the children of thousands of other survivors like me, their wives, their grandchildren, they are the forgotten, silent victims of the trauma of training homes that has ripped through the generations. You will not see them stand here behind this podium and tell their stories, yet they are no less victims than we were. Their suffering is no less the result of our boys home training than ours is.

Fifteen years after the Premier apologised, I started my journey of healing and my fight for the right to resources to rebuild my family's structure. I started to stop the reprogramming of my brain, my mind. I finally stopped acting the way I was "trained" to act while I was in Kinchela Boys Home. When I came out of that place, I started on the journey of the assimilation policy—as they trained us. I did what they programmed us to do. I worked. I bought a house. I sold the house. I bought another house. I invited some friends to come and live with me because of the trauma that made me afraid to be living in the world where I was. After a time, I knew something was wrong. I did not know what else to do except to tell my wife to grab the baby, put her in the pram, take some pillows, blankets and clothes—and we just walked out. We went and lived at Aunty Tam's place and then eventually went back to stay at my mother's place until I could get my own house again.

People asked me, for years, "Why did you do that?" I said, "I don't know." I know now why I did it. It was the programming that they did to us by not allowing us to ever be able to ask for anything or ever be able to talk about anything. When you take children and you punish them and starve them and flog them and abuse them, you create what happened up here in my head. That was the hardest thing for me in my life. As I was growing up and getting older, I was given back to my mother by a doctor. Not all Stolen Generations have had the journey of trauma that I have had.

I turned 18. I said, "Nobody is ever going to tell me what to do again." I started my journey. I cut my children's lives down to a place where they never learnt or were not able to learn how to socialise in the communities. I built a wall around them for protection. I got on my knees when they were five and six years old to teach them how to fight, how to throw somebody over, because that is what that place did. Sometimes I would not let them stay in the hospital. I would tell my missus that we would go back in and get them. She would come back out and say they were not allowed. I would go in and tell those people that if they did not give me my baby, I was going to do bad things, not knowing that I was suffering, that this was trauma. This was the way that the policies were designed to make me think about work and make me think about owning a house, owning a job, not loving my children. I am a healthy father, a grandfather, a great-grandfather and an Elder of my family.

I just said that not all Stolen Generations survivors have had the journey. Too many survivors died before Premier Carr's apology and too many survivors have died since the apology and apologies after that. Like them, we all are still waiting for the full implementation of the Bringing Them Home report's 54 recommendations. We are waiting for the Stolen Generations policy framework that sits across the whole of government, State and Federal. Investing in the Bringing Them Home report recommendations could have saved the lives of the Stolen Generations survivors and our descendants. We would be further on our healthier journey. Our pain could stop with us. Our children's, grannies' and great-grannies' pain would be less. Our healing and their intergenerational healings are interconnected.

We needed to be provided the resources to heal together. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent 3 per cent of the population. We have all heard about the need for closing the gap, and targets have been set across areas that have an impact on lives and outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These targets miss an important fact: Stolen Generations survivors and our descendants have been identified as the invisible gap—the gap within the gap. We are a gap no-one talks about closing. I have heard this at different times by people who have spent a lot of years going around on their journey with Bringing Them Home, the royal commissions and doing investigations. I have heard it said that the majority of Aboriginal people are doing well. I am happy for that. But I have just identified that we are a percentage that sadly falls through the gaps and that we do not get the chance, because our silence and our pain is part of the blame. But the main blame lies with the policies that were made to entrap us into this program, the way that they wanted us, by the abuse and floggings that they did to us.

We are here today, Premier, Leader of the Opposition, Ministers and parliamentarians, to say that we can change this. Work with us. You can ensure that we are not left behind and our children and grannies are not left behind. You can make sure the New South Wales implementation plan for achieving the commitments in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people doesn't leave us, the Stolen Generations and our descendants, falling through the gap. The New South Wales Government's commitment to unfinished business and reparations for Stolen Generations has been a start, but it needs more support and investment. Today you have seen what my KBH brothers and I have created with the resources provided by the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation. We were able to create the national first Stolen Generation Mobile Education Centre, ensuring our truth-telling is heard throughout communities, in schools and across New South Wales.

Without truth-telling, there can be no healing. I will add too that at this moment you are all my healers. I can't heal unless I'm doing what I'm doing. I know that because I kept that pain inside for so many years, not being able to talk about it and letting it kill me from the inside out. My strength is my voice, my speech. While I talk, the stronger I get. We need you to continue to see us, hear us and sit with us. We need you to commit to a genuine partnership with us so that our solutions—the ones we know will work—are the ones you invest in. Together we can ensure all Stolen Generation survivors across the State achieve outcomes that will substantially improve the quality of life for our descendants. You can help close the gap. You have the power to ensure the promise that came from the apology is followed through—not over the next 25 years, but today. This is key to ensuring the intergenerational transformation of social, emotional and cultural wellbeing, family and collective healing, economic inclusion, empowerment and home ownership. That is what is required to close the gap.

It is the only way we can stop the entry of our descendants into the criminal justice system and their incarceration in the jails. It is the only way that our descendants will stop being removed from our families and put into care. I have heard over the last few years a bit too many times governments say that they want to heal the communities. I stand here before you and tell you that is not possible. Governments cannot heal communities, not while they are taking children away from families, because once a child is removed, that family becomes traumatised. And that family, traumatised in the community, becomes a thorn and a part of the pain of the community's trauma too. The child, like myself, goes back looking for my family, my people. And because of what happened, I'm not there, I'm not the same. I don't talk the same; I don't act the same. I can't talk about going pig catching with them, or yabbing or yam hunting or bee hunting or honey hunting. I can't do that; I'm not there. I'm part of a different world, so I close down. I'm in my own world.

The only way to heal a community is to heal families. Instead of taking the children away, spend more money and effort on the resources to make the mother and father a better family—not a better parent, but a better family. Happy families is the only thing that will make happy communities. This anniversary event leaves me with hope and determination. On this apology anniversary, I respectfully request an urgency to act. If this event had happened last week, I would have shared with you that there were 63 survivors alive. Today, a week or so later, there are 62 because of the loss of brother Jesse Barker. We do not have 25 years for this genuine partnership to improve outcomes for survivors, our descendants and families. We have the right to see the resources invested in our solutions that we know will work. We have the right to die knowing our children have the same opportunity as the rest of the nation, that our pain and suffering has not gone unanswered by this great nation and that the power rests with you today. I ask you, Premier, and the Leader of the Opposition, that you meet with Stolen Generation organisations to ensure this happens. We need bipartisan support on this. I invite you to walk with us, our families, on this journey of healing. You can help stop our pain so our families no longer live with it.

I want to finish by acknowledging the Stolen Generation survivors who are here with us today. Brother Kerry McKenzie, a survivor of Clairvaux in the Blue Mountains, is celebrating his sixty-third birthday today. Happy birthday, brother. As a gift to Uncle Kerry and the other Stolen Generation survivors who were sent to Clairvaux, I will ask the Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services to please urgently meet with brother Kerry and other Clairvaux survivors before Land and Housing Corporation demolishes that site, which is in that process now. Once that heritage is lost, the voices of survivors are lost and this past can happen again. Brother Kerry, happy birthday from all of us here today. Everyone here today, thank you for taking the time to listen to me. I thank you very much.

*Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.*

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you so much, Uncle Michael. I invite Aunty Lorraine Peeters to address the House. Thank you, Aunty Lorraine.

**Aunty LORRAINE PEETERS:** It's a hard act to follow, isn't it? Good afternoon. Premier, I want to acknowledge you first and thank you for having us speak here today. Also, I would like to acknowledge all the Cootamundra survivors in the room, and also the Kinchela Boys, where my brothers grew up too, and all the Bomaderry survivors where all our babies were sent before they came to Cootamundra. I want to acknowledge the families of all Stolen Generations in this room, not only them, their families and whole communities, and those that are still trying to find their way home—we know there are thousands of those—also, those that did find their way back. I want to acknowledge the Gadigal people from the country that I am standing on today, because I am Wailwan and Kamilaroi from the west. I want to acknowledge emerging leaders from the Gadigals. Today we acknowledge the twenty-fifth anniversary since the New South Wales Government issued an apology to the Stolen Generations and it was the first Australian State Government to respond to the Bringing Them Home report. I thank you for that.

The apology called upon Australian governments to respond to the report with compassion, understanding and justice, yet our children are still being taken. Our women and men and young people are still being incarcerated at alarming high rates, which are higher than ever before. The Bringing Them Home report set out 54 recommendations, an apology being one of those. All survivors have the right to know whether these are being addressed and who is monitoring them. And if we do find out who they are, we have a right to know how many of those recommendations are being covered.

If I have one message today, I want to say on behalf of our grandmothers and our mothers: Stop removing our children. You are just recycling the trauma and contributing to intergenerational trauma. Contemporary Aboriginal child removal is a systematic cycle of abuse. It needs to stop. We need to break the cycle and continue to close the gap. The system in my eyes should be dismantled and rebuilt and should embrace survivor-led solutions, which are truth-telling, healing, and trauma-informed care. Resource the grassroots Stolen Generation organisations appropriately to allow us to address our trauma so that we can resolve our social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing for our survivors and their families. I will quote a fellow who all here have heard of, Albert Einstein, who once said:

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.

Resourcing programs that are government-led solutions that are using the same thinking is not working for us, and we need you to listen. There is an urgent need to address the intergenerational trauma in our mob by priority for families being before the children are taken, and not after. You take a child from its parents and straightaway that child shuts down into trauma. I cannot understand how somebody could take a child from its mother. Even to remove that child out of that family unit, doesn't it make sense to fix up the parent so that the child can stay with the parent?

I work with fathers and mothers who have experienced this firsthand. It is a vicious cycle of trauma and we need the system overhauled to be able to implement healing for our mob and stop causing further harm. We need to be addressing the underlying trauma that our mob are carrying so that healing can occur. I think it has to start with truth-telling. My work takes me all over the country and I am shocked to bear witness to the ignorance and lack of education and knowledge in the wider community of the history of this country. I did a whole workshop with non-Aboriginal workers working with Stolen Generations only last week. Not one of those workers in that workshop knew the history. How can you work in a place that you know nothing about?

Truth-telling sites have to be created as we do not want to leave a legacy of trauma. We want to leave a legacy of healing, strength and resilience. We want our families to know our stories; we want the wider community to know our stories. I am not sure that I will see this happen in my lifetime. Our Stolen Generation organisations are doing amazing work all across the State to bring about change, healing and the truth-telling and recognition of our survivors and families. But they need to be better resourced to provide consistent and lasting change. We need to be heard, so please listen to us, hear us and take action.

For 22 years I have been delivering a trauma-informed, culturally informed healing program, which I have called the Marumali Program, that is based on my own journey, delivering it to survivors, workers and prisoners. It addresses six of the Bringing Them Home report recommendations, so we have minimal impact on the larger scale of the issue we face. That is only six out of the 54 recommendations. I do not know how many others have been met. But I know what I do has saved lives. It has impacted lives. It has made lasting change for some. Stolen Generation organisations in New South Wales have the answers and they have the survivor-led solutions. We are creating change and restoring our social, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing. However, we need to be resourced better to allow us to make lasting and constant change. If we address the trauma, we will have healing. We will have lasting change for our generations to come. Thank you.

*Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.*

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you so much, Aunty Lorraine. I now invite Uncle Richard Dawes to address the House.

**Uncle RICHARD DAWES:** Good morning. I am the chair of the Stolen Generations Council NSW/ACT. I thank the Minister for inviting us here today. I thank Mr Bob Carr for the twenty-fifth anniversary that we are here to celebrate, and I thank both Houses for welcoming the Stolen Generation people today. I represent the Stolen Generation of New South Wales. We have a lot of members spread throughout the State that we need to help. We need finances to get those people the help they need. I was taken in 1956 walking along Silverdale Road at Warragamba Dam. I was picked up with my three sisters and my brother and taken into the homes. They said back then that we were not going to school. That was their excuse. It took me until I was 13. I finished up riding a pushbike all the way back from Taree to Condell Park to the old school I used to go to. That is how I got back with my family.

Then it took me 45 years to find the rest of my brothers and sisters who were also taken. One was taken at birth from Crown Street Women's Hospital. I got in touch with the government. It could not help me. We did not even know we had a sister who was taken at birth. But then we found out. I went through Link-Up and it finished up finding her over in Perth and flew her over. We spent the weekend with her and now I have found the rest of my 15 brothers and sisters. That is what I do today: try to help those people who were stolen to find their families and give them all the help they need, because they really need it. I also went to 10 different foster parents. If I was taken because I was not going to school, how could I get an education going to 10 different schools over a period of seven to eight years?

This is where I think things have got to change. You just can't keep on bouncing from foster parents to foster parents. I think more things should be spread to try and keep them with family or with relatives, before we start removing them from the families. I think it is also up to the Government. Back then, we never had the drugs that we have got going through the communities now. Maybe we need heavier punishments, or just get them out of our country. Because this is Aboriginal land and we don't want those sorts of people here. I am not racist, but things need to change or we are just going backwards. So that is all I can really say here today.

There is also another problem that we have got with the reparation scheme that the Government had going where they were paying \$75,000 and \$7,000 for funerals for people who were taken by the Aboriginal Welfare Board. We know that most of the children, going way back, probably up until 1969, there were a lot of people taken by the police and they were also taken by welfare and they have received no compensation. We get phone calls every week. They feel that they are the forgotten ones. It was brought out that if you were taken by the Aboriginal Welfare Board, you would get the reparation money. If you were taken by the welfare or the police, you do not get anything. I am hoping that both Houses get together and work out something.

We hear that the States, the Territories are now paying compensation. I asked the question a couple of weeks ago, "Does that mean taken by the Aboriginal Welfare Board or all?" They said, "No, all." Why can't the New South Wales Government get on board and do the same thing, help our members out? Try and give them a better life, with the suffering that they have gone through all these years. You might forget, but all these people up here, they won't forget. They have lived it and they have walked it and the children now are walking it with them. We might be a dying race, but we are not going nowhere. Thanks very much.

*Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.*

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you, Uncle Richard. I thank all three of you who have shared your stories and your thoughts. You have done so with such distinction. Consistent with the earlier resolution of the House, I will now call upon the Premier and then the Leader of the Opposition to each speak for up to 10 minutes. There are disciplines for the House, with which members are familiar. Before the Premier commences, I ask that he move the motion before the House.

### *Motions*

#### **STOLEN GENERATIONS APOLOGY TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY**

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (12:53):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the New South Wales apology to the Aboriginal people of Australia, for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country, by reaffirming its support for the resolution of the House of 18 June 1997.
- (2) Acknowledges that this month marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the New South Wales apology to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country.
- (3) Reaffirms its unreserved apologies to all Aboriginal people across New South Wales and Australia for the systemic injustices of separating Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country, whilst acknowledging the Government's role in inflicting continued pain and suffering to Aboriginal people across New South Wales and Australia.
- (4) Sincerely apologises for the intergenerational trauma and deep-seated agony these policies and laws have inflicted onto the many generations of Aboriginal people in our State.
- (5) Reiterates its continued commitment to effective reconciliation in New South Wales, and supporting the implementation of the New South Wales Government Response to "Unfinished Business" by working in direct partnership with Stolen Generations survivors, Elders, Aunts and Uncles and with the Stolen Generation Advisory Committee Organisations: Kinchela Boys' Home Aboriginal Corporation, Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation, Children of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home Incorporated, and the NSW/ACT Stolen Generations Council.

I commemorate the apology issued by this Parliament to the Stolen Generations 25 years ago. I begin by thanking Uncle Richard, Aunty Lorraine and Uncle Michael for their deep words to the Parliament today, and particularly Uncle Michael. It was very clear to all of us here today how difficult that was for him but, as he said and as he has experienced, healing can only come from having a strong voice and continuing to speak. As he said, while he talks, the stronger he gets. In addition to that, I would say the stronger the country gets in this process of healing and reconciliation. I thank him so much for that today.

I reiterate today on behalf of this Parliament our enduring sorrow for the hurt, the harm and the trauma inflicted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families by government policies of forced removal in the past—policies that allowed children to be torn away from their parents, their siblings, their families and their homes, with no regard for the damage done. The history of our modern nation is, in part, a story of awakening to the real consequences of those policies and those failings. It is our privilege to have survivors of the Stolen Generations and their families present in the gallery today, people who have lived the injustice and hurt and who continue to feel its profound consequences. We welcome them to this Parliament. On behalf of the Parliament, we reaffirm our sorrow and we again commit to walking the path of reconciliation, of truth-telling and of healing with all of them.

At the outset, I advise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers here today and online that my remarks will make reference to persons who have passed away, and I acknowledge that this may cause distress. Public acknowledgement and apology on behalf of the State of New South Wales is a significant act of respect, and that is why the apology made by this Parliament 25 years ago was so important. As Premier and on behalf of the State of New South Wales, I too apologise unreservedly to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities. We continue the process of seeking reconciliation as a State, as a nation and ultimately as a people.

Today it is fitting to acknowledge the New South Wales Premier at the time, Bob Carr, for the moving apology he offered on behalf of this Parliament. It is also fitting to acknowledge Peter Collins for his strong support and the bipartisan spirit in which that apology was made, which we all share today. But it is most fitting

to acknowledge Aunt Nancy de Vries, who told a confronting story of a life she described as incomprehensible—of being taken from her mother at 14 months of age; of growing up alone, isolated and different from everyone around her, never treated as an equal and never understanding why; and of seeing her people belittled and denigrated, victims of racism in their own land.

She spoke of crying at night and crying in the day. But most of all, Aunt Nancy spoke of the burning desire, which never left her and never subsided, to find her mum, to know her family and to reclaim her identity. That is what was taken from her—her identity, her sense of self and her connection to her history, her culture and her people. She was cut adrift, and it is heartbreaking to imagine the immense pain that must have pierced her soul at every waking moment. That is the crushing weight Aunt Nancy and so many others were forced to bear.

Raising public awareness of the history of Stolen Generations is important to survivors to break the cycle of cultural and intergenerational trauma. Now it falls on us to ensure that past injustices are made right and the mistakes of the past are never repeated. With the apology we commemorate today, this State took the first steps towards justice and healing, and I believe we heard that today in Uncle Michael's speech to Parliament. But progress on the road to healing is slow. It begins with words, but it must be made with actions. Our Government is determined to keep moving in the right direction, with practical initiatives that make a real difference. That includes delivery of the commitments raised today in response to the 2016 *Unfinished Business* report into reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales.

In 2017 New South Wales was the first State to establish a reparations scheme for Stolen Generations survivors, and the Stolen Generations Funeral Assistance Fund was established the same year. In 2018 the Stolen Generations Healing Fund commenced, providing support and collective healing initiatives, including healing centres, memorials and the continuation of the important work of establishing keeping places on the sites of former children's homes. We have also delivered funding to improve access to archival records for Stolen Generations survivors and their descendants. Those initiatives have touched the lives of hundreds of Stolen Generations survivors and their families, and in the upcoming budget we will be including additional funding for important truth-telling and healing initiatives, including enhanced funding for keeping places, which has been spoken about today, and an extension of the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme.

Those initiatives represent real action and they all have one thing in common. As spoken about today, they were not devised by Government and imposed on survivors by the State. They are survivor led. They arose from respectful and careful listening to Stolen Generations survivors, organisations and First Nations people in New South Wales and in particular the Stolen Generations Advisory Council. The initiatives flow from the response to the *Unfinished Business* report and they are the first steps in our 10-year commitment to work closely with Stolen Generations survivors to make progress on reparations. It is impossible to measure healing in dollar terms. Money can never compensate for the suffering of survivors, but by listening we have heard and understood the aspirations of survivors and their families and recognised their resilience and leadership. We have been able to take practical steps together to make a positive difference.

There is so much more to be done to make amends to Stolen Generations survivors and their families, including more truth-telling about the past to bring healing into our present and for our future. That important journey is one part of a much bigger process of reconciliation. Today the gap in basic living standards that our First Nations people endure remains completely unacceptable. It has to change and we have to do better. We must act with urgency to secure true equality and opportunity in this nation for all Indigenous Australians, including economic opportunity, social opportunity and political opportunity. That is a personal priority for me, and that is why I have asked every Minister in this Government to make closing the gap real, to do the work to identify the policies that can make a real difference and to be accountable for making real progress beyond just words and commitments. Those are all steps on the path to our goal, the goal of true reconciliation.

In this nation we have to be realistic about what reconciliation means. We will only be reconciled when we can look unflinchingly at our past, look honestly at our present, see one another eye to eye and move forward together. It should not surprise any of us that this is still hard and not yet within reach, because there is still pain and division, inequality and injustice, but we can make progress and we will make progress. For many years I was convinced that symbolism was a distraction and not a solution because grand symbolism without any follow-through left Aboriginal Australians no better off.

Now I understand that symbolism matters too. I also understand that it is more than symbolism; it is about identity and truth-telling. It speaks volumes that when Aunty Nancy de Vries addressed this Parliament in 1997 she was overwhelmed not with anger or fear but with joy. After a lifetime of pain and dislocation from her own identity, being present in this Chamber and hearing those words of apology moved her to declare, "It is wonderful." That speaks to an inner strength more powerful than all of the pain that she had suffered. It is a strength that never lost its grip on hope. [*Extension of time*]

Our task is clear: We need to ensure that we are making real progress towards justice for Aboriginal Australians in their daily lives and towards unity as a nation. There is no quick fix. There is no reconciliation without pain, sorrow, apology and forgiveness. But our reconciled future is rooted in our common humanity and shared destiny as the present inhabitants of the great southern land. The future will never be an ideal utopia and the scars of our past will never disappear, but we can heal and grow together. We can look to the future and be united in our commitment to take another step, and then another, and then another, until we reach our destination. We must implement the National Agreement on Closing the Gap in close partnership with Aboriginal communities and, most importantly, deliver on our commitments to heal unfinished business.

Bit by bit, we move towards that reconciled future—symbolic, cultural, forged in identity and, importantly, truth-telling—working to reunite our First Nations people with the identity that was taken when their children were taken. Together we will keep going until the words of Aunty Nancy ring through the years to proclaim of the progress we will make as a State: It is wonderful.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (13:06):** I acknowledge that we are meeting on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Each of us has a story. Each of us has a narrative about who we are, what we have done and what we believe. Twenty-five years ago, this Parliament invited Nancy de Vries to join us on the floor of this Chamber to share her story and speak her truth as a member of the Stolen Generations. She told us how, at the age of just 14 months, she was taken from her mother and was moved and relocated a staggering 22 times before she turned 18. She told of how, growing up Aboriginal in a non-Aboriginal world, her childhood was full of fear, rejection and tears—the tears of loneliness that only a child who believes she is unloved can cry.

Twenty-five years ago, Nancy de Vries told this Parliament her story, and then we asked her to accept on behalf of the Indigenous community this Parliament's apology to the Stolen Generations. In her autobiography, *One Life, Two Stories: Nancy de Vries' Journey Home*, Nancy said this about what that day a quarter of a century ago meant to her:

Do you know what was the biggest healing moment in my life? When Bob Carr and all those politicians apologised and let me feel they were sorry that it happened to me, and they would make sure it doesn't happen again.

Let me expand on Nancy's words and acknowledge some of the people who were present on that day. First, I acknowledge the role of former Premier Bob Carr from 1995 to 2005. It was his leadership that ensured this Parliament was the first to apologise to the Stolen Generations. I acknowledge Dr Andrew Refshauge, the former Deputy Premier and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs from 1995 to 2005, and Colin Markham, the Parliamentary Secretary for Aboriginal Affairs from 1995 to 1999. Sadly, we lost Colin in 2020, but we acknowledge his work in the cause of reconciliation and land rights. I also acknowledge the Opposition leader at the time, Peter Collins, for his role in ensuring the apology was both unanimous and bipartisan, a difficult task when you consider large sections of his own party were completely opposed to the apology.

Finally, I acknowledge the Minister for Health, and member for Wakehurst, Brad Hazzard, as the only remaining member of this House who spoke in favour of the motion that day. The Government followed up the 1997 apology with numerous initiatives to create a more equal and inclusive society in this State. Housing was delivered in partnership with Indigenous communities, and new employment programs were introduced, including Indigenous procurement policies, cadetships and traineeships. There was renewed focus on better health services and outcomes in both urban and rural Aboriginal communities. Investments were made in essential infrastructure to deliver clean drinking water and to manage sewerage, and work was done to preserve and document Aboriginal culture and languages.

It is worth noting that not everyone was supportive of this Parliament's apology. Some claimed hurtfully that the generation was not stolen but rescued. Others claimed that it never happened at all, that the stories of the Stolen Generation were somehow concocted to gain attention or compensation. That had the effect of denying the legitimacy, the pain and the trauma that so many people felt, as if some hoped that to deny their voice would make them fall silent. But no-one was going to silence the more than 500 people who gave evidence to the Human Rights Commission inquiry into the Stolen Generations. No-one was going to silence Nancy de Vries, who wrote:

Let me tell you, it definitely happened. I have all my own papers and there is not one bit of evidence that my mother signed any paper or that it went to court. I was conveniently removed because I was Aboriginal and because my mum was Aboriginal, perhaps because I was fairer, perhaps because my mother was young, perhaps — who knows really. That's how it was then.

When this Parliament passed its unanimous apology, it also rejected that offensive denialism. This Parliament acknowledged the role it played in separating Aboriginal children from their families—how, for a century, this Parliament enacted laws that inflicted grief, suffering and humiliation on Indigenous Australians. As a member of the Australian Labor Party, I must also acknowledge the role our party played in this dark history. In 1915 the New South Wales Labor Government of William Holman introduced a bill to amend the Aborigines Protection

Act. That legislation gave the New South Wales Aborigines Protection Board new powers that the board had long asked for, including the power to remove any Indigenous child at any time for any reason. The bill reads:

The Board may assume full control and custody of the child of any aborigine, if after due inquiry it is satisfied that such a course is in the interest of the moral and physical welfare of such child. The Board may thereupon remove such child to such control and care as it thinks best.

As if the legislation was not clear enough, the Colonial Secretary, John Henry Cann, said in his second reading speech:

The main principle embodied in the proposed amendments is actually to empower the board to take the place of the parents.

...

It is not a question of stealing the children, but of saving them.

At the end of his speech, the Secretary provided a clear statement of Parliament's ultimate objective, which goes well beyond child welfare. He said:

... the aboriginals will soon become a negligible quantity and the young people will merge into the present civilisation and become worthy citizens.

For this legislation, passed by a Labor government; for forcibly separating Aboriginal children from their families; and for claiming it was done for the children's own good, I say unreservedly that I am sorry. It is my sincere hope that members of the Stolen Generation here today accept this apology on behalf of our party. As this Parliament did a generation before, we must follow up words with action. Bob Carr's motion committed this Parliament to the goals and processes of reconciliation. We must use this anniversary to renew our commitment to this goal of achieving a just reconciliation with our First Nations people.

While this Parliament's apology was historic and healed many, we still have much work to do. The statistics for Indigenous people remain sobering; their life expectancy is 8.2 years less than the general population, there is a 25 per cent gap in year 12 attainment, nearly a 30 per cent gap in tertiary education completion and there are many more difficulties that statistics cannot tell us about the discrimination that First Nations people have to overcome each and every day. These are confronting facts, but ones we cannot shy away from.

Today I commit New South Wales Labor to continuing a dialogue with First Nations people in this State to develop a process of treaty, and to build on the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Rights Act, self-determination and service delivery to improve outcomes for First Nations communities. The Federal Government has committed to embracing the Uluru Statement from the Heart. We should offer our Parliament's support for the new Federal Government as it works to deliver on the promise of the Uluru Statement at a referendum. It is my hope that this Parliament can show the same spirit of bipartisanship and unanimity it showed 25 years ago when it first apologised to the Stolen Generation. We all know this is the next great step in our nation's journey towards genuine reconciliation with our First Nations people.

Let me conclude by acknowledging the members of the Stolen Generations and their families who are with us today. I also acknowledge the organisations that make up the Stolen Generations Advisory Committee and the people of those organisations who have supported their journey. Let us all commit to do better by the next generation of Indigenous Australians. Our task is not done, but we can look to the future with hope, optimism and purpose.

**Debate interrupted.**

**The SPEAKER:** I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 3.00 p.m.

#### *Announcements*

### **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SITTINGS**

**The SPEAKER:** I thank members for their cooperation in enabling this later time for the resumption of proceedings. Recognising the significance of other matters happening in the House today, and with the concurrence of the major parties, I decided that question time should be delayed until three o'clock today in the public interest.

*Members***MEMBER FOR NORTH SHORE****MEMBER FOR SHELLHARBOUR****MEMBER FOR NEWCASTLE**

**The SPEAKER:** The member for North Shore celebrates her birthday today. The member for Shellharbour and the member for Newcastle celebrated their birthdays during the week. I wish them all a happy birthday.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a very warm welcome to guests of the member for Lake Macquarie, Danielle Whyte, Sophie Fone, Charlize Whyte and Bruce Andrews from the Our Backyard project. I also welcome to the Chamber guests of the member for Maitland, Jess Aitchison and Nathan De Beer.

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

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** On behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet: I inform the House that in the absence of the Minister for Health, the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government will take questions on his behalf.

*Bills***STATE REVENUE AND FINES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2022****VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING BILL 2021****ELECTRONIC CONVEYANCING (ADOPTION OF NATIONAL LAW) AMENDMENT BILL 2022****FIREARMS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022****GOVERNMENT TELECOMMUNICATIONS AMENDMENT BILL 2022****MINING AND PETROLEUM LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022****RACING AND GAMBLING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022****RSL NSW AMENDMENT BILL 2022****WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY (MINES AND PETROLEUM SITES) AMENDMENT BILL 2022****Assent**

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

*Governor***ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of messages regarding the administration of the Government.

*Bills***FIREARMS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022****GOVERNMENT TELECOMMUNICATIONS AMENDMENT BILL 2022****Returned**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of messages from the Legislative Council returning the bills without amendment.

**MOTOR ACCIDENTS AND WORKERS COMPENSATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL  
2021**

**Returned**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill with amendments. I order that consideration of the Legislative Council's amendments be set down as an order of the day for a later time.

*Question Time*

**ROAD TOLLS**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (15:05):** My question is directed to the Premier. Why does Andrew, a truck driver who spoke on 2GB today, have to pay \$356 a day in tolls, or \$93,000 a year, and get no toll relief simply because of the tolls mess the Premier created?

**Mr Matt Kean:** You are the godfather of tolling in Sydney. It's your scheme.

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier will wait. I call the Treasurer to order for the first time. I call the member for Macquarie Fields to order for the first time. I call the member for Cabramatta to order for the first time.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:06):** Not only is he the godfather of tolls but also the Leader of the Opposition is the architect. The great announcement today by the roads Minister in the other place and the Treasurer is a fair and balanced approach to issues relating to the cost of living. This Government has done more on cost of living than anywhere else in the country by a long way. As we know, tolls are down, taxes are down and, as a result, Labor is down. Today we announced a 40 per cent rebate for those who spend more than \$375 on tolls per year, up to a rebate of \$750.

What is interesting about the Liberal-Nationals policy is that it does not discriminate between where people live, unlike under Labor and the M5. We do not play politics. We give it to everyone because that is what the Liberals and Nationals do, unlike those pork-barrellers on the other side of the House. In addition, a great new website called [thelatch.com.au](http://thelatch.com.au) was brought to my attention today. It has an article titled "Cost of Living Rebates: A State-by-State Guide" by a great journalist, Joel Burrows; we should get him into our gallery and get this information out. The article reads:

The Queensland government offers several decent rebates ...

South Australia offers typical concessions and discounts ...

On Tasmania, the article reads:

When you Google the phrase "rebate" next to the Tasmanian Government's website, no results come up.

It goes on:

To be honest, the ACT is pretty light on the rebate front ...

Then we get to New South Wales. The article states:

The NSW Government's Saving Finder website slaps.

I did not know what "slaps" meant, so I went to the Urban Dictionary, which defines it as a "verb meaning 'to be excellent or amazing'". The article goes on:

If you want to sit atop a throne made of rebates, then NSW is exactly where you want to live.

It goes on and on. It states:

To be honest, these awesome programs shouldn't be exclusive to those that live in NSW.

Joel Burrows knows what we know: New South Wales is the best place to be when it comes to putting downward pressure on the cost of living.

**STOLEN GENERATIONS REPARATION**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:09):** My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on what the Government is doing to continue to work towards reconciliation?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:10):** I thank the member for North Shore for her question. Like the Speaker, I congratulate her on her fortieth birthday and wish her a happy birthday.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** It's the new thirty.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** It is the new thirty. As we know, today marks 25 years since this Parliament issued an apology to the Stolen Generation. It was an important step for this Parliament to show its enduring sorrow for the hurt, harm and trauma inflicted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families by past government policies of forced removal. A public acknowledgement and apology on behalf of the State of New South Wales is a significant act of respect. I acknowledge the leadership of the New South Wales Premier at the time, Bob Carr, in offering the moving apology on behalf of this Parliament. As the Leader of the Opposition did today, as Premier on behalf of the State of New South Wales I too apologise unreservedly to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the systemic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities.

When I became Premier, one of my core priorities was to focus the entirety of government on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. I have asked every Minister in this Government to make closing the gap real. We are delivering on commitments in response to the 2016 *Unfinished Business* report into reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales. In 2017 New South Wales was the first State to establish a reparations scheme for Stolen Generation survivors. The Stolen Generations Funeral Assistance Fund was established in the same year. The budget will also include funding for an extension of the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme.

In 2018 the Stolen Generations Healing Fund commenced, supporting collective healing initiatives, including healing centres and memorials. The budget includes funding to continue the important work of establishing memorials and keeping places on the sites of former children's homes. We have also delivered funding to improve access to archival records for Stolen Generation survivors and their descendants. Our Government continues to develop and implement a range of new initiatives and investments. We are investing \$23 million in the First Steps strategy, which aims to ensure that more Aboriginal children benefit from early childhood education and includes a focus on Aboriginal language education.

We have moved to fly the Aboriginal flag on the Sydney Harbour Bridge permanently. We are creating a First Nations cultural centre. We are also handing back Me-Mel and have allocated \$43 million in this budget to support that transfer. I thank the infrastructure Minister for the work that he has done in relation to that initiative. We are implementing the National Agreement on Closing the Gap in close partnership with Aboriginal communities. Those symbols represent real action. They have one thing in common: They were not devised by Government and they are survivor-led. [*Extension of time*]

There is much more to be done to reconcile with Stolen Generations survivors and their families. We are committed to seeing that through. I thank former Premier Bob Carr and former Opposition leader Peter Collins for their leadership on this issue 25 years ago—well before any other jurisdiction. As a Parliament, we should be incredibly proud of that. We had many survivors here today. Uncle Michael spoke about his own traumatic past and experience. The speakers acknowledged how important the apology 25 years ago was for them and their communities in their healing and dealing with the immense trauma that many have felt. We cannot undo the past; what we can do, as a Parliament, is continue to work together across the political aisle to ensure that situation never occurs again and the trauma that has been suffered by many of our First Nations people was not in vain but, importantly, takes us step by step forward to reconciliation across our country.

## ROAD TOLLS

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (15:14):** My question is directed to the Premier. Does the Premier admit that he has created a mess that forces Salah—a bus driver who lives in Leumeah, in my electorate—to choose between taking a 1.5-hour journey to get to work to provide public transport to the eastern suburbs and paying the Premier's tolls of up to \$3,000 a year?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:14):** As we have always said, we make no apologies for building the motorway network and the roads and public transport networks that set up our State for success. Labor left the people of our State with a \$30 billion infrastructure backlog because it cannot manage money well, ensuring that the State went backwards. As recently as WestConnex, Labor opposed not only the construction of that road but also the transaction that unlocked capital that we have been able to invest in infrastructure right across the State so that people could get to work and get home more quickly. Labor is the eternal custodian of the status quo. That is where Labor took our State backwards to after all of those years. That is what the Liberals and The Nationals have turned around. As a result of projects like WestConnex, alternatives are available. Parramatta Road would be a car park under Labor.

**Ms Julia Finn:** It is a car park.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** What would it have been under you? Labor opposed the WestConnex. Where would all the cars be going? They would not be going anywhere. In fact, only last week I was with the

infrastructure Minister and the roads Minister at Sydney Gateway—a project connected to the WestConnex. Where is the member for Parramatta? Motorists can travel from Parramatta to the airport in 40 minutes because of WestConnex and Gateway, bypassing 26 traffic lights.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** That is incredible. Not only do people get to the airport faster but also Parramatta Road flows faster.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Unlike Labor, we will make the tough decisions to build the infrastructure to make a real difference to people's lives. That is what we do. That is why we will build \$110 billion of infrastructure over the next four years. That is why we have a \$5 billion WestInvest fund, which was opposed by Labor because it opposed the transaction. Therefore, Labor should have nothing to do with commentary on those investments.

*[Opposition members interjected.]*

Well, have a policy! We are all waiting for a policy. Have a policy on anything; just give us a policy on something. In the meantime, the Liberals and The Nationals will continue to build a brighter future for the people of our State.

### FLOOD RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (15:17):** 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 how the Government is supporting flood-impacted communities to get back on their feet?

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (15:18):** I thank the member for Clarence for his question and his ongoing work in the Clarence region. Like others in that area, the member has been working tirelessly with his community to ensure that people are getting the right information as they recover from the devastating floods that occurred earlier this year. The cameras may have left the Northern Rivers, but I assure the House that the Liberals and The Nationals in government have not left those communities. We continue to show up, support and listen to the needs of those communities. Only last week the Northern Rivers region was visited by the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience; the Minister for Agriculture; the Minister for Local Government; the Minister for Families and Communities; and me. We all made announcements that showed our ongoing commitment to the people of the Northern Rivers.

We all know that the recovery is continuing. While we might have seen the debris and the rubbish being cleaned up, we know that those communities will be facing years as part of the rebuild in those areas. Sadly, a large majority of flood-impacted businesses are yet to reopen. There is still plenty of work to do, which I know this Government to be committed to. I say also what I said to the locals on Friday: We will keep coming back because we are with them during this difficult time. I am sure that all members of this House agree that, with all the challenges being faced by the flood-impacted residents, the last thing they need to worry about now is receiving a rates notice in their mail. That is why the New South Wales Government announced a \$40 million package. This is a \$40 million package by the Liberals and Nationals. It will mean one less bill for those people who still cannot get into their homes, for people who cannot get into their businesses. They will not have to worry about paying rates over the next 12 months.

For people in those seven local government areas—Tweed, Ballina, Byron, Richmond Valley, Clarence Valley and Kyogle—it will mean that now they will not have to worry about paying rates for the properties and businesses that have been impacted by floodwaters. We announced also our extension to the wood supply agreements. This is important for the timber industry on the North Coast. In addition, we announced \$60 million to go towards repairing flood-impacted roads within our State forests. There is around 60,000 kilometres. A \$60 million investment will ensure that we can get timber harvesting occurring but also get recreational users—mountain bikers, four-wheel drivers, campers—back into the local areas. *[Extension of time]*

These announcements, as I said, show that the Government is actually committed to supporting jobs and families right across New South Wales. Investments like this will certainly see those roads that have 10,000 to 15,000 kilometres that have been impacted by floods actually getting the support to be able to reopen. It is very sad that I am yet to hear any comment from the shadow Minister for regional transport and roads in relation to this matter. This year—

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order: It is not directly relevant what the shadow Minister may—

**The SPEAKER:** I am happy to hear further from the Deputy Premier at this stage.

**Mr PAUL TOOLE:** The unions have actually said that 2022 is going to be the year of strike. We have seen that strike actually extended to the shadow Cabinet. If you have a look at the shadow Cabinet, it seems like it has been on strike.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order: The Minister's comments are completely irrelevant; they are not even close to being directly relevant.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough. The Minister will come back to the question.

**Mr PAUL TOOLE:** While we were there, we announced our mobile flood property assessment team, who will be travelling around those communities and also assisting by going on ground to those properties to assess the damage. The Leader of the Opposition might want to grandstand about industrial relations, but he is also neglecting the fact that he has shadow Ministers who are actually striking and not doing their job. I make it very clear that, on this side of the House, we will continue to represent the people of New South Wales. We will stand up for them each and every day, because that is what Liberals and Nationals do in government.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister has completed his answer.

#### PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (15:23):** My question is directed to the Premier. Why did he decide that a police officer who had to enforce COVID rules, issue fines for COVID breaches and routinely clash with people carrying the virus is not deserving of his thanks or his \$3,000 bonus?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:23):** First, I reject the proposition of the question. As I said actually this morning, on this side of the House we appreciate the sacrifices everybody has made over the past two years to help our State get through COVID. Whether that is our police officers, our teachers, our health workers, our Service NSW staff who have been on the front line, our prison officers, or our child protection workers, it is our public service that has done an amazing job during the pandemic. In addition to that, it is every single person across our State. We have had businesses close for months on end and make enormous sacrifices. We have had people lose their jobs for many, many months. They have now regained their jobs.

**Ms Prue Car:** Point of order: My point of order is on relevance because the question was about \$3,000.

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier is being relevant. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Always playing politics, Lady Macbeth. Our health workers, as we say, have been the heroes of the pandemic. As I said, everyone has made enormous sacrifice. As we on this side of the House know, when you are making decisions on wages, you need to balance up the competing priorities. Yesterday we increased wages by 3 per cent in the first year and 3½ per cent in the second year. If I compare that to—

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** You are patting yourself on the back, but you are just catching up.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Catching up, is it? I will compare that with the other States: Labor, Queensland, 2½ per cent; Labor, Victoria, 1½ per cent; Labor, South Australia, 1½ per cent; and Labor, WA, 2½ per cent—who also froze wages for years and years and years.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Wollongong and the member for Hornsby will remain silent.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** What did we do on this side of the House? We kept wages increasing at 2½ per cent, well above inflation, to ensure that our public servants here in New South Wales were paid above inflation, particularly during the pandemic.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We then froze wages for one year. The NSW Police Force, which has done an amazing job—as the police Minister and Deputy Premier knows—just entered into its own agreement with the New South Wales Government in relation to its wages policy. We will be untying that and bringing the force forward to 3 per cent as well, like the rest of the public service here in New South Wales. This is a fair and responsible policy that balances the competing needs of the budget, when we have invested \$46 billion over the

past two years to get every single person through it. That is the hope and optimism we will be providing for the people of New South Wales, not the negativity and partisan politics on that side of the House.

### COST OF LIVING

**Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (15:26):** My question is addressed to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Liberals and Nationals are supporting New South Wales families with cost-of-living pressures, and whether there are any alternative policies?

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (15:27):** I certainly can. I just want to acknowledge the outstanding work—

**Mr Ron Hoening:** Point of order: Mr Speaker, I ask you to rule the question out of order. You have given a considered ruling on any question that contains the phrase "Are there any other alternative policies?", as the answer will infringe Standing Order 130. You did that last year.

**The SPEAKER:** I think it is Standing Order 126.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** To the point of order: There are no alternative policies. Those opposite do not have a single policy. That is the point.

**The SPEAKER:** No, it is not. The Treasurer and the member for Heffron will resume their seats. Consistent with my earlier rulings in relation to questions seeking information—Standing Order 126 rather than Standing Order 130, I think the member for Heffron will find—I rule the question out of order. However, I will give the member for East Hills the chance to reframe the question and ask it again without the additional words.

**Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (15:28):** My question is addressed again to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Liberals and Nationals are supporting New South Wales families with cost-of-living pressures?

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (15:28):** The member for Heffron wanted to silence me in praising the outstanding member for East Hills—one of the best members of this Parliament, fighting for her community and standing up for people in western Sydney. The member for Heffron wants to silence great members like the member for East Hills. The member for East Hills is doing a great job on behalf of her community, and a great job on behalf of the people of western Sydney. She drew to my attention, just before I walked into question time, as she had been scrolling through Twitter, that this week marks the Leader of the Opposition celebrating his first year in the top job. That means it is one year since he knifed and hung up on the former member for Strathfield, the woman chosen by the membership of the Australian Labor Party to lead that party, who he took out a year ago.

We are marking one year since the Leader of the Opposition said he would have 100-day plan. What policies have we seen in the 365 days since the Leader of the Opposition assumed the top job? None. In fact, tomorrow we will see the first policy from the Leader of the Opposition, which is to have the year of the strike. His only policy so far is to launch an assault on hardworking families and businesses of New South Wales with his mates in the union movement who put him in the top job. That is the only thing we have seen from the Leader of the Opposition in 365 days.

Members on this side of the House are focused on positive plans to help families with their cost-of-living pressures. That is why today we have announced a comprehensive toll strategy to see families reduce their toll payments by up to 40 per cent. If you are an eligible person who has spent more than \$375 on tolls, we will give you a 40 per cent discount on the huge tolls imposed on us by the architect of tolling in Sydney, the Leader of the Opposition. He is such an enthusiastic supporter of the policy he introduced—toll prices tied to inflation—that he also designed the scheme that would force people onto the toll roads to use them. He is the architect of tolling in New South Wales, and this Government is supporting families by putting downward pressure on prices and giving up to 40 per cent discounts on tolls every day. This is a win for commuters. This is about putting more money in more people's pockets, more often, while they have a better ride on our roads—roads that were only built because of the decisions of this Government. [*Extension of time*]

What do you expect from the most negative person to ever lead an opposition in the State's history—the man not only dubbed "Chris Minus", but also the man who we know his colleagues call "complaining Chris"? I was very interested to see a post on Twitter from Chris Minns this week that said, "When I became leader a year ago, I was told that my job was to oppose everything, that we couldn't deliver positive change in politics. But together we proved them wrong." Who said irony was dead? You would usually think this was a Chinese Government sanctioned hack, but not in this case. Government members are focused on helping families. We are helping drive down the cost of tolls in Sydney with a 40 per cent discount, saving motorists up to \$750 per annum.

They will get their rebates quarterly and they will get more cash in their bank accounts, more often, while they enjoy a great run on our roads.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** That is what the Coalition Government is all about. We manage our finances well. We run the economy well, so we can pay a dividend to the people of New South Wales in driving down cost-of-living pressures. This is hot on the heels of us delivering a pay rise for public servants in New South Wales, increasing the wage cap from 2.5 per cent to 3 per cent because we on this side of the House support our public servants. We on this side of the House want to make sure we ease cost-of-living pressures for people across New South Wales, whether they be in the cities or in the bush, because that is what good governments do. That is what governments with strong policies do.

### PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (15:33):** My question is directed to the Premier. Why is Dominic—coincidentally—an allied health assistant at NSW Health, who worked tirelessly during the pandemic in a COVID intensive care unit as well as tested people, not deserving of the same thanks and \$3,000 payment as all other healthcare workers simply because he worked full time on a casual contract?

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier will wait for silence.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:34):** It is almost like members opposite are cheering at the issue. It is pretty disgraceful. The Leader of the Opposition asked the question. Members opposite should not cheer at the thought that somehow there is an argument that somebody technically might not have qualified, as if that is something to laugh at.

**Mr Chris Minns:** Technically might not have qualified?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I am happy to look at it. The intent of the policy is to ensure that health workers who have been on the front line during the pandemic receive a \$3,000 payment. In addition to that, those who are part time will generally be pro-rataed. In relation to casuals, that is something I am very open to looking at, but members opposite should not cheer about it as if it is some political win.

Can Opposition members at least have a policy in relation to wages? They do not have one. They have been talking about this now for months on end. They have been protesting with the unions, with the teachers wanting 1½ per cent and with the nurses wanting 6 per cent. They have been out there. On 27 April the Leader of the Opposition said that the consumer price index should be the floor for wage increases. On 27 May the member for Keira said it should be somewhere in the vicinity of 3½ per cent. They need to stop commentating and have a position.

The Leader of the Opposition came out yesterday with his policy—I do not know if it was a policy—talking about the caps. Removing that cap would take us to the days before 2011 where wage increases in the public sector were beginning to put New South Wales in a position in which investments in frontline services could not be made. Over the past 48 hours we have seen a record investment that will put over 10,000 health workers in our system over the next four years. That is inclusive of the biggest investment in paramedics.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** That is why, when Victorian Premier Steve Bracks wrote in his book about wages policy and the challenge they had in Victoria, he stated, "We had to distinguish ourselves from Labor in New South Wales, which was rubberstamping the highest wage increases in the country." He goes on to say that John Brumby had gone to see the then New South Wales Treasurer Michael Egan in pursuit of a consistent approach to wages around the country, but he came back and said he could not rely on Sydney for help. Michael Egan told him that the New South Wales approach by Labor to these things was to just give the unions what they want. He said, "That sounded like a recipe for disaster," and we know how that story ended—badly.

### COST OF LIVING

**Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (15:37):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government. Will the Minister update the House on the success of the Government's cost of living program?

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government) (15:37):** I thank the member for Heathcote for his question. Like many of us on this side of the Chamber, the member for Heathcote understands that cost-of-living pressures are really important and concerning to people of New South Wales. That is why, as the Premier has said, we are leading the nation, if not the world, in making it

easier to find cost-of-living savings initiatives. That is one of the things. Other States and Territories can try to deliver cost-of-living initiatives, but we have made it easier and been world leading in the way we have done it. For example, since 2018 some \$6 billion in household savings have been returned to the people of our great State. Since 2018 we have had the online Savings Finder, which brings together more than 70 rebates and savings initiatives in one spot. That initiative has been used more than three million times since it has been up and running. Just the cost-of-living officers alone have helped out over 150,000 people.

As I said, pretty much all members on this side of the Chamber are giving people information about the cost of living, whether it is on social media, in the Chamber or at community events, because we know it is important to the people of our State. I know that the Leader of the Opposition is out doorknocking. I have no doubt that he is trying to spruik cost-of-living initiatives as well. I have helped out the Leader of the Opposition with a Kogarah doorknocking script. It goes like this, "Hi. You probably don't know me"—

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I will hear further from the Minister if the point of order relates to relevance.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** I am trying to help. I am knocking on the door—knock, knock, knock. "Hi, you probably don't know me, but I'm Chris Minns. I'm here to give you some important information about the New South Wales Government's cost-of-living initiatives. The average saving per appointment is \$770. It's delivered through the world-leading Service NSW, which is another initiative of the Liberal-Nationals Government. You can contact Service NSW through 13 77 88 or go online and you can get all the information you need about cost of living, or contact the cost of living officers today, because right there, on average, you are saving \$770. If you need more information, please don't ask me or my office because I'm too busy being negative, bagging out the Government with motherhood statements and trying really, really hard not to develop any policy. Anyway, have a good day and goodbye."

*[Opposition members interjected.]*

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Murray but ask her to pause so that she can ask her question in silence.

#### WATER LICENCES

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (15:41):** My question is directed to the Minister for Lands and Water. Given the Commonwealth register does not provide information on which specific foreign governments own New South Wales water, will the Minister tell me which foreign governments own New South Wales water and how much they own?

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (15:41):** I thank the member for Murray for her question. The member should recall that I advised her that details on foreign-owned entitlements are kept in a Commonwealth register and are freely available. I reiterate for her that the data is available if the member pays an administration fee. For most data information that is available you pay a fee. Specifically, it is freely available. In terms of foreign-owned entitlements, they are a foreign-owned register. If the member for Murray would like New South Wales owned entitlements, we are able to provide that for her. The NSW Water Register, which is held by WaterNSW, has the licence number, details, volumes and conditions of each of those licence holders, and it is free.

The other option the member could go to on the interweb is the Water Access Licence Register. That has a list of information brokers where ownership details of each licence in New South Wales can be accessed. Again, that is free. I hear the member for Murray talk about foreign. I have said time and time again it is a Commonwealth register that is held by the Commonwealth. In particular, the member for Murray is edging around the manipulation of traders. Some of those details are competitive disadvantage, but she can freely avail herself of them for an administration fee. They are private details and it is sensitive information that can be manipulated by traders—those same traders that the member for Murray is targeting.

#### SKILLS AND TRAINING

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (15:43):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government's investment in fee-free training is helping people get skilled for jobs in key industries?

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

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (15:44):** I thank the member for Riverstone for his strong advocacy of skills and training in western Sydney. It was great to go to the Nirimba campus of TAFE with him a few weeks

ago, and it was even better to be at Miller TAFE last week with the member for Holsworthy to announce 70,000 future fee-free training places in New South Wales—a great investment by our Government in more skills. That is on top of the 170,000 fee-free apprenticeships and traineeships that we announced some years ago. We were at Miller TAFE with third-year carpentry apprentices. Josh told us what a great difference it made to his life to have a fee-free apprenticeship. It saved him thousands of dollars. He bought a ute and some tools.

Unfortunately, those opposite do not care about skills and training. What was the response? Everybody, including employers, thought it was a great announcement—70,000 fee-free training courses in New South Wales. Josh and his friends thought it was a great announcement. The only sector of New South Wales that criticised the announcement was NSW Labor. NSW Labor and Marginal Minns went to cover. He was nowhere to be seen. The member for Newcastle, the shadow Minister—

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 130. Clearly, the Minister wants to debate the matter. He should do so by way of substantive motion under Standing Order 73.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The Minister will resume his answer.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** The shadow Minister went to cover. He was MIIA—missing in inaction. Labor talks about the year of the strike; he would have to go on strike to start working.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. Clearly, the Minister is imputing an improper motive and making a personal reflection on me.

**The SPEAKER:** I do not uphold the point of order. I will listen carefully to the Minister and determine whether he goes further in his answer.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** Labor had to send someone from the upper House to respond. It was not his portfolio. What did he do? He talked down TAFE. Labor does not care about TAFE. It does not care about skills and training. All it ever does is talk down TAFE.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. There have been repeated points of order that I have not upheld. I will hear the member's point of order.

**Mr Greg Warren:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73, improper motives and personal reflections. The Minister should move a substantive motion.

**The SPEAKER:** A mere criticism is not necessarily a breach of Standing Order 73. I have made it clear that I am listening carefully to the Minister. I do not believe he has breached that standing order.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** Labor does not care that we are providing a brighter future for people in this State so they can get more skills and training. It does not care. [*Extension of time*]

It is all politics and no plan over there. All Labor ever does is talk down TAFE. It talks down our announcements. It cannot even be positive about 70,000 fee-free training and skills places in this State. We have a golden age of skills and training in New South Wales. We have a record budget for TAFE. There has never been a better time to get a new job, a first job or a better job than right here and now.

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister has completed his answer.

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 59, tedious repetition. It is too little, too late, Minister—too little, too late.

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

#### PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (15:49):** My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier tell the House why Michelle—a school learning-support officer who earns \$56,000 and worked in classrooms when children were not approved to be vaccinated, could not social distance and were unable to wear masks—is not also deserving of a \$3,000 thankyou payment?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:49):** I thank the member for Charlestown for her question. Firstly, going back to the previous question to me, I have received advice that the one-off payment was included for casual workers as well as part-time employees. If the Leader of the Opposition has information to the contrary, I am more than happy to look into that.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members on the Government benches do not need to assist the Premier.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I am happy to speak to Dominic directly. But the intent of the policy is that the amount of hours that a part-time or a casual worker worked would be pro-rataed in relation to that amount. I am happy to take that on board. In the second question from the member from Charlestown relating to Michelle, I have made it very clear that we appreciate all the work that our frontline workers have put in during the pandemic. Everyone across our State has made enormous sacrifices. That is why yesterday we increased the public sector wage in New South Wales by 3 per cent and 3½ per cent in the second year with productivity savings. That policy is the most generous in the nation. In addition—this is sometimes lost in the debate—that also includes the increase that a teacher may get. I am not sure how many years Michelle has worked in teaching, but if Michelle was a fourth-year teacher becoming a fifth-year teacher, she would receive around a 6 per cent increase—

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** She is learning support.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The point that I am making is that it is across the board and the member for Charlestown asked a question in question time relating to a specific area of work.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Yes, that's what question time is for.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Yes. And what I am saying is that the 3 per cent pay increase is also in addition to the natural increase that public servants in various areas across the board will receive as part of their ongoing work and the experience that they have. We are very proud of the fact that we have been able to have a policy that manages the circumstances of our times, particularly in a situation where the budget is under pressure. We have invested \$46 billion over the past two years to keep people safe, keep people in work and keep businesses open. When I look around the country, I think that the Liberals and The Nationals in New South Wales should be incredibly proud of their stewardship through the pandemic. What we are seeing today, once again, is the reckless wage policies of the past under Labor versus the strong, fair and responsible policies of the Liberals and The Nationals.

#### FLOOD RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (15:52):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery. Will the Minister update the House on the rollout of flood recovery supports to communities impacted by the February-March floods?

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (15:52):** I thank the member for Tweed for his question. I particularly thank him for his unwavering advocacy for his communities. The detailed representations from the member for Tweed, as well as the member for Ballina and the member for Lakemba, resulted in some important changes to the Back Home grant guidelines. I am pleased to inform the House that residents living permanently in caravan parks and retirement villages and residents of multiple tenancies can now apply for the Back Home grant. It makes \$20,000 available to caravan park and retirement village residents and \$5,000 available to tenants who have lease agreements for a dwelling that is on the same land as another dwelling or for tenants who have leases for dwellings on the same land as another dwelling.

The average processing time for each application is currently three days. We have 211 assessors continuing to work seven days a week. We have now approved 5,359 grants totalling \$74.5 million since going live on 20 April. Each of these Back Home grants is helping people restore their flood-damaged properties and replace essential items. I am also pleased to update the House on our grants blitz team, which has set up shop in the Lismore Workers Club this week. Every day this week the grants blitz team will be holding personalised 45-minute appointments with local residents and small business owners, helping to connect them with financial assistance. I am pleased to update the House that, as of yesterday, we had around 100 people visit and more than \$561,000 of grants approved.

One of those people was a 40-year-old man who previously lived at a caravan park and is currently in emergency accommodation. Service NSW and Resilience NSW staff travelled with the man to his van to take photos of the damage because he did not have a phone or an email address. He was also assisted by Legal Aid to document his story with a statutory declaration. Through these efforts, he was approved for a Back Home grant. I thank all of the staff who diligently worked with this gentleman and many others to get good outcomes. I will continue to keep a close eye on the progress made by the grants blitz team over the coming week. Since the last sitting week, I have had the privilege of spending several days in the Northern Rivers region. I look forward to meeting with communities again this weekend and beyond. Let me reaffirm that the New South Wales Government will continue working day and night to help our flood-affected communities rebuild and recover.

### BLUE MOUNTAINS TUNNEL

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:55):** My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. On 15 May the Deputy Premier promised—again—the world's longest and most expensive tunnel through the Blue Mountains. Less than a fortnight later, *The Daily Telegraph* revealed that he would not be able to get it up, through Cabinet. Did he mislead the people of Blue Mountains, Central West and New South Wales?

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (15:56):** I thank the member for Blue Mountains for her question. She speaks about the investment we are making into the Great Western Highway. We have not heard from her before on this particular road. Here we go. She has been out there with her community, saying, "We oppose the upgrade to the Great Western Highway. I do not agree with this." But do members know what? She hears this "story" from an "independent report" that says it might not go ahead. She runs out to the media and then she says, "I cannot believe the Government is not going to build it." I am going to disappoint her, because this Government has a track record of building megaprojects. We have always said that we will start the eastern and western sections of the Great Western Highway early next year. By the end of this year, we will be going out for tender.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Blue Mountains asked the question. She will remain silent.

**Mr PAUL TOOLE:** Then we will see construction commencing early in the year. In our announcement when we spoke about the tunnel, we said that it would be an 11-kilometre tunnel and that it would be Australia's longest road tunnel. Do members know what? I think the member's constituents in the mountains deserve it. Bill from the mountains comments on it all the time to me and says, "I want to see the tunnel getting underway." Jenny from the Central West says, "Just get out and build the road. We need it to happen." We always said that this tunnel would start two years later. We already have an investment of \$4½ billion from the Commonwealth and the State.

**Ms Trish Doyle:** It's off the table.

**Mr PAUL TOOLE:** No. Transport for NSW is continuing its community consultations because it is still progressing with the road and it is still engaged with the community. I also point out that we said the tunnel would start two years later. The State Government has already committed its money; its \$2.5 billion for the centre section of the tunnel is already there.

I hate to disappoint the member for Blue Mountains here today, but this Government has a track record of building big projects. The member for Blue Mountains is in opposition to megaprojects and in opposition to where the routes will go. She is in opposition to the construction, to the funding and to the Opposition. She can tell Jenny, Pru, Chris and all the people in my electorate that they will get this investment because it will make a difference to our communities.

### SIX CITIES VISION

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:59):** 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 Liberal and Nationals Government's six cities vision is securing a brighter future for New South Wales families?

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (16:00):** I thank the member for Terrigal for his question and for his strong advocacy for the citizens of the great city of the Central Coast, which is a huge part of our six cities vision for metropolitan New South Wales. Across the world, city-regions are shaping up as the big crucibles for accelerating investment and industry. The tri-state area is the engine room of the east coast of the United States, and the Bay Area on the west coast of the United States is a crucible for the IT industry, for example. I know that is something very dear to the heart of the customer service Minister, wherever he is. The cities of the Ruhr in Germany, for example, by themselves generate about 10 per cent of the economy of one of the world's biggest exporters, the Republic of Germany. The city-region of the six cities, the sandstone mega-region of New South Wales, is this country's only global city-region, which gives us a massive competitive advantage over our competitors in other States.

**The SPEAKER:** There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The Minister is speaking about a serious matter and will be heard in silence.

**Mr ROB STOKES:** To be directly relevant to the question, in relation to the 80,000 families on the Central Coast, great advocates like the member for Terrigal have been at the forefront of advocating for the sorts of investments that have been promoting the Central Coast as a lifestyle city, like the Leagues Club Park and the 5 Lands Walk. But more important than that are investments in the education and future of the Central Coast, which is a big part of our six cities vision—investments like the new clinical school at the new Gosford Hospital

and the decision to bring a university campus right into downtown Gosford, in much the same way as this Government supported the University of Newcastle with the NUspace building, which has brought a university right into the centre of Newcastle.

Those are the sorts of investments that evidence our commitment to delivering on what we plan. That is what will be so exciting about the new six cities vision, which I have charged the Greater Cities Commission with producing over the coming months. There will be plenty more to say, but it will guide our infrastructure decisions, which will ensure that the six cities region of New South Wales will emerge as one of the great city-regions of the world.

### **BLACKWATTLE BAY FORESHORE DEVELOPMENT**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (16:03):** My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport. Will the response to submissions for the Blackwattle Bay State significant precinct be informed by the City of Sydney's design review to ensure amenity in new and existing homes and in public spaces, and to create a world-class foreshore and park?

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (16:03):** I thank the member for Sydney for his question and for his strong advocacy for the best possible urban planning outcomes and land use outcomes for his constituency of the City of Sydney, which is the centrepiece of the global city that I was mentioning in my answer to the last question. To be directly relevant to his question, the short answer is yes. I have had the opportunity to meet with the City of Sydney, and I commend the lord mayor for her advocacy as well as the hardworking staff at the city—people like Graham Jahn and Peter John Cantrill. The city is blessed with some extraordinary experts and an extraordinary history of expertise that has been generated over all sorts of complex projects. That expertise will be invaluable for Infrastructure NSW [INSW] as they determine the future for this really strategic site on Sydney's foreshore.

There are not many true brownfield sites left in Sydney, as many of the old industrial areas around the harbour have been transformed. This is one of the last remaining and also one of the most strategically important, because this development provides the opportunity to finalise one of the last missing links in that 15-kilometre walkway between Rozelle Bay and Woolloomooloo Bay and provides the first opportunity in 150 years for citizens of Sydney and visitors to access that part of the harbour. That is why the vision is all about returning more than half the site—I think it is about three hectares, from memory—into public ownership and ensuring that people have access to the foreshore. That is a fundamental part of the INSW vision for the site.

It will also be a vision for many more homes and many more jobs in that critical area. I understand the city has a particular view about the mix of residential and commercial floor space there. It continues to be my view that we have an urgent need for both, but with its proximity to the new western metro, it is a logical area to ensure that it can be a context for more homes and more jobs located near a world-class fish market. The agency is still in the process of developing the response to submissions, but I have directed that INSW take particular note of the submission from the City of Sydney because of its huge experience in delivering transformative and world-leading design in Australia's major global city.

### **ALBURY ELECTORATE SOCIAL HOUSING**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (16:06):** 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 help people get keys in doors?

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes) (16:06):** I thank the member for Albury for his question, and what a great job the member for Albury is doing as a staunch advocate for increasing housing supply in his electorate—so much so, we have reached a landmark agreement between the NSW Land and Housing Corporation [LAHC] and Albury City Council to prioritise projects to provide more and better social housing. Albury's population alone is expected to grow by some 20,000 people over the next 20 years, and that agreement is expected to immediately create a pipeline for LAHC to deliver 540 new social homes and around 700 dwellings for the private market in Albury.

I have said it before and I will say it again: The Government is working smarter to deliver for the communities of New South Wales, and it is not just Albury. The Government has partnered with the City of Newcastle to give the Government a holiday on its rates to deliver new social housing in the local area. I was up there with the lord mayor, Nuatali, a fantastic lady. She sends her very best, Crackers, and she said she has no interest in running for the State. Just joking—she did not say anything about that. But she was very interested in working with the State, or in the State or the Parliament—I missed part thereof.

In Cooma, the Government is utilising government-owned land, Crown land, to roll out more housing options, with up to 140 housing lots to be developed. Cooma is the first community to benefit from a new statewide MOU, and Government members are not just stopping there. We are eyeing off opportunities on the South Coast, not just those seats, to partner with local councils to increase market, social, Aboriginal and affordable housing. Those councils are banging down the door to deliver for their communities in conjunction with the State Government. In Coffs Harbour we are delivering the Argyle Estate, a mixed community of social and market homes, through a partnership with the local council. They are fresh, modern, elegant new homes—far better than the existing homes, which were built after the Vietnam War. They are a little older than me but not quite as old as the member for Liverpool but, just like the member for Liverpool, they are looking ready for retirement.

We are shifting the dial to enable our community housing providers to deliver more social and affordable housing across the State, from the 69 new homes we inherited in 2012 to over 3,000 today. I take members on a journey further north to the Hunter, where last month I announced the opportunity to deliver thousands of new homes that have been fast-tracked with a State significant declaration. This is the delivery of a new town. I am not talking about the member for Newtown's town. This is a new town, not Newtown. I do not think you will find a single basket weaver collective in this new town; it is more likely a town full of miners and tradies. This new town is the first in 50 years, and it is in regional New South Wales. There are 2,700 homes already occupied and 5,000 more to be delivered, injecting \$850 million into the economy over two decades. It is all about collaboration. Three minutes is not long enough for me to scrape the surface of what the Government is doing for housing in New South Wales, but I will be around afterwards if anyone wants to ask any further questions.

#### *Documents*

### **INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**

#### **Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 74 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Investigation into the awarding of contracts by employees of the former NSW Roads and Maritime Services*, dated May 2022, received on 20 May 2022. I order that the report be printed.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION**

#### **Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 140 of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016, I announce receipt of the report of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *An Audit of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission's Acquisition and Use of Assumed Identities and Other Matters Related to the System of Oversight of Covert Investigative Powers in NSW*, dated 27 May 2022 and received that day. I order that the report be printed.

### **INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES**

#### **Reports**

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

- (1) Report entitled *Inspection of inmate transport in NSW*, dated 7 June 2022.
- (2) Report entitled *Inspection of Goulburn Correctional Centre and the High Risk Management Correctional Centre 2021*, dated 7 June 2022.

I order that the reports be printed.

#### *Committees*

### **JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE VALUER GENERAL**

#### **Government Response**

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt of the Government response to report No. 2/57 of the Joint Standing Committee on the Office of the Valuer General entitled *Report on the Fourteenth General Meeting with the Valuer General*, received out of session on 23 May 2022 and authorised to be printed.

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

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt of the Government response to report No. 4/57 of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Reputational impact on an individual being adversely named in the ICAC's investigations*, tabled on 25 November 2021, received out of session on 24 May 2022 and authorised to be printed.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE****Government Response**

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt of the Government response to report No. 2/57 of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure entitled *Inquiry into the Transport Technology Sector*, dated 7 June 2022, received this day and authorised to be printed.

*Documents***AUDITOR-GENERAL****Reports**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 52B of the Government Sector Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the financial audit report of the Auditor-General entitled *COVID-19 Response, Recovery and Impact*, dated 20 May 2022, received out of session on 20 May 2022 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE****Chair and Deputy Chair**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 19 May 2022 Mr Peter Bryan Sidgreaves was elected chair and Ms Melanie Rhonda Gibbons was elected deputy chair of the Committee on Children and Young People.

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

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL:** As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 44/57*, dated 7 June 2022. I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL:** I also table the minutes of the committee meeting regarding *Legislation Review Digest No. 43/57*.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE****Inquiry**

**Mr TIM JAMES:** As Chair: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1), I inform the House that the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure has resolved to conduct an inquiry into emission-free modes of public transport, the full details of which are available on the committee's home page.

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD SAFETY****Inquiry**

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH:** On behalf of the Chair: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1), I inform the House that the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety has resolved to conduct an inquiry into speed limits and road safety in regional New South Wales, the full details of which are available on the committee's home page.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

### Rural Health Department

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to establish a department of rural health, received from **Dr Joe McGirr**.

*Business of the House*

### BUSINESS LAPSED

**The SPEAKER:** I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 general business notice of motion (for bills) No. 1 [Economic Inequality (Initial Measures—Exemptions and Other Supports) Bill 2021], general business order of the day (for bills) No. 1 [Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2021] and general business notices of motions (general notices) Nos 3155 to 3239 have lapsed.

I order that a message be sent informing the Legislative Council of the lapsing of general business order of the day (for bills) No. 1.

[Notices of motions given.]

*Commemorations*

### STOLEN GENERATIONS APOLOGY TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (16:30):** I contribute to today's commemoration of the apology to the Stolen Generations in 1997. I start by acknowledging the deep and heartfelt contributions from representatives of that generation—Uncle Richard, Auntie Lorraine and Uncle Michael. I thank them. As I listened, it once again struck me that I cannot possibly understand the depth of pain and suffering felt then and now: to have your identity and family removed, replaced by a number in Kinchela Boys Home; the hole created that could never be refilled; the pain that would echo through generations. This forces us to sit with a number of very uncomfortable truths about those that came before us in this place and in our society.

We cannot fix the mistakes of the past. We cannot ease the pain that so many felt and still feel. The only things we can do are listen, learn, apologise and ensure the same mistakes are not made again. It would be comforting to think that we will never revisit those days, those policies and those ideals again, but that comfort would be misplaced. As leaders, it is incumbent on us to work every day to safeguard our society from the ideologies that led to the Stolen Generations. The speeches made today must serve as a clarion call to never, ever repeat the mistakes of our predecessors. The motion that was passed by the Parliament in 1997 serves as a challenge to us all, in particular the third clause, which states:

That this House ...

- (3) calls upon all Australian Governments to respond with compassion, understanding and justice to the report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission entitled *Bringing them home* ...

As we carry out our roles in this place, the pillars of compassion, understanding and justice must continue to be at the forefront of what we do. I reiterate the comments and apologies made by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, and I add my own. To the members of the Stolen Generations, I say sorry, though I know that cannot possibly ease the pain and suffering felt by so many for so long. I thank those in attendance today for the sentiments they shared. We can all learn from their example as we continue the process of reconciliation and truth-telling and strive to make the future brighter for the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (16:34):** On these, the lands of the First Peoples, it is with profound respect that I acknowledge the spirits of their Elders past, today's Elders, emerging leaders and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the east, west, north and south; surrounded by the oceans, seas, rivers, creeks and streams; under the southern stars in the celestial heavens; acknowledging that they continue to be the custodians and that, having nurtured these lands for over 60,000 years, they are the oldest continuous culture on Mother Earth. Today and every day we acknowledge the always-present and never-diminishing pain and suffering caused to the Stolen Generation by governments and civil society institutions on these lands of the First Nations people, on which we gather.

Today I am wearing a scarf that was presented to me by the MINGALETTA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation at Umina, where the aunts handed me the scarf as a reminder that it is not just on special days and on special occasions that we engage in truth-telling; it is every day. And so this scarf is kept permanently in my office to remind me of that very solemn job that we have. The Stolen Generations and their children and grandchildren are 50 per cent more likely to be charged by police, 30 per cent less likely to be in good health and

10 per cent less likely to have a job. Those statistics are repeated often. I had a great speech worked out for today, but last Friday I went to a reconciliation dinner at Moree with my parliamentary colleague Adam Marshall, the member for Northern Tablelands.

At that function was Connor Johnson—a young Gomeri warrior aged 14. He had a profound effect on me, looking through the eyes of a young Aboriginal man and looking at how his people have been treated. I cannot read his whole speech today, but I acknowledge part of what he said. I will take the opportunity at another time to read his full speech. These are his words; he wrote them himself. He was asked to change them by some people who found them too confronting, but he refused. Because of the occasion today his words are very important. He said:

The 'breeding out the black' policy, was a policy that implemented "rape" as legal to breed out my people completely – No matter how hard they tried, we just kept coming back.

Another major setback for my people was that they brutally murdered the men, young men, and with a possibility, children, which left the women defenseless.

As such this is only one cruel and vile example of what they did to my people.

The settlers beat, starved, sexually abused, and murdered those poor innocent souls.

They took every piece of innocence that ever saw or got a glimpse of the light. It was their own fun game to harm us and we were seen as nothing but Flora and Fauna.

Forced down to reckoning, their malicious desires became more sickening and turned heads which lead to policies.

For the elders who escaped the White people and returned to their mother, father, and siblings, I truly adore that courage. And finally, their souls ascended into the final resting place, with Baiame.

It is of the dust of the Mother in which we are born, and to the dust of the Mother, we return before being taken to our new home – and then re-emerging as our totems from the dust of the Mother.

Be as it may, our courtesy remains. So I offer you, my kindest sentiment. Take off the blindfold that heals the past, and reveal the truth, Australia. It's the only true way that we can heal.

Connor passionately spoke of dispossession and the policies to "white-ify" Aboriginal people, robbing them of language, culture, country and identity. Today we heard the story of Uncle Michael, Number 36. People who have heard his story before know that as an eight-year-old he was taken from his family. He was taken to Kinchela. He had his name taken off him. He commented ironically that the cow had a name and that the dog had a name, but he had only a number. When we remember the apology and what we need to do in the future, and we listen to young people's powerful statements—like that of young Connor, who is still suffering the trauma of that time—that is what the apology is about. We have a responsibility to make sure that, from now on, we do better, achieve better results and make their lives better.

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:39):** I support the motion of the Premier as we mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology given by the New South Wales Parliament. I acknowledge that we gather here in this House in Australia's oldest Parliament on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. I acknowledge and pay my deepest respects to the Gadigal ancestors who were among the first Aboriginal people to experience the devastating impact of colonisation in New South Wales. I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land that I represent in the electorate of Port Macquarie and thank them for their custodianship of country.

I acknowledge the survivors of the Stolen Generations, their ancestors and descendants, and the lands to which they belong. I also acknowledge and respectfully remember the children who never came home. As a former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, I had the incredible privilege to witness their individual and collective strength and resilience as they brought their experiences to light. My many conversations with the Coota girls and the Kinchela boys allowed me to better understand their grief, their suffering and the injustices of the Stolen Generations.

The day Uncle Richard, Number 28, took me to the Kinchela Boys Home will be etched in my memory forever. I remain in disbelief of what I heard that day. Of all the institutions that were associated with the Stolen Generations, the Kinchela Boys Home was one of the most notorious. As he shared with me his memories of its conditions, the scale of the unimaginable harshness, hardship, cruelty, alienation and abuse became apparent. I thank Uncle Michael "Widdy", Auntie Lorraine and Uncle Richard for joining us in the Chamber today. I thank them for sharing their hurt, their truth-telling and their healing journey. The apology moved by the New South Wales Parliament on 18 June 1997 stated:

That this House ...

4. Reaffirms its commitment to the goals and processes of reconciliation in New South Wales and throughout Australia.

In June 2016 I made my own apology to the Stolen Generations, understanding that past government practices had a profound effect on Aboriginal people. In the same month, the Legislative Council General Purpose Standing

Committee No. 3 tabled its report *Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales*. The report contained 35 recommendations, including a financial reparation scheme that was similar to those in Tasmania and South Australia. The Bringing Them Home report, which was tabled in the Federal Parliament in May 1997, stated:

... That, for the purposes of responding to the effects of forcible removals, 'compensation' be widely defined to mean 'reparation'; that reparation be made in recognition of the history of gross violations of human rights; and ... should consist of,

1. acknowledgment and apology,
2. guarantees against repetition,
3. measures of restitution,
4. measures of rehabilitation, and
5. monetary compensation.

When conducting its inquiry, the Legislative Council standing committee adopted that definition of reparation. The New South Wales Government accepted a vast majority of the committee's recommendations. Together with the Premier, I made a commitment to establish a Stolen Generations advisory committee to ensure that our response was implemented swiftly, effectively and respectfully, but most importantly in partnership with Aboriginal people.

A Stolen Generations reparations scheme was established, which offered payments to survivors without the need for a lengthy and arduous legal process. A \$5 million healing fund sought to address the impacts of trauma for not only survivors but also their families, descendants and communities. The Government's response officially acknowledged the real and heartbreaking trauma caused by historic government policies and practices of removing Aboriginal children from their kin and country. I sincerely hope that by acknowledging the wrongs of the past and providing enduring and meaningful support for the future we can avoid such a tragedy ever being repeated.

However, while such a reparation scheme can make amends for the wrongs of the past, no measures—financial or otherwise—will ever restore what has been lost as a result of past forcible-removal policies and practices. Those who were stolen from their families, including those who joined us in the Chamber today, lost their identity, culture and community. It would be naive for any of us to think that any level of reparation will reinstate those severed relationships and connections. The 1997 Bringing Them Home report states:

... the past is very much with us today, in the continuing devastation of the lives of Indigenous Australians. That devastation cannot be addressed unless the whole community listens with an open heart and mind to the stories of what has happened in the past and, having listened and understood, commits itself to reconciliation.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to those from the Stolen Generations who have joined us here today and those who I have had the privilege of meeting during my time in this Parliament for their counsel and guidance, for nurturing me and for teaching me so much, and for their enduring friendship, for which I am eternally grateful.

**Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (16:44):** I was moved by today's commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the New South Wales apology to the Stolen Generations. "After sorry" is a poignant moment to reflect on the legacies that reverberate across generations. It is sobering and important to acknowledge that many of the horrible practices and policies at that time were grounded in laws that were passed in this place, and that despite the collective wisdom that is our democracy we can and do get things terribly wrong. It is important that we acknowledge that and take every opportunity to right those wrongs. I was taken by Aunty Lorraine's speech when she said that so many Australians have little knowledge or understanding of our history or of the stories of survivors.

Every non-Indigenous person in this place has their own personal story of migration that has made their presence in Australia possible. But I also recognise that non-white immigrants have a long history of interconnectedness that is built through shared experiences of racism. Chinese migrants, for instance, have been in Australia for over 200 years and were migrants in Australia's early period of invasion and colonisation. The relationship between Chinese and Indigenous Australians is long and profound. It was forged at the fringes of society where both groups lived. In welcoming migrants, time and again First Nations people have shown their deep generosity in the face of hardship and trauma. Forging new links and enhancing solidarities between Indigenous peoples and those who have experienced different forms of racism is an important part of inclusive reconciliation.

Coming together to acknowledge great horror and injustice, and to embrace the process of healing, has the power to bring us together. Reconciliation is a project not only of white Australia and Indigenous Australians. It is a project for all Australians and a vital part of creating a more cohesive society. There is no more important

nation building than coming to terms with our past, by taking something we are ashamed of and making it into something that informs a stronger future.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:47):** Today is about the past but it is also about the present and, most importantly, the future. The *Bringing Them Home* report was a seminal moment in modern Australia. It was the moment when Australians could no longer deny our history and when the shame, pain, trauma and hurt that we had caused our Aboriginal brothers and sisters were laid before us. When the report was released, I was working in the Australian Parliament. I still remember the shocking impact that the report had on me and continues to have on me. In fact, last week I read it again as my own sorry business. It tells of forced adoptions; children who were told that their parents had died; parents who were told that their children had died; sexual, physical and emotional abuse; and the stealing of land, country, language, knowledge and identity—a systemic genocide of our First Nations people.

I pay tribute to the Hon. Michael Lavarch, AO, who commissioned the report under the Keating Labor Government. I pay tribute to Sir Ronald Wilson, AC, KBE, CMG, QC, who, as President of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, oversaw the two years of evidence that formed the foundation of the report and spoke to its intentions and outcomes. I pay tribute to the Hon. Bob Carr who as Premier of this State was the first leader of an Australian State government to issue an unreserved apology to our First Nations people, which we commemorate today. Most importantly, I pay tribute to each of those 500 First Nations people who shared their story with the inquiry in the hope of bringing us closer to reconciliation. I pay tribute to the many who have found their voices since then.

Truth-telling about trauma is always the hardest job. Hearing from them and from those who spoke to us today, I am always struck by the generosity and hope that so many continue to hold despite the harsh experiences that devastated them as individuals, families and communities. But their sacrifice and their trauma mean nothing if we do not learn from them. I will read from an article on the twentieth anniversary of the *Bringing Them Home* report, which was just five years ago:

Though it has been twenty years since the report was published, *Bringing them Home* remains significant today. Many of the report's recommendations have not yet been implemented, members of the Stolen Generations and their families continue to be affected by the trauma caused by forced removal and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are still removed from their families at a very high rate.

...

Despite concerted efforts to reduce the number of Indigenous children in out-of-home care over the past 20 years, the likelihood of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being removed from their families has increased since *Bringing them Home* was released. In 1997, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children accounted for 20 percent of children living in out-of-home care. Twenty years later, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reports that Indigenous children make up 35 percent of children living in out-of-home care. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are also 10 times more likely to be placed in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children. Though every state and territory has adopted the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (a key recommendation of the report), in 2016 only 66 percent of Indigenous children were placed in out-of-home care in accordance with the principle.

In my electorate office, just in the past seven years, I have helped Aboriginal mothers to get back children, who should never have been stolen. It is a disgrace. I have seen instances of discrimination in the face of the law, an Aboriginal woman who died in police cells not 200 metres from my office. And so it continues. I am ashamed and sorry for the history of our country when it comes to the treatment of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, but I am ashamed and sorry also for the present injustices. We have much to do, and I will continue to work for the rights of all Aboriginal people. Madam Deputy Speaker, I agreed with you when you read an extract from the report, which still resonates so strongly with us today. I too read it onto the record:

... the past is very much with us today, in the continuing devastation of the lives of Indigenous Australians. That devastation cannot be addressed unless the whole community listens with an open heart and mind to the stories of what has happened in the past and, having listened and understood, commits itself to reconciliation.

I am listening. I am committed. I want to walk forward with my community on this journey with our Aboriginal community, and I want to support all of the Aboriginal people who are still to this day, just last week, losing children from their kinship families. The speakers today spoke so eloquently of the trauma of losing a child from a family. The impact on the child, the impact on the family and the impact on the community is so strong. We should really pay attention. We have passed the time for this. We know enough about trauma-informed care and the causes of these terrible situations to be addressing them properly rather than just continuing the genocide.

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (16:52):** I make a contribution to this important motion and speak specifically about the Cootamundra Domestic Training Home for Aboriginal Girls. The home was opened in an old hospital building by the Aborigines Protection Board in 1911 and closed in 1969. Girls were forcibly removed from their families and sent to the home to be trained as domestic servants and farmhands. Girls were referred to as inmates. Parents

were unable to access or visit them until they turned 18 years of age, though many families were never reunited. Over 570 children carried out duties, from scrubbing floors and washing to looking after children, for over 1,200 employers. In 1937, when the assimilation policy was adopted, 2,600 children had already been removed from a population of 7,370 to 10,593 on Aboriginal stations and reserves under the control of the Aborigines Protection Board. Between 1939 and 1969, an additional 825 children were removed and placed in children's training homes.

I thank all of those involved in the ongoing maintenance, preservation and education at the Cootamundra Domestic Training Home for Aboriginal Girls site. The school recently announced plans to partner with the New South Wales Government to refurbish and rehabilitate the site, allowing those who attended and/or their descendants to find closure. Last year the New South Wales Government provided a grant to rehabilitate the site. I spoke then of the significance of the site to the survivors and to the Stolen Generations. I look forward to working with and alongside Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation as these developments progress. I thank the Premier and Minister Franklin for announcing today that Coota Girls will share in \$15.3 million over four years as part of the 2022-23 budget, to work with Stolen Generations organisations to progress the establishment of memorials and keeping places. These memorials and keeping places will preserve these culturally significant sites as places of truth-telling and learning and will allow Stolen Generations survivors to record, preserve and share their stories.

I especially thank and acknowledge the continuing work of the Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation. Founded in 2013 by a courageous group of former residents of the school, the corporation plays an integral part in supporting the social, emotional and wellbeing needs of Cootamundra Girls' Home survivors and their descendants. Through its board of directors, which is made up of Coota Girls' survivors and descendants, Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation aims to address the complex healing needs of our Stolen Generations survivors and their families who were impacted by forced removals under the Aborigines Protection Act.

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (16:55):** On this anniversary, I make it clear that the struggle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has brought about every gain that has been made in their quest towards justice and healing from the horrors and trauma they have experienced. I will read part of the Uluru Statement, which attests:

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future. These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is *the torment of our powerlessness*.

Today's bipartisan motion is that, with the full support of this Parliament, once and for all, we need to make this change. We need to remove this gap between our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, and other Australians. We need to do so much more.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology made to the Stolen Generations is an historic occasion. Former Premier Bob Carr and former Leader of the Opposition Peter Collins were here. Let me put the apology into context. It followed a long Indigenous campaign in the early 1990s, culminating in the Going Home conference in 1994 in Darwin, which highlighted that public ignorance of the history of forcible removal of Aboriginal children was hindering the recognition of the needs of its victims and their families and the provision of services. Attorney-General Michael Lavarch listened and, in May 1995, instigated the inquiry that listened to over 1,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culminated in the Bringing Them Home report, which was tabled on 26 May 1997. The inquiry gave survivors a space to tell their stories in their own voices, some for the first time.

A month later Bob Carr responded when he unreservedly apologised for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities. Gough Whitlam listened to the struggle of Vincent Lingiari and his people's extraordinary nine-year struggle for justice when he transferred the Wave Hill Station back to the Gurindji people, symbolically pouring a handful of red soil into Vincent Lingiari's hands on 16 August 1975. That was a turning point and the beginning of the Aboriginal land rights movement. I acknowledge also former Prime Minister Paul Keating, who listened to the struggle of Eddie Mabo, who endured a 10-year battle in the courts and died five months before the Mabo judgement was handed down, declaring the concept of terra nullius to be fictitious.

Still on his deathbed he told his children they would own their own land one day. Paul Keating's Redfern speech in 1992 was the first public acknowledgement by the Commonwealth Government of the dispossession of the country's First Nations people. The Mabo judgement was brought down the same year. Then Kevin Rudd's formal apology on 13 February 2008 was a long time coming, and now it is time to listen again. I acknowledge Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at the Canterbury-Hurlstone Park RSL on the night of the election highlighting the need for the Uluru Statement to be enshrined in legislation. It is time, when our children and grandchildren are asking us why we have not reconciled with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, and it is such a difficult

question to answer when one has five-year-olds, 10-year-olds and 13-year-olds asking the same question again and again. It is time once and for all.

**Debate interrupted.**

*Public Interest Debate*

**NEW SOUTH WALES WORKERS WAGE INCREASE**

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

That this House acknowledges that the 3 per cent and 3.5 per cent increases for public servants, over two years, strike the right balance between the sensible and appropriate use of public funds and a recognition of the need to increase public sector wages.

The New South Wales Government is delivering for New South Wales workers with confirmation that wages will continue to increase. The Government's public sector wage policy is all about finding a fair and responsible balance. It strikes the right balance between fair pay for public sector workers and the responsible use of taxpayer dollars. It has to be affordable and responsible. Despite what those opposite would have us believe, there is no magic pudding, no bottomless pot of money. We have to be responsible economic managers. But that does not mean that we cannot look after our public sector workers. That is what we have been doing and will continue to do. This Government has been giving public sector employees a deserved pay increase and will continue to do so.

Under the 2½ per cent cap on annual wage rises since 2011, real wages for public sector workers rose by 5.6 per cent by December 2021 compared to 4 per cent for private sector workers. Under the public sector wages policy, the Government is giving a real boost to public sector wages by lifting the cap on annual wage rises from 2½ per cent to 3 per cent for the next two years. Workers who make a substantial contribution to productivity-enhancing reforms will be eligible for a further 0.5 per cent wage increase in 2023-24. This policy is both affordable and responsible, and it recognises the great work of our frontline workers. It is the most generous wage policy in the nation.

New South Wales is currently enjoying its lowest unemployment on record. To attract and retain the best talent, it is important to maintain competitive wages, and in the context of a strong and growing economy this two-year increase to wages is an affordable and sensible policy. It strikes the right balance. It ensures that the taxpayers who ultimately pay public sector wages will also benefit from cost-of-living relief measures as well as essential projects and programs. This Government is investing record amounts across all areas of government, from our record \$120 billion infrastructure pipeline to record investments in schools, health services and measures to ease the cost of living. All this is possible only with prudent management of the State's finances.

We all know that Labor is clueless when it comes to money. It could not manage a money tin, let alone the State's multibillion-dollar budget. Labor should now come clean as to its wages policy. Does it support demands for pay rises that are unaffordable and uneconomic? How will it pay for them? Which programs and projects would be cut and which taxes would it increase? Someone has to pay, and it will be the average hardworking families of New South Wales that will take the hit under Labor should it have the chance. We all know that those opposite are beholden to their masters in the union movement. They promote an agenda of discredited fiscal recklessness, an agenda that will damage our economy and community and reduce living standards for all of us. Herein lies the inherent conflict of interest for those opposite. Labor and the unions are two sides to the one coin. But do not take my word for it. Former Labor Minister Frank Sartor said:

The biggest encumbrances on the New South Wales Labor government's ability to govern were the quadrennial enterprise bargaining negotiations, during which the unions insisted on pay rises that were simply not sustainable.

They could not afford it, but they just kept on paying and the whole State suffered as a result. This Government is finding the right balance, and it is only through this approach that we can support our hardworking health workers who have been at the forefront of the pandemic response. We thank them and salute them for their service. New South Wales health workers will also receive a \$3,000 one-off payment in recognition of and support for the toll the pandemic has had upon them.

The Government is also investing in our frontline workers with the nation's largest ever boost to the health workforce. We are recruiting, and proudly so, a record 10,000 full-time staff across our hospitals and healthcare services in New South Wales. This will relieve the pressure on health staff and improve working conditions, not to mention the benefits for people and communities. It is very welcome news for the residents of my electorate and, indeed, the people of our great State. But it is only possible if we are responsible with the State's finances, and all of this would be lost under a Labor government. I would naturally encourage the unions to sit down and talk, to be at the table, to meet with the New South Wales Government and to negotiate a good outcome for their members under the wages policy, and perhaps those opposite might think about a policy that is indeed fiscally responsible and reasonable and represents the best interests of this State. But if, as one imagines, the rolling strikes

continue, then it will be entirely evident that they are a political stunt designed by those prominent union officials who are members of Labor's campaign committee for 2023—two sides of the one coin.

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

**Mr TIM JAMES:** Labor and the unions have an opportunity to demonstrate that their priority is to the people of New South Wales, not to self-serving industrial chaos, disruption and difficulty for commuters and the people of this great State. This Government is delivering for workers and getting on with the job of delivering essential services for the people of New South Wales. It is a very clear contrast. Again, I urge those opposite to think very carefully and not to rush in and order unions and union bosses to get busy on the streets, as I understand will be happening tomorrow, but instead to be constructive, to sit down, to have a chat and to work through this in the interests of the people and communities across New South Wales. It is not that hard. I repeat: What this Government has put forward is the most generous wages policy in the country. Please take note. We are proud of our policy but those opposite simply do not have a policy. Perhaps one day they just might have a policy, but we can be sure it will not represent the best interests of this State. [*Time expired.*]

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (17:08):** Let us start spreading the news, because Sydney is the highest tolled city in the world. It is not New York, New York, or London, but it is Sydney, Sydney—tolls, charges, fees, privatisation. Real wage growth has gone down, down, down; prices have gone up, up, up. Mortgages have gone up again today with interest rate rises. Rents have gone up. Mum-and-dad insurance premiums are going up because of this Government's and this Premier's mismanagement of icare. Let me tell members about this delusion from the member for Willoughby. The member for Willoughby has 10 months to go to Artarmon, Northbridge, Chatswood and Chatswood West because the teals are coming for him.

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

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS:** Let us start spreading the news: The teals are coming for him. I would be very careful if I were the member for Willoughby. The teachers at Chatswood Public and Willoughby Girls schools are listening to this speech and to this member saying that they have not had it so good. In 2011 this Government brought in the constraint of the wages cap, the bluntest of legislative instruments. And what has the Government done? It has wasted money on consultants and on ridiculous projects that have tripled in cost. It has added inflationary pressures. What infrastructure has the Government built to increase the State's productive industries? Absolutely nothing. It has sold everything in this State.

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

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS:** The member for Willoughby says that workers have not had it so good. Not only has his Government constrained the 400,000 very good public servants with its wages cap, it has politicised the public service. The member for Willoughby should have heard what the ICAC commissioner said last week about what his Government has done. It is absolutely appalling. The Government will lose the election next year because it has not acted with integrity in the way it has treated the public sector or constructed grants. It will pay for it. Communities in our State have been listening and they know what the Government has done. It has politicised the public service and not filled public service positions. There are public servants who have been employed on a casual basis for the last 10 years. The insecure nature of their work is a result of what the Government has done. The wages cap has constrained any productivity. Public services have been diminished under this Government.

The O'Farrell Government did not tell the people of New South Wales that it was going to constrain wages in New South Wales, as it did two months after it was elected. It removed the independence of the Industrial Relations Commission, which Nick Greiner and others had utilised when they were in government. The Government has tampered with the Industrial Relations Commission of New South Wales and politicised it. What the Government has done is inconceivable. The people of New South Wales can see what a fraud the Government is. The Government dismantled the workers compensation system, where return-to-work rates now are below average. The fourth report on the dust diseases scheme is due at the end of this week. It is the fourth report, and the Government has done absolutely nothing. It has underpaid or not paid, and people have died. That is what it has done to workers in this State. It has the worst record for protecting workers in New South Wales and it will pay for it in 10 months' time.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (17:13):** I support the motion moved by the member for Willoughby. Wages are a very important issue for any worker. Everyone works for wages to pay bills and mortgages, to look after their kids, to feed themselves and to put roofs over their heads. It is always a sensitive issue. The announcement is a good one. The 3 per cent wage cap shows some common sense, particularly in my area. I look across the border and I see Queensland has a public sector wage cap of 2.5 per cent. For one year, Queensland did not have any rises whatsoever. I also see a lot of people in my area who have lost their businesses due to border shutdowns because of COVID. I see a lot of people who still do not have a job. I see a lot of businesses struggling

to get employees. I also saw the magnificent effort by my doctors, nurses, clinicians, allied health and police. I fully support them in their endeavours to get higher wages.

It is important to understand that the State spent \$46 billion dealing with COVID and providing benefits, together with the Federal grants of JobKeeper and JobSaver. I am seeing that now in my area. My colleagues the member for Lismore, Janelle Saffin, the member for Ballina, Tamara Smith, and a bit further south the member for Clarence, Chris Gulaptis, see the enormous amounts of money it is costing to rebuild after the floods. Today the Government has spent \$3½ billion, if not more. We all worked together during COVID and we are now working together after the floods. We call it Government money, but it is taxpayers' money. There is a limit. We would all like higher wages; I understand that. I understand the cost of living and mortgage costs, but we need to run the State responsibly, and that is what this policy is about.

In my area, apart from the floods, the Government is only a year away from finishing a \$750 million hospital. It will be the biggest regional hospital in the State because we are one of the fastest growing regions. It will employ double the current number of doctors, nurses, clinicians and cleaners. I have a very good rapport with the Health Services Union and also the Nurses and Midwives' Association. I understand their concerns and I support them. I have come out before in this place to support them. However, at times reality needs to come into play and we need to ask whether the State can afford it. I think 3 per cent is a commonsense figure. As I said, over the border they are getting only 2½ per cent. I believe my colleagues in Victoria are getting 1.7 per cent. We talk in percentages; that is 6 per cent. What about the poor businessmen who have lost their businesses and are in debt up to their eyeballs over COVID lockdowns and flood damage? They are getting nothing. We are talking about wages and the wellbeing of the State. If we neglect one section, we are not going to have a profitable State. I look at our unemployment rates and how low they are. I think that is a fine tribute.

**Dr Marjorie O'Neill:** What is the underemployment rate?

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST:** It is about 3.5 per cent.

**Dr Marjorie O'Neill:** The underemployment isn't. It's above 6, mate.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Tweed does not require assistance from the member for Coogee.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST:** I come from the hospitality trade. I know how desperate the clubs are trying to find workers, from casuals right up to permanent staff. We cannot be irresponsible. It is all about economic responsibility. What this side of the House has done, from what I have seen—and I have been here 16 years; longer than many on both sides of the House—we have built things. I walk through the city and I see cranes, new hospitals and new train stations. My electorate does not have a train. I wish we did. The Labor Government took it away many years ago, thank you very much. It is all about trying to be responsible in the judgments we make.

I sense people have faith in this Government. I dispute the fact that come 10 months we will not be re-elected. I do not feel that. I did feel that with the Federal Government, I must admit, but I do not feel it with this Government. It is all about trying to be responsible. People elect us—whether it is the Opposition, the Government or the crossbenches—to do the best for our community for the long term. We are not to be selfish. We are not to look after one section of the community but to look after all, whether they are a flood victim or a doctor or a nurse. That is why I support this responsible economic program.

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (17:18):** I thank all our hardworking teachers and nurses and all our public sector workers in New South Wales and I say to them that they deserve more.

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

**Ms SONIA HORNER:** Workers have felt the impacts of COVID lockdowns, furloughing and the challenges of working from home. Our community rose to the challenges time and time again, and I thank them for that. In 2020, though, the New South Wales Government dealt a massive blow to our public sector workers by freezing wages. Ten years ago I spoke in Parliament about the Liberal Government capping public sector wages at 2.5 per cent. I argued then that our public sector deserved better—and it still does. When I was a teacher and we were fighting for wage increases, we knew that going to the Industrial Relations Commission led to a frank, fair and balanced outcome for both the government and the workers. But this Government took away the power and scrutiny of the Industrial Relations Commission and as a result did a disservice to the hardworking public sector workers across New South Wales.

This week the Government announced it was increasing the wages cap from 2.5 per cent to 3 per cent. With inflation at more than 5 per cent, petrol at \$2 a litre, electricity prices through the roof and the Reserve Bank increasing interest rates today by 50 basis points, 3 per cent does not cut it. This continued wage capping policy represents real cuts in wages for nurses, teachers and other public servants. As a teacher who started in the bush,

I ask Government members: With a promise of a 3 per cent wage rise, what incentive does a young person have to go to university to become a teacher or a nurse and then be sent to be school or a hospital in an isolated and distant town like Walgett, eight hours away from where they grew up?

Is that the Government's big incentive to teach or nurse in Walgett? Remember that it is the teachers, the nurses and the police officers who put the money into the businesses in Walgett too. Every time public sector workers get a wage rise, they buy houses when they can afford to. They live in country towns and they contribute to the community and the small businesses. Earlier today I spoke with a local nurse at John Hunter Hospital. She thanked me for not posting on my social media channels, which members know are pretty busy, about the proposed wage increase. She told me very passionately:

None of this addresses the systemic issues we are facing daily. The 3%, which is really only half a percent, given we were already supposed to be getting 2.5 doesn't even make up for the pay cuts and freezes we were subjected to during the pandemic.

As for the \$3,000 one-off payment, its only for permanent staff, so contracted and casual workers won't get it, despite working huge hours throughout the pandemic.

...

And what about all the other frontline workers including first responders who protected us during the COVID pandemic, why are they missing out on the payment?

This policy is wrong and the Government must rethink it. The current New South Wales bargaining system is out of date. We need a system that strikes a fairer balance and is affordable for our working-class people, particularly those on lower wages. We can do better. We need an independent industrial relations system that delivers real wage growth over time for the workforce and world-class services for the public. I will continue, as I have for the past 16 years, to support the hardworking teachers, nurses and public sector workers in our community. I always have done and always will.

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (17:23):** I welcome the opportunity to speak in support of the motion of the member for Willoughby. I reflect on the comments of the member for Tweed, because we are both members for border electorates. Our communities get the impacts of the border closures. As the member so rightly acknowledged, we certainly got to see firsthand—perhaps even more pointedly than a lot of other communities in that regard—the work that was done by all the frontline workers during the pandemic period. Importantly we also get to observe what is happening in other jurisdictions. It was an important point because it goes to the argument put forward by the member for Wallsend in terms of capping wages. The New South Wales Government has put in place a policy for a 3 per cent increase for this year and up to 3.5 per cent for next year. The member for Tweed has made the comparison with the 2.5 per cent increase in Queensland.

We compare that then with the 1.5 per cent increase in Victoria. On 15 May 2021 the Labor Treasurer of Victoria, Tim Pallas, announced changes to the Victorian public sector wages policy to apply from 1 January 2022. That change saw rate growth capped at 1.5 per cent per annum over the life of the agreement. Every time we hear from those opposite that we should be looking at wage caps, we need to reflect on what their peers are doing around the country. We compare that to, as I said, up to 6.5 per cent over the next two years in New South Wales and the \$3,000 bonus for frontline health staff. I hope that the member for Wallsend will go back to that nurse who spoke to her today and reassure her that that support is going to not just permanent but also casual staff in the health service. Across New South Wales public health, permanent, casual and part-time workers will all be supported with the \$3,000—or pro rata in that regard.

As a regional MP, I was also pleased to hear the regional health Minister, Bronnie Taylor, saying that the staffing boost and the support will be extended across rural and regional New South Wales, where I know our communities will be waiting with opening arms to welcome skilled health professionals. This is the point as well: It is not just about the money. The New South Wales Government understands that. One of the important pressures acting on our frontline staff at this point in time is labour shortages. It is significant, therefore, that the New South Wales Government is spending \$4.5 billion dollars to add 10,148 health workers and looking to recruit over 7,000 of those within the next 12 months. It will also support New South Wales frontline ambulance services with a \$1.76 billion boost for 2,128 staff. There is not only the wages support but also the support to make sure that there is the recruitment to see additional staff taking the pressure off our frontline workers.

The member for Willoughby made some key points. The first of those is that it is sound economic management and stewardship through the pandemic that enables the New South Wales Government to support our frontline workers. Part of that economic management, too, has been the infrastructure that makes a real difference to people's lives. The member for Canterbury asked the Chamber about whether infrastructure has helped productivity in this State. I quote "Ol' Blue Eyes" in response: You could *Fly Me to the Moon*. The member for Willoughby also said that we are making investments for the eight million people of our State. We are not beholden just to the public sector unions; we are looking at investments across all of our communities, including

the 40 per cent toll relief rebate for all citizens in our city of Sydney and the 70,000 fee-free TAFE positions across our State. I again make comparisons with other States. It is not just the money; it is the positions that this Government is investing in as well.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Conversations in the Chamber will cease out of respect for the members who have the call.

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:28):** On behalf of The Greens, I completely reject the motion brought to the House by the member for Willoughby. It is not only offensive but patronising to be suggesting that this is the right balance between the sensible and appropriate use of public funds. If members in any way listened to the current cries for help of frontline public sector workers and if they heard and saw the tears of the nurses when they briefed some of us in Parliament about how under-resourced and underpaid they are and how desperate they are for support and assistance, they would say that a 3 per cent or 3½ per cent increase in public sector wages solves nothing.

When members opposite hear the calls outside of the striking teachers, who are desperate to have better pay and conditions and who are overworked and underpaid, and when they hear the trauma in the voices of the teachers who know that the next generation of young people are having their education sacrificed because of the mean and cruel policies of this Government, it is outrageous for them to say that it is a sensible and appropriate use of funds. The Premier thought when he announced this pay rise today and had the member for Willoughby come into the Chamber and move this motion that everyone would stop striking and say, "Thank you, sir". He thought they would kowtow and say thanks and vote in the Libs at the next election.

The Public Service Association, the Teachers Federation, the nurses and the transport workers are very clear that the best solution for a strong public sector and union movement in New South Wales is to kick the Liberal Party and The Nationals out in March next year. It is pretty exciting to see that there is a movement to reject the neoliberal agenda of the Coalition Government. That is amazing to see. Workers in this State are calling on the Government to completely scrap the unfair public service wage cap. The Greens' policy is to repeal the arbitrary and unfair public sector pay freeze legislation, and that is why I seek to amend the motion to put our position on the record. I move:

That the motion be amended by removing all words after "House" and inserting instead "supports the abolition of public sector wage caps in New South Wales".

A 3 per cent pay rise that also includes the legislated superannuation increase means that the offer is closer to a 2½ per cent increase, which means that real wages will go backwards. It is also important to remember this is not just about wages. Teachers, nurses, paramedics, transport workers and frontline emergency service workers all say that they are not resourced adequately. The nurses are calling for nurse-to-patient ratios, and this Government is failing to deliver. The teachers are calling for an urgent addressing of the teacher shortage, and this Government is failing to deliver. The paramedics are desperate for more support, and this Liberal-Nationals Government is failing to deliver.

But what does the Government deliver on? It delivers on pay rises for themselves. A large number of parliamentary secretaries and almost every single Coalition backbencher has received a pay rise of at least 5,000 bucks. In addition, some have seen increases of as much as \$150,000. Take a minute to think about this. New South Wales Government Ministers receive an extra \$140,000 in their salaries, on top of the basic MP wages, while senior Ministers are paid an extra \$160,000. Our nurses' and teachers' whole salaries sit around the \$70,000 mark, while members opposite receive \$150,000 more.

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

**Ms JENNY LEONG:** Those opposite are saying this is a sensible, reasonable and appropriate use of public funds, but I do not think the people of New South Wales would think that giving the member for Willoughby additional duties is a sensible and appropriate decision or use of public funds. I certainly do not. The Greens are absolutely appalled by the complete cruelty of this Liberal-Nationals Government in failing to abolish the wage cap. The Greens are committed to abolishing the wage cap in New South Wales and we are absolutely committed to standing with public service workers to ensure that they are treated with respect and dignity and receive appropriate levels of remuneration.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:33):** The member for Willoughby, who represents Castlecrag, Neutral Bay, Cremorne and Cammeray, is of the view that the lowly public servants can have only a 3 per cent pay increase upon their measly salaries and thinks that that is fair enough and perfectly okay.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Willoughby will have an opportunity to respond.

**Mr RON HOENIG:** Only somebody from Castlecrag would be blind to the thousands of nurses, the heroes of the pandemic, who a few weeks ago were protesting out the front of the Parliament. Only somebody from the rich part of Lane Cove would be turning a blind eye to the teachers protesting down the road. Members opposite have presided over critical health shortages and critical teacher shortages. They have been caught by their own privatisation agenda, and now they make a one-off announcement of a change of wages policy. They send into this House the intellectual giants—although I note Minister Roberts is here—to say they cannot afford to pay any more than 3 per cent, but they are not measuring that on any basis whatsoever.

If those opposite looked at their phones, they might remember that today the Reserve Bank of Australia increased interest rates by 0.5 per cent. For someone on 100 grand a year, if those opposite give them 3 per cent, they are giving them a gross \$60 a week or a net \$40 a week.

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

**Mr RON HOENIG:** Today their mortgages have gone up by \$100 a week, and that is after tax. Those opposite think that they are looking after their employees, whom they are responsible for, their unsung heroes of the pandemic.

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

**Mr RON HOENIG:** Whether it is nurses, health service workers, teachers, cleaners, bus drivers or anybody else on the public sector payroll, their wages have been artificially pegged because members opposite have refused to have a proper industrial relations system.

I remind members opposite that inflation is now growing at the fastest rate it has in 20 years. The value of workers' pay packets has been deteriorating rapidly. The recent surge in consumer inflation has even caught the RBA by surprise. Never in the modern era have we seen inflation like we have today. In the past quarter the consumer price index has increased by 1.4 per cent. That is already half of the Government's proposed pay increase. Fuel prices have jumped 35 per cent in the past 12 months. Prices for building materials are 15.4 per cent higher than they were a year ago. Consumer durables inflation is rising at its fastest pace in more than three decades. Fruit and vegetable prices are up 6.75 per cent.

The people out there are struggling and are absolutely demanding some relief from cost-of-living expenses. The Government members' reaction is simply to make a political decision, thinking that they will silence everybody by announcing an increase in the cap to 3 per cent and handing over \$3,000 cash to health workers as a thankyou bonus. What about the police? What about the teachers? What about everybody else? It is a political decision. Handing over the cash will not do those opposite any good because the community will work them out. They are coming for those opposite, because this Government has reached its use-by date. Its best days are behind it. I move an amendment to the motion as follows:

That the motion be amended by removing all words after "servants" and inserting instead "and notes the wholesale privatisation of electricity assets has increased the cost of living for public servants beyond pay increases and opposes any further privatisation of electricity assets".

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (17:39):** In reply: It is nothing but politics and platitudes from those opposite, unsurprisingly. Let us deal with reality, be responsible and recognise that there is a lot to balance in this State. The Government will be and must be responsible and reasonable for all residents of New South Wales. Once again I draw out the contrast with some other States. In Queensland, the public sector wage cap is 2.5 per cent. What are the unions in Queensland doing? Are they striking? Is anyone aware of any action in Queensland under the Palaszczuk Government? Funnily enough, no, there is nothing to see here. What are the unions doing in Victoria, where there is a wage cap of between 1.5 per cent and 2 per cent? They are doing absolutely nothing under the Dan Andrews Government in Victoria. In Western Australia, where there is a 2.5 per cent wage cap, the unions are saying and doing nothing about the Mark McGowan Government's policy. It is extraordinary. This Government's policy is the most generous in the nation, so it is pure politics from those opposite.

The member for Canterbury verballed me, and her statement should be struck from the record. She said that I said that workers have never had it so good. I did not say that. In fact, I stated my respect and deep appreciation for public sector workers and that the Government is getting the balance right, unlike those opposite, who have absolutely nothing to offer. Those opposite made a curious suggestion that public sector wages should be tied to the inflation rate. If the Government had heeded that genius idea, public sector wages would be significantly lower today than under the Government's existing 2.5 per cent cap because we have had years of low inflation. Health workers, in the midst of a pandemic, would have been significantly worse off under a Labor

government. They were in fact 3 per cent better off under this Coalition Government. Again, it is hollow words and hopeless policy—in fact, a complete absence of a policy—from members opposite.

To give some context, there are eight million residents in New South Wales, with 400,000 highly valued public sector workers. This Government is putting forward a balanced, serious and responsible policy, including wage increases, one-off increases, and boosting staff and resources in record fashion. It is doing more than those opposite have ever done, and it is proud to do so. This Government's policy would keep New South Wales ahead of the nation and meet the State's best interests. Meanwhile, there is no policy from those opposite. They can continue to play politics but, again, this Government's position is the most generous in the nation. The Opposition's rank hypocrisy when it comes to its Labor mates across the country is galling and appalling. Members opposite should be ashamed of themselves. Finally, both sets of amendments are not proper amendments. It is a shameful contribution to this debate, and those opposite should do better. [*Time expired.*]

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Willoughby has moved a motion, to which the member for Newtown has moved an amendment and the member for Heffron has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment of the member for Newtown be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....38  
Noes .....41  
Majority.....3

**AYES**

Aitchison, J	Harrison, J	O'Neill, M
Bali, S	Haylen, J	Park, R
Barr, C	Hoenig, R	Parker, J
Car, P	Holland, M	Piper, G
Catley, Y	Hornery, S	Scully, P
Cotsis, S	Kamper, S	Smith, T
Daley, M	Lalich, N	Tesch, L
Dalton, H	Leong, J (teller)	Voltz, L
Dib, J	Li, J	Warren, G
Doyle, T	Lynch, P	Washington, K
Finn, J	McDermott, H	Watson, A (teller)
Greenwich, A	Mehan, D	Zangari, G
Harris, D	Minns, C	

**NOES**

Anderson, K	Henskens, A	Provest, G
Ayres, S	James, T	Roberts, A
Butler, R	Kean, M	Saunders, D
Clancy, J	Layzell, D	Singh, G (teller)
Conolly, K	Lee, G	Smith, N (teller)
Cooke, S	Lindsay, W	Speakman, M
Coure, M	Marshall, A	Stokes, R
Crouch, A	McGirr, J	Taylor, M
Davies, T	O'Dea, J	Toole, P
Dominello, V	Overall, N	Tuckerman, W
Elliott, D	Pavey, M	Upton, G
Evans, L	Perrottet, D	Williams, R
Griffin, J	Petinos, E	Wilson, F
Gulaptis, C	Preston, R	

**PAIRS**

Atalla, E	Hazzard, B
Chanthivong, A	Sidgreaves, P
Crakanthorp, T	Hancock, S
Mihailuk, T	Gibbons, M
Saffin, J	Bromhead, S

**Amendment negatived.**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The amendment moved by the member for Heffron is to remove all words after "servants" and insert instead "and notes the wholesale privatisation of electricity assets has increased the cost of living for public servants beyond the pay increases and opposes any further privatisation of electricity assets." To clarify, the motion of the member for Willoughby as amended would then read:

That this House acknowledges the 3 per cent and 3.5 per cent increases for public servants and notes the wholesale privatisation of electricity assets has increased the cost of living for public servants beyond the pay increases and opposes any further privatisation of electricity assets.

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

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order: The amendment infringes Standing Order 160. There is a number of reasons I take this point of order. First, the notation that is proposed to be inserted is not relevant to the question because it is not actually an amendment to the motion before the House. The amendment seeks to add a notation, which is not a resolution of the House or relevant to the question. It is an insertion of an irrelevant notation. I add that when the Leader of the Opposition sought to put this falsity on social media, he got absolutely hammered because there is no relationship between the wholesale electricity price and the poles and wires.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is this relevant to the amendment?

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Yes. The amendment does not relate to the question; it is the insertion of a notation, and it is nonsensical in any event.

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

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** To the point of order: What is added to the motion instead of the deleted words specifically relates to the proposed salary increases. There is nothing wrong with the House noting anything; it does it all the time in successful motions that it carries. A string of motions exists where the House notes something. There is nothing wrong with the House noting anything by resolution. The amendment specifically relates to the proposed salary increases. There is a clear nexus between what is proposed in the amendment and what is in the original motion, because the subject matter is the pay increases and the debate is the adequacy of them.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Further to the point of order: It was interesting that the Manager of Opposition Business did not relate his contentions to the standing order. Standing Order 160 says that amendments "must be relevant to the question". That is the point: A notation is not relevant to the question. It does not fall within the standing order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have heard the arguments from both sides. Standing Order 160 clearly states:

Amendments must be relevant to the question which it is proposed to amend.

Based on that standing order and my previous rulings, I will allow the amendment. The question is that the amendment of the member for Heffron be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....38  
Noes .....41  
Majority.....3

## AYES

Aitchison, J  
Bali, S  
Barr, C  
Car, P  
Catley, Y  
Cotsis, S  
Crakanthorp, T  
Daley, M  
Dalton, H  
Dib, J  
Doyle, T  
Finn, J

Harrison, J  
Haylen, J  
Hoenig, R  
Holland, M  
Hornery, S  
Kamper, S  
Lalich, N  
Leong, J  
Li, J  
Lynch, P  
McDermott, H  
Mehan, D (teller)

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

## AYES

Harris, D  
Minns, C

## NOES

Anderson, K	Gulaptis, C	Provest, G
Ayres, S	Henskens, A	Roberts, A
Butler, R	James, T	Saunders, D
Clancy, J	Kean, M	Singh, G (teller)
Conolly, K	Layzell, D	Smith, N (teller)
Cooke, S	Lee, G	Speakman, M
Coure, M	Lindsay, W	Stokes, R
Crouch, A	Marshall, A	Taylor, M
Davies, T	McGirr, J	Toole, P
Dominello, V	O'Dea, J	Tuckerman, W
Elliott, D	Overall, N	Upton, G
Evans, L	Pavey, M	Williams, R
Greenwich, A	Perrottet, D	Wilson, F
Griffin, J	Preston, R	

## PAIRS

Atalla, E	Hazzard, B
Chanthivong, A	Sidgreaves, P
Mihailuk, T	Gibbons, M
Saffin, J	Bromhead, S

**Amendment negatived.**

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

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....41  
Noes .....36  
Majority.....5

## AYES

Anderson, K	Henskens, A	Provest, G
Ayres, S	James, T	Roberts, A
Butler, R	Kean, M	Saunders, D
Clancy, J	Layzell, D	Singh, G (teller)
Conolly, K	Lee, G	Smith, N (teller)
Cooke, S	Lindsay, W	Speakman, M
Coure, M	Marshall, A	Stokes, R
Crouch, A	O'Dea, J	Taylor, M
Davies, T	Overall, N	Toole, P
Dominello, V	Pavey, M	Tuckerman, W
Elliott, D	Perrottet, D	Upton, G
Evans, L	Petinos, E	Williams, R
Griffin, J	Piper, G	Wilson, F
Gulaptis, C	Preston, R	

## NOES

Aitchison, J	Harrison, J	Minns, C
Bali, S	Haylen, J	O'Neill, M
Car, P	Hoenig, R	Park, R
Catley, Y	Holland, M	Parker, J
Cotsis, S	Hornery, S	Scully, P
Crakanthorp, T	Kamper, S	Smith, T

## NOES

Daley, M	Lalich, N	Tesch, L
Dalton, H	Leong, J	Voltz, L
Dib, J	Li, J	Warren, G
Doyle, T	Lynch, P	Washington, K
Finn, J	McDermott, H	Watson, A (teller)
Harris, D	Mehan, D (teller)	Zangari, G

## PAIRS

Bromhead, S	Saffin, J
Gibbons, M	Mihailuk, T
Hancock, S	Barr, C
Hazzard, B	Atalla, E
Sidgreaves, P	Chanthivong, A

**Motion agreed to.***Community Recognition Statements***FRED HOLLOWS RESERVE CONSERVATIONIST WARREN DOYLE**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (18:14):** I congratulate Warren Doyle and the many other dedicated members of the community on their tireless work in conserving and beautifying Fred Hollows Reserve. I met 81-year-old Warren at the reserve so he could show me all the work that he and his friends had done in weeding out invasive species and replacing them with Australian natives in the reserve and surrounding strata land. Their dedicated, considerate and caring ecology restoration and preservation has made the reserve a sanctuary for gully skinks and a plethora of native birds, possums and more. Warren is so dedicated to the task that until recently he was at the reserve every day, weeding and planting. He still goes regularly, even in the rain. Thank you to Warren and all the dedicated volunteers. Because of you, we have this beautiful sanctuary—a green highway for our native flora and fauna to thrive in a built environment. I thank Warren for maintaining our green spaces for everyone to enjoy.

**DETECTIVE SUPERINTENDENT CHAD GILLIES**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:15):** I congratulate the newly appointed commander of the Tuggerah Lakes Police District, Detective Superintendent Chad Gillies. Detective Superintendent Gillies joined the NSW Police Force in 1995. He worked throughout Sydney and Newcastle until his promotion to detective sergeant at Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command [LAC] in 2008. He then worked in various roles in a range of LACs, most recently serving as district commander of the Port Stephens-Hunter Police District, which makes him very well qualified to prevent crime and build community partnerships on the fantastic Central Coast. I thank the outgoing commander, Superintendent Steve Kentwell, and wish him the best of luck in his new role in the NSW Police Force. I congratulate Detective Superintendent Gillies and look forward to working with him and the other police officers at Tuggerah Lakes to help keep people safe across the Central Coast. I thank them for working tirelessly every day to protect the people of the Central Coast.

**RELATIONSHIPS AUSTRALIA**

**Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (18:16):** I congratulate Relationships Australia on the recent opening of its new office in the heart of Blacktown CBD. Relationships Australia provides support to develop and nurture respectful relationships, which is essential for mental health, general wellbeing and resilience. It provides local families with services such as counselling, dispute resolution, relationship education, domestic violence services and children's support services. An impact of COVID restrictions in New South Wales has been an increase in demand for the services offered by Relationships Australia. Presently the average wait time to access local services offered by Relationships Australia is 118 days. On 21 April I was delighted to attend the grand opening of the centre with Relationships Australia NSW CEO Elisabeth Shaw, Blacktown Councillor Kathie Collins and the member for Holsworthy. The new and improved facility will provide additional support services to assist individuals, families and communities to build respectful relationships.

**COFFS HARBOUR LIFEGUARDS**

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (18:17):** Last weekend a dramatic rescue took place off the Coffs Coast. The efforts of those involved deserve special mention. On Saturday afternoon Coffs Harbour City Council lifeguards responded to reports of a fisherman washed into the ocean at Look At Me Now Headland,

Emerald Beach. Lifeguards searched the area and saw the man treading water, waving his phone light in the near darkness about one kilometre out to sea. Lifeguards brought the man to Emerald Beach. Paramedics treated him for hypothermia and took him to hospital. The rescue was a great team effort. The outcome could have been very different without the swift response of lifeguards Alex Swadling, Daley Bear and Maddi Carah. I thank NSW Ambulance and NSW Police Marine Area Command for their sterling work. Rock fishing can be a dangerous pastime. Anglers should always wear a lifejacket, and people should dial 000 if someone is washed into the water.

### **BASEBALL PLAYER JACK ELASI**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (18:18):** I acknowledge Jack Elasi for being selected in the under-16s NSW Country Baseball team, which will compete at the national championship at Redcliffe, Queensland, in July. Jack is an outstanding young sportsman who has played baseball for Belmont Baseball Club for the past 10 years. He is currently in second grade. Jack attends Hunter Sports High School, which is a local selective sports high school. For the past nine years he has been selected in Newcastle representative teams, and for the past four years he has been a member of Hunter Academy of Sport. Those achievements demonstrate that Jack has a passion for baseball and is dedicated to his sporting field. I have no doubt that he is well and truly deserving of being selected in the under-16s team. I congratulate Jack on being selected in the under-16s NSW Country Baseball team and wish him and his team members all the best for the competition.

### **HIS HOLINESS MAR AWA III**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:19):** The local Assyrian Church of the East in Sydney has been graced by the presence of the recently consecrated Catholicos-Patriarch, His Holiness Mar Awa III Royel. This is a special time for the local Assyrian church, as it has been able to worship and meet His Holiness Mar Awa III. The visit has given hope to the community as it expands across the globe with its diaspora. I was privileged and honoured to join with esteemed colleagues on Wednesday 25 May 2022 to meet His Holiness with members of the Assyrian church, community leaders and clergy from Christian and other faiths. I thank His Beatitude Archbishop Mar Meelis Zaia, AM, Metropolitan of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, for his kind welcome and hospitality. I thank also Father Ramen Youkhanis for the invitation to join in this special event. I wish His Holiness Mar Awa III Royel well for the rest of his visit in Australia.

### **MIRANDA RSL YOUTH CLUB**

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (18:20):** I congratulate Miranda RSL Youth Club on 60 wonderful years in our community. Established in 1962, Miranda RSL Youth Club is an affiliate of the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch and has a proud history of offering fun and inclusive activities for young people. With over 200 members and 20 coaches, the youth club caters to all ages and abilities, offering karate, trampoline and tumbling, and provides an environment where participants can learn valuable life skills, such as balance, self-confidence, respect and leadership. I take this opportunity to commend the efforts of all club members, particularly president John Boes, secretary Amanda Donaldson, treasurer Bill Lewis and committee members Ann Corey-Hewitt, Anthony Bull, Paul Caruana and Vicki Ferlazzo. I also recognise the team of dedicated coaches, including Louise Brown, Brian Cox, Robert Bull, Emily Cox, Rebecca Gray-Schwarz, Keelie Smith, Sarah Ireland, Sienna Gates, Kristen Chirgwin, Anastasia Gikas, Mia Summers, Tasha Caruana, Rhiannon Bainat, Nate Ferlazzo, Jensen Hawes, Liam Merchant and Wayne Budd. I extend my best wishes to Miranda RSL Youth Club and look forward to celebrating this milestone soon.

### **BLUE MOUNTAINS SENIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER MAREE CAIRNS**

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (18:21):** I warmly congratulate Maree Cairns on receiving the Blue Mountains Senior Citizen of the Year award. I hold Maree in the highest regard, as an educator of excellence, a mentor, a supporter of community organisations, a tireless volunteer and an advocate for change in the field of gender equality. She has had a lifetime of service in public schools throughout New South Wales, making a significant contribution to the lives of families in the Hazelbrook community over many years as a classroom teacher and assistant principal.

Maree has always been a catalyst for change. She played a critical role in bringing the Zonta club to the Blue Mountains. Maree and the Zonta team helped assemble birthing kits for women in developing countries and funded cards with valuable phone numbers to help women in domestic violence situations. She is a founding member of the Blue Mountains and Penrith Districts Women in Educational Leadership network, organising many events to support women in and aspiring to leadership in education. Since retiring, Maree has immersed herself in many community organisations, including the National Trust and Friends of Norman Lindsay Gallery. I thank Maree for all her amazing work. This recognition, which I proudly supported, is well deserved.

### ST PAUL THE APOSTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:22):** I acknowledge the terrific new playground at St Paul the Apostle Primary School in Winston Hills. I recently visited the school to observe the new accessible outdoor musical garden, which was installed over the past few months. The equipment can be used as a tool for learning during interactive music lessons or during free time by the students. The new installation was funded through a 2020 Community Building Partnership grant and is utilised to inspire the broader school community. St Paul the Apostle Primary School is a fantastic community-orientated school. It educates pupils from across the electorate, including from the suburbs of Northmead, Old Toongabbie, Winston Hills and beyond. I take this opportunity to congratulate the school captains, Noah Scerri and Lilly Grasso, and the vice-captains, James Manaras and Emma Daniel. I recognise and congratulate also the school leaders, Gabriel El-Rassi, Jade Gonzales, Kyan Flynn, Savannah Nour, Elias Khouri and Elizabeth Tannous. I thank the school's principal, Megan Baird, and her dedicated staff for continuing to support the students across the Seven Hills electorate.

### MARITIME UNION OF AUSTRALIA

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (18:23):** I congratulate the Maritime Union of Australia, which is celebrating 150 years of representing workers in the diving, ferry, offshore oil, offshore gas, port, shipping and stevedoring industries. The union can trace its roots right back to 1872, as the Seamen's Union of Australia. No matter the name, the union has always worked for its members. The union has a proud history of standing up for workers and not backing down from a fight, with the 1998 waterfront dispute with Patrick's a notable example, which ultimately resulted in the union winning crucial litigation action. I particularly acknowledge the union's Newcastle branch, who are champions of our community, always first on the picket line, always standing up for the workers. The branch is also active in local charity events and makes such a huge contribution to the wider Newcastle community.

### ST JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL, GOULBURN

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (18:24):** Today I congratulate each and every person involved in the 105 years of in-patient care at St John of God Hospital in Goulburn, also known as Bourke Street Health Service, which last year closed its doors, with the approximately 30 staff members transferring to the new clinical services building at Goulburn Base Hospital, entering new fields of work or retiring. The service began in 1916, when the Sisters of Saint John of God came to Goulburn from Ireland. I hear that a nip of Irish whiskey was used to commemorate the service's closure. St John of God Hospital will always be remembered in high regard by the community. I publicly recognise the entire facility's commitment to giving patients attention, compassion and a truly exceptional standard of care. I thank all who contributed to St John of God Hospital or Bourke Street Health Service for their valuable contribution.

### POLICE ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES PRESIDENT KEVIN MORTON

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:25):** I offer our community's and my personal congratulations to Sergeant Kevin Morton on his election as president of the Police Association of New South Wales. President Morton is currently serving as a general duties sergeant in the Northern Beaches Police Area Command and has 32 years of experience in the NSW Police Force. President Morton has been active in the Police Association for a number of years. He has previously served as a field organiser and as an executive member. He has most recently served as vice-president. At his first Police Association conference as president, held at Wollongong on Tuesday 24 May 2022, President Morton made his inaugural speech, expressing his vision for how the Police Association and the New South Wales Government can support New South Wales police officers. His vision includes better pay, career structures, improved rehabilitation and housing affordability for New South Wales police officers. I congratulate again Sergeant Morton on his election as president. I look forward to working with him in the future.

### CANCER RESEARCH FUNDRAISERS DONNA DOBSON AND ROBYN GILMOUR

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:26):** Today I acknowledge siblings Donna Dobson and Robyn Gilmour for registering in the Big Three trek to raise valuable funds for cancer research. Recently rocked by a cancer prognosis in the family, sisters Robyn and Donna are embarking on a mammoth 150-kilometre walk from the National Rugby League headquarters, in Moore Park, Sydney, to McDonald Jones Stadium, in Newcastle, on what is called the Big Three trek. The three-day pilgrimage commencing on 29 June is aimed at raising awareness about the effects of brain cancer on families. Donna and Robyn will use this unique initiative to also raise money for the Mark Hughes Foundation. Motivated by their daughter's and niece's husband, who was diagnosed with brain cancer and is now undergoing treatment, Donna and Robyn are committed to shining a spotlight on this debilitating disease. Both girls have been meticulously training locally for the past 10 weeks in the Hastings Valley, from coastline to countryside. It is hoped that their trek for the Mark Hughes Foundation will

encourage corporate sponsorship and community donations in support of this cause that is close to their hearts. I wish Donna and Robyn every success in their Mark Hughes Foundation Big Three trek.

#### LAKEMBA SAMOAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (18:27):** Last Sunday I joined the Lakemba Samoan Presbyterian Church for its Sunday service. The congregation was very warm and welcoming, and Reverend Faauga Siiti'a led a beautiful sermon about looking beyond our differences in a multicultural nation. When we look beyond our differences, we find that there is a lot more we have in common. Also, I think it is important that we learn about one another's faith, hence my joining in there. In our understanding of one another, we can create the most harmonious and respectful society. The congregation presented me with a Samoan chief's staff and fua. These are symbolic of a tribal chief, known in Samoa as a matai. I was told that this means every time I bang the chief's staff on the floor, everyone must stop what they are doing and listen to my instructions. I did try it later that afternoon, at home. Suffice to say that it did not work.

**Mrs Tanya Davies:** Try it in here.

**Mr JIHAD DIB:** I was going to bring it in. I thank Reverend Faauga Siiti'a, Good Lady Faatuai Siiti'a and the whole congregation for making me feel so welcome, for their generous and very symbolic gifts, for their interfaith work and for their sense of community. I especially thank Philip Filibo for organising the visit.

#### AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE PLAYER MAX JANS

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (18:28):** I acknowledge Max Jans—an outstanding young Australian Football League [AFL] player who recently clocked up 100 games for the mighty Balgowlah Suns. Max is a very dedicated young athlete, and I have no doubt he will continue to enjoy AFL and be a wonderful inspiration to his teammates, the club and the broader community. A huge thanks to the entire Balgowlah Suns family, including Adam Jesser, Alex Jans, Andrew Vaughn, Andy White, Ben Rouvray, David Butcher, Hayden Shean, Michelle Radatzke and Peter McLucas for their support for Max and the entire Balgowlah Suns AFL club as their committee and wonderful leaders. I thank them for supporting Max and all the players. Well done, Max.

#### ACROPOLIS FUNERAL SERVICES

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (18:29):** I acknowledge and thank Acropolis Funeral Services, in particular, the owners and principals Vicky and Michael Kiriazis, for having me on the special occasion of the special blessing on the opening of their new funeral service business in Earlwood. They also have another funeral business in Kogarah and in Kingsford. I acknowledge the many funeral services and funeral directors who worked very hard over the past two years during COVID. It was a difficult period for them, and I publicly acknowledge their hard work. I thank Acropolis for putting on a beautiful evening. I also thank Father Nicholas, Father Michael and Father Sotiris. I thank Acropolis for its important Project of Giving initiative for providing important support and services to the local community.

#### STANLEY YEAMAN 100TH BIRTHDAY

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (18:30):** I acknowledge a remarkable person and veteran, Mr Stanley Yeaman from Wahroonga, who recently celebrated his 100th birthday. In 1931 at nine years of age, Mr Yeaman and his family moved to Hornsby. By 1942 Mr Yeaman had signed up for the army and served in Papua New Guinea as a driver where he unloaded ships and transported supplies. After the war ended Mr Yeaman returned to Australia and started a saddlery shop repairing leather goods. He then purchased a milk run servicing 400 homes in Hornsby, before taking a job at Hornsby Hospital. Mr Yeaman eventually threw himself into his work and raised significant money for the hospital. In recent years, Mr Yeaman has been heavily involved in bowls at Waitara Bowling Club and The Grange, and tutored students from Hornsby Girls High School. He has participated in several Anzac Day ceremonies. Mr Yeaman is an exemplary person whose longstanding service to our community and nation is inspiring. Congratulations on turning 100.

#### WORDS ON THE WAVES

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:31):** A huge congratulations and thank you ever so much to everyone involved in the Central Coast Words on the Waves Writers Festival last weekend. For the second year running Words on the Waves was an absolutely stunning event that attracted talented authors and writers from across Australia and visitors from across the Central Coast and beyond. The love of words and writing was delivered with joy and generosity to students at primary schools, through the primary schools program, sharing the love of reading, writing and storytelling to another generation. The children received the information with gratitude and curiosity to take beyond the visits of the esteemed authors. From the cocktails at Totos to enjoying the sharing of

ideas with Van Badham and Hannah Kent at the Naughty Noodle Fun Haus on Friday night, there was a show for everyone. It was a weekend packed with information and entertainment at venues across the peninsula, laughter and tears, inspiration and intelligence. We thank all the organisers and wish them all the very best for an even bigger Words on the Waves in 2024.

#### LIFE EDUCATION

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (18:32):** I recognise the important work Life Education NSW does in several schools across Willoughby and the positive impact the program has had on generations of local children. Since 1979, Life Education has educated and empowered children and young people to make safer and healthier choices regarding alcohol and drugs, diet and now online engagement, among other topics. Life Ed has educated more than seven million children through its innovative and holistic teaching and learning approach. Like millions of Australians, Life Education's Healthy Harold was a staple of my childhood and did much to instil healthy lifestyle habits and choices. From 2012 to 2021, I was privileged to serve as a volunteer director of Life Education NSW, and then as a director of the national body from 2018 to 2021. I remain committed to this cause and I will be encouraging and supporting all schools in Willoughby to give their students the chance to learn from Life Education. I recognise chairman Alan Cadman, OAM, CEO Jono Peatfield and the whole Life Ed team. Our children are precious and worth every investment we can make in them.

#### BOOMERANG BAGS

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (18:33):** With New South Wales finally banning single-use plastic bags this month, I acknowledge the important work of Boomerang Bags Sydney Inner West. Since 2013 the inner west chapter of Boomerang Bags has sewn thousands of bags with donated fabrics that would otherwise have ended up in landfill, creating beautiful reusable bags that also eliminate the need for single-use plastic bags that will otherwise end up in waterways and landfill. As well as reducing wasteful and harmful plastics, Boomerang Bags also spark meaningful conversations about sustainability, inspiring more and more people to reduce their ecological footprint. Boomerang Bags also runs workshops in Annandale and Ashfield on sewing new items, mending old clothes and encouraging those who are interested in doing their part for the environment to give it a go. I am proud that inner west organisations like Boomerang Bags have not only contributed practical solutions to the challenge of plastic pollution but have also contributed so much to have single-use plastic bags banned across Australia. Banning single-use plastic bags in New South Wales has been long overdue and I thank grassroots organisations and activists that have made it happen.

#### FIREFIGHTER DEREK KOLSTER

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (18:34):** A firefighter from Wollondilly has been recognised for his bravery, hard work and exceptional service at an award ceremony held to coincide with St Florian's Day on 4 May. St Florian's Day is also known as International Firefighters' Day and is named after the patron saint of firefighters. At the ceremony, Derek Kolster of the Wilton Brigade received the Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation for his crucial actions in performing CPR and resuscitating an injured victim of a motor vehicle accident in November 2021. Mr Kolster was attending to a man in a crash scene who lost consciousness and stopped breathing. Mr Kolster immediately performed CPR and revived the man, who then remained conscious under his watch until NSW Ambulance crews arrived. I congratulate Mr Kolster on receiving the Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation and thank him for his valuable service to our local community.

#### VILOMAH COMMUNITY

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (18:35):** The Wagga Wagga-based Vilomah Community was created in 2021 by two bereaved mothers in honour of their beautiful baby girls, who were both stillborn. A parent who has lost a child is a Vilomah, a word that implies against the natural order. Megan Gaffney and Rebekah Post saw a gap in the care provided to families for the first 12 months after the loss of their babies. Through their own personal experiences, Ms Gaffney and Ms Post created a program to provide support and comfort to families. Their goal is to ensure no family walks alone the journey of infant loss during pregnancy—that is, from 16 weeks to neonatal babies up to 28 days of life. I commend these compassionate and hardworking women for their willingness to ensure grieving families have support as they walk that journey of loss. Through the Vilomah Community, they provide guided support through the process of creating memories and keepsakes, liaising with hospital staff, helping with funeral arrangements, leaving the hospital, making medical appointments, understanding the legal processes, as well as supporting families as they face important dates and preparing workplaces for the return of their employees.

#### INVICTUS GAMES PARTICIPANT NATHAN KING

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (18:37):** I congratulate Penrith local flight sergeant

Nathan King on his outstanding success at the 2022 Invictus Games. One of 32 Australians attending the games that were held in the Netherlands, Nathan participated in four sports—discus, indoor rowing, swimming and sitting volleyball. Nathan won a silver medal in the men's IF5 discus and a bronze medal in the 50 metres backstroke. Nathan has worked tirelessly to excel at this level of competition, and he is no doubt an inspiration to many of the athletes across the State and country. During his time in the air force, he served with the No. 37 Squadron, which is based at the Royal Australian Air Force, Richmond, working on C-130 aircraft, and he deployed twice to the Middle East in 2004 and 2006. When asked what winning will look like at the Invictus Games, his response was a very simple "Representing Australia is a win." Nathan inspires every person across our community and many other members of the Defence Force to continue.

#### **LAKE MACQUARIE STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (18:38):** In times of danger, the people of New South Wales know that they can count on the State Emergency Service. In the Charlestown electorate, we rely mainly on the fantastic personnel of the SES Lake Macquarie unit. As severe weather struck the Hunter at the end of May, bringing down trees and powerlines and plunging parts of the Charlestown electorate into darkness, our local SES stepped up as they always have. On 31 May, the Lake Macquarie SES unit received 69 calls for assistance in the 24 hours. I thank the crews for their diligence, their bravery and their willingness to assist those in need. Thanks to the Lake Macquarie SES.

#### **NSW WOMAN OF EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNER TRICIA PARKER**

**Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (18:39):** I congratulate Tricia Parker of Condell Park on winning the NSW Woman of Excellence Award for 2022. Tricia has been associated with South Western Sydney Local Health District since 1993, volunteering in various roles—first as a community care volunteer and, since 2002, chairing and actively leading the Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital Consumer and Community Participation Network Group. Tricia is known as an exceptional leader and motivator who puts her heart and soul into ensuring that patient safety is at the forefront of her work. Tricia has been involved in the fields of research, policies and procedures, frameworks and models of care, volunteering her time to teach meditation and relaxation techniques to staff as a way of improving healthcare services. Tricia has a particular passion for end-of-life care because, as she says, "We only get one go at getting it right for someone". I congratulate Tricia and thank her for all her hard work and dedication for such an important cause.

#### **VIETNAM VETERANS CLAIMS TEAM LEADER STEPHEN KARSAI**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:40):** I recognise the valuable contribution that Mr Stephen Karsai of Woy Woy has made to the community of veterans and their families on the peninsula and beyond. For the past few years Stephen has been the claims team leader for the Central Coast Sub-Branch of the Vietnam Veterans' Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Association of Australia, located in Ettalong. As part of his integral role, Stephen has been advocating for and assisting local vets go through the arduous and emotionally taxing application process for Department of Veterans' Affairs pensions and other support needs. He has also assisted countless vets to feel confident and comfortable returning to the workforce and placing them in jobs, such as first responders. I thank Stephen for his tireless contribution to supporting our local vets and their families. Stephen is moving to Bendigo to be closer to his family. At the same time, he is planning on taking his 250-plus Central Coast files with him as he knows the people still need his support and he can work long distances in the new age. He will definitely be missed. I wish him and his family all the very best in his new endeavours in Victoria.

#### *Private Members' Statements*

#### **ROYCE'S BIG WALK**

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (18:41):** I pay tribute to a legend of the Penrith community—now in more ways than one—Mr Royce Simmons. Royce was recently diagnosed with dementia at the age of 61, which he disclosed publicly earlier this year. Not to be deterred, and typical of the man, Royce made it his mission to get out and raise funds to support sufferers and their families. This led to Royce's Big Walk. Royce's Big Walk of 300 kilometres began on 17 May at his hometown of Gooloogong, and ended on 26 May at Penrith Stadium, which happened to coincide with a local footy game and a pretty big crowd. He completed a lap of honour.

The full route of the walk was Gooloogong, Cowra, Woodstock, Carcoar, Fitzgeralds Mount, Bathurst, Brewongle, Sodwalls, Browns Gap-Hartley, Katoomba, Faulconbridge and Penrith Stadium. I have it on good authority that Royce only walked half the way as he kept stopping to chat with people and take photos with supporters. That meant he had to run half of the 300 kilometres to catch up with the rest of the group as they were walking ahead of him. It is worth noting that he passed through Carcoar. As the Minister for Tourism and Sport,

I should say that it is one of the top tiny towns in New South Wales. It is also the home of Kurt Fearnley, who just happens to be Royce's nephew.

Along the journey there were several fundraising events that were organised with the help of the local communities, such as sportsmen's lunches, dinners and coaching clinics, with many guest speakers in attendance at each event, including Allan Langer, Wally Lewis, Brad Fittler, Andrew Farrah and John Cartwright. Mark Geyer hosted a Men of League golf day at Bathurst Golf Club. Owners of the Penrith Atmosphere gym, Peter and Kristelle Vicary, were fortunate to walk with Royce and his family on the last leg of the trip. Over \$600,000 has been raised, with the walk supporting Dementia Australia, local junior rugby league clubs and families of dementia sufferers.

Royce's Big Walk was also supported by a harbour cruise event, which was held with the help of Lou Zivanovic, a former teammate of Royce's. More than 250 guests attended, raising over \$300,000. Sponsors of the walk included CAFE and The Royce, Hertz, JK Williams and Breakout River. Dementia Australia represents the estimated 472,000 Australians living with dementia and the almost 1.6 million Australians involved in their care. Dementia is the second leading cause of death in Australia and there is no cure. Dementia is the leading cause of death for women. In 2022 there are an estimated 28,800 people living with early onset dementia.

Royce is now living in a retirement complex, fittingly named after him—The Royce. He played over 400 rugby league games and 237 of those were first grade games for the Penrith Panthers. He played 10 State of Origin games and represented Australia in 10 tests. He was also an NRL coach for eight years. It is fair to say that the people of Penrith will never forget Royce's contribution to Penrith winning the 1991 grand final, which saw Royce score two tries and make a series of commitments that he is still working his way through across the broader Penrith community. In many ways, Royce's Big Walk has outdone anything that he has been able to do on the football field. It is a true mark of the man's character that when presented with this challenge the first thing he thought about was other people. It was not just about what was happening to him, it was not just about the impact on his family, his first thought was to raise awareness about dementia so that other people could benefit from his higher profile approach to life.

With that in mind, to walk 300 kilometres and bring people out from across the rugby league community is a serious reflection of his high quality. People who participated in the walk included Brad Fittler, Andrew Farrar, Kurt Fearnley, Terry Lamb, Luke Goodwin, Paul Langmack, Kevin Kingston, Darren Britt, Glen Liddiard, Len Stacker, Brad Waugh, Col Bentley, Allan Langer, John Cartwright, Martin Lang, Steve Carter, Paul Smith, Joe Vitanza, Garry Jack, Nigel Plum, Chris Lawrence, Robbie Farah, Neil Paine, Tim Sheens, Warren McDonnell, John Skandalis, Greg Alexander, Paul Clarke, Wally Lewis, Gene Miles, Trevor Gillmeister, James Graham, Kezie Apps and Kylie Hilder. That is the who's who of rugby league, both Maroons and Blues—and I say that in State of Origin week. That is the mark of what Royce has been able to do. Royce's Big Walk has changed lives and raised the profile of dementia in Australia.

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (18:46):** I acknowledge the Minister and member for Penrith for bringing to the attention of the House the amazing lifetime achievements of Mr Royce Simmons. My personal engagement with Royce began just a couple of years ago when I agreed to be a mentor with the Penrith Panthers on the program that took aspiring and potentially incredible young leaders along the Kokoda Track. Each leader was matched with a community mentor. I was very grateful to be asked to be one of those mentors. During our preparation for that experience Royce volunteered his time in the centre of the Penrith Stadium to give us a training session to try to toughen up a bunch of young and not-so-young women to prepare us for the Kokoda Track. He was incredibly gracious and a very generous man. I thank the member for Penrith for bringing this outstanding man to the attention of the House. I congratulate Royce.

#### **AMBULANCE RAMPING**

**Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (18:47):** I was shocked but not surprised when I saw the pictures. I saw the first one on Friday 22 May—at least 10 ambulances parked out the front of the John Hunter Hospital waiting to off-load patients to an understaffed, overworked and overwhelmed emergency department. I got the second picture on Sunday 29 May—more ramping. My shock turned to anger. How can the Government let this happen? How can the Government allow bed block and ambulance ramping to get to this point? It is a crisis called ambulance ramping because that is an emergency department at or beyond capacity, with ambulance and health staff stretched to breaking point. The pictures shared by my constituents are hard evidence of the crisis, and yet the Government flatly denies that there is a problem.

The pictures reinforce the statistics. One in three paramedics are reporting they spend between four to six hours ramped outside hospitals, facing bed block. Fifty-five per cent reported that they have been ramped for between two to four hours. Nine out of 10 New South Wales paramedics believe that the current crisis in the NSW Ambulance network leads to patient deaths. The ambulance network is regularly hitting status three, the

highest emergency response level, while paramedics try to respond to increasing demands with fewer staff and resources both in the ambulance service and hospitals. The secretary of the Australian Paramedics Association, Gary Wilson, said:

We have the worst response time in history, worse than any other state, and delays in response times leads to deaths.

And what has been the response from this Government? "There is no problem", "Everything is okay". No-one would ever doubt the professionalism or commitment of our ambos. Unfortunately, more and more find that they just cannot do the job anymore. They have reached the limits of their mental and physical health. Sixty-seven per cent of paramedics reported doing forced end-of-shift overtime in the past month. Three-quarters of paramedics reported feeling too tired to drive home safely after work. That is dangerous. Mr Wilson made clear:

The system is buckling and the only thing that has kept it afloat is that paramedics are breaking themselves to look after the community.

Is it any wonder so many of them are facing burnout? Is it any wonder we are having difficulty retaining staff? On a per capita basis, New South Wales is 1,500 paramedics behind Queensland and Victoria, whilst our paramedics deal with more than their colleagues in other States. Figures from March show that NSW Ambulance had the highest number of responses since 2010: 320,729 ambulance responses, out of which almost 9,000 were priority cases. These are cases where patients were facing life-threatening conditions.

No-one denies that our health staff and ambulances have faced extraordinary and unprecedented challenges over the past two years. They have stepped up, and while we are all thankful for what they have done, they deserve more than thanks. They deserve to be listened to and to be supported. They deserve a government that does not stick its head in the sand and does not say that there is not a problem and that everything is okay—because it is not. I have the pictures and the statistics to prove it. The Government must listen to the unions and the workers because they know what the problems and challenges are. They know what is facing them and how to get the work done. I urge the Government, please listen to your workers.

#### **GOLDEN KANGAROOS HORNSBY CONCERT BAND**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (18:52):** Today I congratulate the Golden Kangaroos Hornsby Concert Band on its fiftieth anniversary celebrations. It has been an iconic part of the Hornsby shire for over 50 years. However, the onset of the pandemic hindered its celebrations in 2020. Current president Dr Matt O'Rourke made sure the milestone was not forgotten by marking it with a special community concert and celebration dinner. The Hornsby concert band was established in 1970 under the baton of the late Victor Grieve, who was also the Hornsby Citizen of the Year in 1995. Vic started the band with 12 players from local schools and, through his dedication over the next 40 years, it became one of the best known concert and marching bands in Australia. It performed all over the world.

Vic and Louise Grieve's children Helen, Alex and James grew up with the band and James was the drum major of the marching band for 30 years. Other drum majors include Chris Wrightson, Alistair Simpson, Mark Ennor and John Buckley, who is the current drum major. The marching band was always part of the Anzac Day parades and often played at rugby league and AFL grand finals, ticker tape parades through Sydney's CBD, local community parades and festivals, special openings such as for the harbour tunnel and new Hornsby aquatic centre, in television programs such as *A Country Practice*, and at City2Surf fun runs. It is proud to have competed twice at the world music championships in Holland, at the Royal Tournament in England, at the Tokyo, Paris and Los Angeles Disneylands, and at the Australian war memorial in Villers Bretonneux.

In 1989 the Golden Kangaroos set a world record for distance marching of 64.5 kilometres, which took 16 hours of nonstop marching and music making. It has been featured on *Australia's Funniest Home Videos*, with a member being knocked over by bass drummer Andrew Yeo's big bass drum, and Anthony Goodwin falling down a hill and into the creek at Fagan Park. Many of the band's members have gone on to be successful and professional musicians. These include Michael Quigley, Matt Dempsey—an old schoolmate of mine—Jill and David Parkin, Joshua Hill and Daniel Smith. Daniel joined the band when he was six and is now a world-renowned conductor based in Italy. The Golden Kangaroos Hornsby Concert Band has members from the age of six to Barry Willis who is in his eighties and David Price on the bass clarinet who is in his nineties.

Many families from the Hornsby community have been a part of the band for decades and have had several generations of their family involved in the explorer, discovery and senior marching bands. Stephanie Flynn, OAM, is the band's longest serving member and her mum has never missed a concert. Mt Colah family the McNaughts joined the band in 1983 with their two children, Joanne and Cameron. They have played a huge role in the band's success over the years, with Merilee and David still active members today and great members of my community of Hornsby. Pat Mason from Berowra and her children, Lesley and David, were a big part of the band. The late David Mason was a much-loved member and friend to all. His sister, Lesley, and her husband, Peter, moved on from the band to form the successful ABBA tribute show, *ABBALANCHE*, which I have enjoyed seeing performed

at the local Magpies Waitara club. My Hornsby office manager, the awesome Heidi Cameron, joined the band in 1989 with her siblings Aaron, Josh and Luke. Her dad, Ron Hill, was the original mascot, Boomer the Kangaroo. In later years Heidi went on to have a stint as Boomer, and passed down her baton, literally, to her daughter Hollie.

Other multi-generational families in the band include the Ferriers, the Putnams, Liz and Mal Hamilton, and Marnie, Alin and Selin Holmes. Ryoko Funamoto and Stephen Firmer are still playing strong, with Dawn Nettheim, OAM, still writing and arranging the music for the band. Former member for Hornsby Stephen O'Doherty is the current music director and principal conductor. At the fiftieth anniversary concert the band played a piece composed by Stephen that was a moving tribute to its late conductor Jeanne Hope, who sadly died of breast cancer a few years ago. The program also included a tribute piece to the late Vic Grieve called *Salute to the Victor*. They also played music such as *Military Escort*, *Tequila*, *King of the Road* and *The Dam Busters March*. Greg Butcher was a guest conductor. Matthew Bienman led the explorer and discovery bands and Chris McLeay was the stage band leader.

Band member Amanda Irving composed a piece played by the band, called *Community*, which expresses how special she feels being a member of the Golden Kangaroos and how the band lives and grows together. Over the years the Golden Kangaroos Hornsby Concert Band has had over 2,000 local members and aspires to make music accessible for everyone. Many former members can be found giving back to the community by directing local school bands, such as Warwick Edwards, Tim Ferrier and Tessa Vallejo Gutierrez, among others. The Golden Kangaroos Hornsby Concert Band is a true community organisation and I take this opportunity to express my congratulations to it on making music together for over 50 years. I know it will continue inspiring our community with music for many more years to come.

### **BANKSTOWN POLICE AREA COMMAND AWARDS**

**Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (18:57):** Recently it was my privilege to attend the Bankstown Police Area Command awards ceremony to recognise and celebrate the hard work of the police officers that serve our local community. Bankstown is one of the busiest commands and the past few years have also been some of the toughest it has faced. A lot of work is also done behind the scenes supporting those on the front lines. The duties of unsworn staff often go untold, as does the endless work of the multicultural liaison officers. All of those roles are crucial and directly contribute to saving lives and keeping people safe. I thank Superintendent Adam Johnson, the Commander of the Bankstown Police Area Command, for inviting me to the commendation of some of our finest officers even though he was unwell on the day, which resulted in me being in a lot of photos in his place. The member for Bankstown gave me quite a good ribbing for that later on in the day. The ceremony rewarded the long service, marked diligence and dedication of our most esteemed police.

The ceremony recognised recipients of the National Police Service Medal, with first cab off the rank being Sergeant Steven Anderson, the father of my daughter's good friend Paris. Other recipients included Detective Sergeant Anthony Holmes, Sergeant Nathan Farr and Sergeant Michael Todd. The medal was for their service to the Police Force, each having served for over 15 years. The National Medal was awarded to Detective Sergeant Anthony Holmes, Sergeant Nathan Farr and Sergeant Michael Todd for their outstanding service history in their 15 years of service.

The NSW Police Medal calls attention to an officer's first 10 years of service, having been completed both ethically and diligently. Recipients of that award included Detective Sergeant Chris Jansen, Leading Senior Constable Matthew Bailey, Leading Senior Constable David Phillips, Leading Senior Constable Amir Saffuri, Leading Senior Constable Mathew Young, Leading Senior Constable Cody-Lee Brennan, Senior Constable Rachael Hill, Senior Constable Rochelle Nicholls, Detective Senior Constable Sarah Axisa, and Detective Senior Constable Tara Conaghan. A clasp is adjoined to that medal for every additional five years in which a bearer of the NSW Police Medal continues to demonstrate those virtues. Recipients of that clasp were Detective Sergeant Anthony Holmes, Sergeant Nathan Farr, Sergeant Michael Todd and Leading Senior Constable Jonathan White.

The NSW Police Medallion lapel pin for diligent and ethical service was awarded to Mr Brett Honeybrook for 35 years of service, Mr Subar Mani for 30 years of service, Mrs Robyn Cuddy for 30 years of service, and Mrs Alison Walsh for 20 years of service. Mr Honeybrook also received the Commissioner of Police Long Service Award for his lengthy and committed efforts in the community. The Commissioner's Commendation for Courage is awarded to a member of the NSW Police Force where there is a risk to life and where sufficient courage has been shown under hazardous circumstances to warrant the award. At this ceremony the Commissioner's Commendation for Courage was awarded to Chief Inspector David Small, Sergeant Anderson and Senior Constable Islam Omar. In 2017 that team of three officers went above and beyond in rescuing a fleeing offender in a sinking vehicle that had, in its attempt to escape police, driven off a boat ramp and into the Georges River at Georges Hall. The officers managed to rescue the occupants in spite of their noncooperation and the increasing speed at which their vehicle was submerging.

Detective Sergeant Paul Stamoulis was awarded the Commissioner's Unit Citation. He demonstrated his commitment in his efforts to bring to justice those behind a historical child sexual assault network that began in 1984 and, horrifically, continued for many years afterwards. He had worked especially closely with one survivor of those acts who had consequently developed severe dissociative personality disorder, developing multiple distinct personalities as a means of coping with the trauma she had endured. Over a period of nine years Detective Sergeant Stamoulis was not only the first to believe the victim's story but also the first to understand it. This was a case of unprecedented complexity, which Detective Sergeant Paul Stamoulis would overcome through his devotion to justice for the survivors of those crimes.

The Australian Federal Police Commissioner's Group Citation for Conspicuous Conduct was presented to Detective Chief Inspector Darren Sly for his crucial involvement in an operation that disturbed a large-scale terrorist network. I thank all the officers for their efforts and for inviting me on the day to attend the awards. It really was a special day to see all of the outstanding work that the officers in our area do and how they daily risk their lives to keep our community safe.

### **BLACKTOWN ENERGY FROM WASTE INCINERATOR**

**Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (19:02):** I discuss the failure of this Government in providing clarity and certainty as to the energy from waste incineration process. In 2013 The Next Generation presented at a Blacktown council meeting about what was to be Australia's first, and one of the world's largest, energy from waste incinerator proposals. The proponents wanted to go from a skip bin collection and dumping facility at Eastern Creek and Alexandria, amongst other sites—which had had a few Environment Protection Authority [EPA] infringement notices served—to suddenly becoming a billion-dollar, 1.3 million tonne high-tech incineration process that is one of the world's largest.

My parliamentary colleague the member for Mount Druitt was my fellow ward 4 councillor in Blacktown in 2013 and staunchly opposed the proposal. In this House, the members for Mount Druitt, Prospect, Mulgoa, Goulburn and Maroubra and I have collectively spoken approximately a dozen times in private members' statements since 2018, all of us against energy from waste incineration and its impacts on our respective communities. A 12,000-signature petition was submitted to this Parliament and debated on 15 February 2018 in opposition to energy from waste incineration. The members for Londonderry, Mulgoa and Clarence and I all spoke in support of the petition, outlining the problems of the energy from waste incineration process. The members for Mount Druitt and Prospect were denied the call at the time.

I thank the Legislative Council's Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Planning and Environment, led by Mr Paul Green and the Hon. Penny Sharpe, which undertook an investigation into energy from waste incineration and tabled a report in September 2018 finding many problems with the process. I thank the Hon. Penny Sharpe and the Hon. Adam Searle for their counsel, guidance and wisdom on this issue over many years. In the other place in 2017, Mr Jeremy Buckingham presented a bill on behalf of The Greens to have a residential exclusion zone. After my private member's bill failed in this place, Ms Cate Faehrmann introduced a prohibition bill in August 2020. I thank The Greens for their outspoken advocacy on energy from waste incineration and their support for the local community organisations that have been fighting the proposal. I also thank the member for Mulgoa for her strong advocacy. Together we have knocked on the doors of relevant Ministers to make sure that the issue is not forgotten.

My bill called for a moratorium, banning it the Sydney Basin and 16 other council areas, with the remaining rural areas requiring community consultation and support, a proper and transparent inquiry and, after all things have been considered, the chief science officer to report back to the Parliament on the safety of the technology. Only after that, in a few select places, may the Minister lift the moratorium on a specific proposal. The bill in 2018 was rejected, and three years later the Government announced a similar policy in September 2021. We lost three vital years.

With much fanfare, the Government says it has restricted it to only four locations in New South Wales. But there is no real detail to the Government policy, and The Next Generation is before the courts as we speak with a State significant planning amendment that the court is considering. The EPA and Blacktown council are fighting the fourth proposition, costing millions of dollars, and community members are stressing out and putting in submissions to the Land and Environment Court, whose decision is due by 21 June.

The Minister for Planning, the environment Minister and the Minister for Energy must put their collective heads together and come up with a solution instead of looking like The Three Stooges on this issue. The only person across both Houses who has spoken in favour of energy from waste incineration has been the member for Ku-ring-gai, and he was recently promoted to the ministry. He and the Liberal-Nationals members voted against the moratorium bill and the ban in populated centres because, as he said, the bill:

... wants a blanket prohibition or a rigid Stalinist approach, which is entirely inconsistent with the normal concepts of the rule of law or the rule of merit- and evidence-based decision-making.

He also said, "This bill does not take account of scientific evidence." Labor was defeated 30 votes to 48. Does the member for Ku-ring-gai now support the Stalinist approach of Commissar Matt Kean and the Liberal Government to ban the incineration process? I hope that the member for Ku-ring-gai is not reflective of the true stance the Government is taking in not putting forward a robust, defensible regulation to end the court cases and support the local community.

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (19:07):** Political parties in this place are often fighting on opposite sides of the fence and in fierce disagreement on a multitude of issues and policies. However, I endorse the words of the member for Blacktown. I thank him for his words in this place, honestly endorsing my work with my colleagues across western Sydney to fight the incinerator. It is an abhorrent proposal for western Sydney. Government members continue to do all that we can. In fact, we have conversations outside this Chamber in relation to where this matter is at. I reaffirm to the House, to my community in Mulgoa and to the people of western Sydney my complete opposition to the The Next Generation proposal. It is wrong, abhorrent and dangerous. I will continue to work with members in western Sydney, of whatever political persuasion, to finally oppose this proposal, once and for all.

#### EDUCATOR GREG WHITBY, AM

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Corrections) (19:09):** It gives me great pleasure to recognise the great work and outstanding career of Greg Whitby, AM, who has made a significant impact to education in western Sydney. Greg has served in the education sector for 48 years and has been a champion of innovation and change in the learning and teaching space. He is acknowledged as being a thought leader, a passionate advocate for educational reform and a champion for change. Greg started his career as a classroom teacher in 1974. In 1976 he moved into high school teaching, where he taught English and history. Greg's leadership career started to take shape in 1982, when he was appointed as the English and history coordinator. In 1985 he moved out of the classroom and into an administrative role as the assistant to the principal at Patrician Brothers' College. He then became the executive assistant to the executive director of the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta for a period of four years.

In 1992 Greg returned to the classroom as a principal until being appointed as the head of curriculum and special programs at the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta. In 1999 he became the executive director of schools for the Diocese of Wollongong, a position which he held for seven years until being appointed the executive director of the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta. I first met Greg in 2008, when I was at Western Sydney University. From the moment I first met Greg he impressed me with his passion for the use of internet technologies to help with student learning. Throughout the past decade, Greg and I have met regularly as he advocated to government for sensible changes to how education is delivered. As the executive director of the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta, he maintained a continued focus on how to collaboratively work with the public school sector. He has always offered his considered advice, whether I ask for it or not.

Greg is a champion of change. He has led a crusade on how to better engage students with education to ensure we motivate student learning by offering alternate curriculums, such as problem-based learning, team-based learning and learning by inquiry. He is a passionate supporter of alternate pathways for students who are best suited to the vocational education and training pathway. Greg has written extensively about education, including as author of *Educating Gen Wi-Fi*, which argues for the need to rethink the nature of learning and teaching in a connected world. His weekly column on education, *Top of the Class*, is syndicated across 22 NewsLocal newspapers in New South Wales. He is a high-profile and highly regarded commentator who is regularly quoted in the press and an op-ed writer for the major newspapers. Greg's advocacy for change and innovation within the education sector has also led to many media appearances.

For his recognised leadership, Greg was appointed to the NSW Skills Board to advise the Government on how to better deliver skills training of the future for our State. He is a Fellow of the Australian Council of Educational Leaders, Fellow of the Australian College of Education, Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management, Apple Distinguished Educator, Fellow of Western Sydney University, recipient of the AW Jones Oration Medal for an Outstanding Australian Educator, recipient of the Papal Knighthood in the Order of St. Gregory the Great, recipient of the Sir Harold Wyndham Medal and a Member of the Order of Australia. Greg has led significant cultural change, with a focus on innovation, collaboration and investment in teachers' learning. Recently Greg announced his retirement, which will be a great loss to the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta and the wider community of western Sydney. I hope he continues to challenge the thinking about learning and teaching. I congratulate and thank Greg for his service to the education sector. He has helped make a difference to the lives and learning of so many children and young people through his work.

## MARITIME UNION OF AUSTRALIA 150TH ANNIVERSARY

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (19:13):** This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Maritime Union of Australia, the great MUA. The MUA had its beginnings on the waterfront in Melbourne in 1872 with the first seamen's union, which became the Federated Seamen's Union of Australasia two years later. That same year, the first local waterside workers unions were formed, representing wharf and dock workers. There was the Wharf Labourers' Union in Sydney and the Port Adelaide Working Men's Association in Adelaide. The MUA has always had a reputation for effective and determined political leadership, and this had its roots early on. That is why, in the year after Australia's Federation, a federated union of waterside workers was established, bringing all of the local port unions under a national leadership. They knew then what all unionists will tell you now: We are stronger together.

In 1993 the Seamen's Union of Australia and the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia amalgamated to become the MUA. Since then the MUA has developed a reputation for principled and resolute political and industrial representation for its members throughout Australia. I am fortunate to have been closely associated with the MUA and with seafaring and waterside work throughout my life. I am proud to bring the perspectives of these communities into this Parliament. My father, Jack Catley, was a seafarer and is a lifelong trade unionist. He is a proud man. As a young woman entering the workforce, my dad told me that two of the most important things I could do were to join my union and to put money aside for superannuation. This was before it was compulsory. Seafarers and waterside workers are among the most politically engaged groups of workers in our society. They knew all along how important it was for working class people to save for their retirements. They also understood that they could use those savings in the meantime to stake a claim in the networks of capital that control workplaces and use their collective financial influence to improve societies.

My husband, Robert Coombs, was a seafarer and rose to become the secretary of the Sydney branch of the MUA at a time when Sydney Harbour was still one of the busiest ports in Australia. It is easy to forget that, as recently as 2005, we had a container terminal at Darling Harbour and White Bay processing thousands of ships every year. More recently, my daughter Alex has been training as an officer aboard coastal trading ships and will continue the Catley-Coombs family connection to seafaring and maritime work. The MUA now represents maritime workers in industries as diverse as seafaring, stevedoring, inland navigation, diving and port services. With more than 98 per cent of Australian imports and exports moving by sea, the MUA's work is as important as ever.

I pay tribute to the national leadership of the MUA: National Secretary, and my friend, Paddy Crumlin, Deputy Secretary Warren Smith and assistant secretaries Adrian Evans and Jamie Newlyn. I also pay tribute to all of the branch secretaries around Australia, particularly those from my home port of Newcastle, Glen Williams and Denis Outram. I also acknowledge the political leadership the MUA has taken recently on the issue of First Nations justice, led by its National Indigenous Officer Thomas Mayor. What a week to mention this. I also acknowledge the MUA's work on workplace justice and empowerment for working women, led by its National Women's Officer Mich-Elle Myers. Once again, the MUA is fighting from the front on the social and political issues of our times, working towards a better and fairer society for all working people. It has always been an active, political and progressive organisation, and I know it will continue this rich history for generations to come. After all, the MUA is here to stay.

## TRIBUTE TO WAL WILLIAMS, OAM

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (19:18):** It is with a heavy heart that I acknowledge the life and legacy of Wal Williams, OAM. He was a World War II veteran who passed away on Saturday at the RSL ANZAC Village in Narrabeen at the age of 99. A local legend in Pittwater, Wal made a valuable contribution to raising awareness of the sacrifice and suffering of prisoners of war during the Second World War in the Pacific between 1941 and 1945. Born in Northbridge in 1922, Wal grew to be an excellent swimmer and represented the Northbridge Swimming Club at the NSW State Championships. This skill would later help save his life. Not long after war broke out, Wal enlisted in the permanent army and then joined the Second Australian Imperial Force in November 1941. Wal was underage and needed permission to join up. His father, a Gallipoli veteran of the Light Horse, did not want Wal to be a soldier but eventually gave his permission.

In December 1941, following the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor and Malaya, Wal's unit sailed to Singapore to reinforce the 2/19th Battalion, which had suffered casualties just north of Singapore. In one of the strange quirks of history, the 2/19th was commanded by one of my ancestors, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Anderson. Together with his unit, Wal fought a fierce defensive battle for several days. Coinciding with heavy attacks elsewhere on the island's perimeter and on its water supply, and with supplies and ammunition dwindling, the difficult decision was made to surrender Singapore on 15 February 1942. Wal, along with tens of thousands of Allied soldiers, nurses and civilians, was taken prisoner. He would go on to spend three and a half years as a

prisoner of the Japanese. At first interned at the infamous Changi prison camp, Wal was then put to work on the Burma-Thailand Railway—with my uncle, Hugh Johnson—for two years, and would later be transported to Japan.

In September 1944, as a prisoner on his way to Japan aboard the *Rakuyo Maru*, an American submarine—unaware that 1,300 Allied prisoners were onboard—fired a torpedo, sinking the Japanese prison ship. Treading water for 24 hours, Wal and a handful of mates survived being strafed by Japanese aircraft, only to be picked up by another Japanese ship which took them to Japan. Only 159 Allied prisoners were pulled from the water alive. Wal survived barbaric hard labour in Japan and the Allied firebombing of Tokyo and Yokohama, and finally returned to Australia at the end of October 1945. Following the war, Wal travelled to Papua New Guinea to work on boats, and upon his return to Sydney he met his late wife, Helen. Wal became an auctioneer. He and Helen raised their son on the northern beaches of Sydney, after Wal opened a second-hand furniture shop at Narrabeen.

Wal was heavily involved in the RSL, being recognised for his work with a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2021. He was passionate about raising awareness of the little-known history of the thousands of Australian and Allied prisoners of war, nurses and civilians who were lost at sea aboard Japanese ships as the result of Allied action. This included the *Montevideo Maru*, which was sunk 80 years ago next month with the loss of all 1,054 Allied prisoners and civilians aboard. Wal worked tirelessly to have the memory of those Allied service personnel and civilians who died on Japanese prisoner of war [POW] ships recognised with a memorial on Robert Dunn Reserve at the south end of Mona Vale Headland. But, in an act of bureaucratic bastardry, the New South Wales Government at the time and the local council denied permission for the erection of the memorial. Therefore, it was incredibly hurtful and, quite simply, outrageous when a memorial to the Japanese submariners entombed in their vessel off Bungan Beach was erected on North Mona Vale Headland. We now have an opportunity to right this wrong.

One of the last things Wal learned about was the decision of the council. I am so pleased that Minister David Elliott has given significant funding, together with council, to ensure that Wal's memorial can finally be built, in the location originally intended, on the south end of Mona Vale Headland. One of the very last things that Wal did was to approve the wording for the memorial. It is interesting that it is positioned on the southern headland at Mona Vale, because it is an unwitting but poignant reconciliation of the tragedy of war—Japanese invaders remembered at one headland, allied POWs remembered at the other, all linked by the new coastal walkway along a beachfront which was covered in barbed wire during the war and in front of a golf course built by survivors of the Great War, including my grandfather, Keith Stokes. Wal is survived by his son, Neil; grandsons, Robert and Nicholas; and a great-granddaughter, Sophia. I feel connected to Wal because his story is shared by families like mine and so many others across Australia. Thank you, Wal, for your service and your incredible life. Lest we forget.

### FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE FLOOD MITIGATION

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (19:23):** I speak today on behalf of the residents of Fairfield regarding several issues which have been of great concern in recent times, and which need to be addressed by both Fairfield City Council and the State Government. The first issue is flood mitigation in the Fairfield local government area. Several pockets of our local area are prone to extreme flooding, including Burns Creek, Prospect Creek, Orphan School Creek, Endeavour Reserve and some areas of Fairfield East, Canley Vale, Carramar and Lansvale. In recent heavy rainfall, many constituents affected by floodwater have come to me seeking assistance. While this is a council issue, they have come to me because they have been unable to receive the assistance they need or the answers to their questions about flood mitigation from Fairfield City Council.

The burning issue here is what exactly is Fairfield City Council doing about flood mitigation in the Fairfield local government area? One of my constituents, who resides in a property which backs onto Burns Creek in Fairfield East, has experienced three major flooding episodes in three months. The resident had previously raised concerns with Fairfield City Council on numerous occasions about the condition of the creek, which had been neglected by council in terms of maintenance and regular cleaning. In one of Fairfield City Council's responses, my constituent was told:

... it is important to remember that flooding is a natural phenomenon and cannot be eradicated altogether.

In the same correspondence, council wrote:

The last few months have seen an increased amount of rain associated with La Nina Southern Oscillation climate pattern. This, in turn, has brought floods to a significant portion of the east coast of Australia, including Burns Creek.

Basically, my constituents are being told by the council to "blame it on the weather". Nowhere in council's response was there any mention of future flood mitigation plans in the event that this happens again. Burns Creek and other areas in Fairfield which are prone to severe flooding warrant immediate assessment and works must be carried out as a matter of urgency to prevent future flooding events. While the council is happy to spend a significant amount of money on infrastructure such as water parks, which are used by residents for only a few

months of the year, it seems that there is no money left in the budget to assist residents in high-flood-risk precincts to protect their homes. Local residents are feeling the brunt of council's neglect. Photographic evidence provided to my office by my constituents clearly shows extensive damage to their properties and personal belongings. Insurance will not cover the loss, so they are basically left to fend for themselves and clean up their own mess.

Another constituent, from Canley Heights, has compared Fairfield City Council's flood mitigation efforts to those in his previous suburb in the Hills District. Needless to say, the Fairfield local government area came off the worst in this comparison. While the Hills District creeks are surrounded by beautiful sandstone walls to mitigate flooding, Fairfield's creeks are left to overflow and flood into residents' backyards and homes. In recent times, the flooding issue has been a concern statewide. Flood mitigation is important to prevent not just damage to property but also loss of life. Unfortunately, rising floodwaters do not discriminate, especially when they rise up onto local roadways and unsuspecting motorists and pedestrians.

Fairfield City Council needs to step up and address the issue of flood mitigation in high-flood-risk precincts immediately. Fairfield does not need any more water parks. What is needed is a definitive flood mitigation plan that will protect residents and their properties from further damage when more extreme weather hits. The State Government also needs to step up and provide much-needed funding to assist councils with flood mitigation plans and to be active participants in the execution of such plans. As the member for Fairfield, I want to work with Fairfield City Council and get it right before there is any more damage or before someone loses their life. This is an important issue to address in the wake of the excessive rainfall experienced by New South Wales communities so far in 2022.

### KU-RING-GAI CHASE FUN RUN AND WALK

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (19:28):** No matter our age, sex or ability, all people deserve the opportunity to participate in sport. For over 40 years, Special Olympics Australia has guaranteed that opportunity for thousands of children and adults with an intellectual disability, helping them flourish into successful athletes and prove that disability is no barrier to success. Along the way, these talented athletes not only honed their sporting skills but formed lifelong friendships in an inclusive and supportive environment. I am proud to support the Ku-ring-gai Chase Fun Run and Walk each year, which is our community's annual fundraising event for the Special Olympics Sydney Upper North Shore club.

Early in the morning on 29 May this year, I joined residents at Claude Cameron Grove for the walk through the leafy, tree-lined streetscapes of Wahroonga. Official ambassador and roving emcee Vic Lorusso launched the event. In past years, he has generously offered exclusive helicopter rides for silent auction in support. It was great to catch up with Vic prior to the start of the race. At 9.00 a.m., the brilliant 10K runners headed for the starting line. Many of them were keen for a competitive run, which has been so difficult to do in the past two years. Once the horn sounded, all their enthusiasm was on show as the runners took off with determination and excitement in their eyes. The 5K runners and walkers followed suit at the starting line, awaiting their turn.

I had the privilege of giving a welcome speech before sounding the horn to start the next race, the 5K run. I then encouraged the 5K walkers, like myself, not to be afraid and to show a bit of form—a little bit like Kel from *Kath & Kim*—as we took off on our walk. As we made our way through the course, it was inspiring to see mothers with prams taking part in the event. In accordance with event tradition, students from Knox Grammar School also ran or walked with the Special Olympics athletes as buddies and support teams. With the students, Special Olympics athletes, families and children, the turnout was an absolutely wonderful reflection of the camaraderie found in all parts of our Ku-ring-gai community.

Once the race was completed, we headed to the oval for the presentation of medals to those athletes who placed first, second and third. I congratulate the winners of the 10K and 5K races, including Martin Smellie, Doug Goulding, Andrew Heyden, Amelia Gorman, Lara Cumming, Megan Zalloua, Charlie Bradford, Michael Tozer, Anthony Slaven, Georgie Farrar, Imogen Robertson and Janna Robertson. I also got to catch up with Nathan Whitty, who placed first in the 10K run last year and who came second this year. In my view, all the participants made remarkable achievements in supporting such a worthwhile cause and helping to raise funds for Special Olympics Upper North Shore.

I congratulate the event sponsors, including Knox Grammar, Poolwerx Turramurra, Differently Abled People Association, Like Family, Unisson Disability, Hireup, and Ku-ring-gai Fitness and Aquatic Centre. Funds raised from the event will ensure that, looking forward, the Special Olympics program will continue across the North Shore community, where over 200 athletes and their families will establish connections through involvement in sport. The challenge to restart the program in a COVID-safe way across 11 sports and 40 locations has been significant. Since the pandemic, some sports, like softball, have had to be stopped. We understand the impact this must have on so many people.

With the support of individuals, volunteers and organisations, the Ku-ring-gai Fun Run and Special Olympics Upper North Shore will continue to thrive and prevail against all challenges. There are currently over 200 million people in the world with an intellectual disability, and 5½ million in the Special Olympics program. The goal is to reach out to each and every one of them and their families. With that special knowledge in mind, I would say that the transformative power of the Special Olympics in the lives of millions of people is a truly worthwhile cause that deserves our community's ongoing support. It has been a particularly difficult time with the disruption to special sports generally, and I spoke to some of the athletes and their families about the impact that has had upon them. Certainly, it is the community and the engagement which they enjoy so much—and the volunteer coaches also absolutely love working with the athletes. It has been another great year of the Ku-ring-gai Chase Fun Run or Walk. We look forward to next year's run and walk as well.

### **BLUE MOUNTAINS ABORIGINAL CULTURE AND RESOURCE CENTRE**

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (19:33):** In the heart of my electorate, on a quiet residential street in Katoomba, is a property that might look a bit ordinary to the average eye. Known as Clairvaux Community Centre, the site—a former government institution set amongst native bush—hosts a collection of old buildings that now house three important community services. One is the Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre, locally known as ACRC—a service that formed in 1994 when a small group of local Aboriginal people had a vision of providing a meeting place for First Nations community members. It would be a place to access social support services and share in culture, arts, history and heritage: a place to call home. The vision became reality in 1995 when the Clairvaux site, owned by the Department of Community Services, the predecessor agency to the Department of Communities and Justice, was made available to the ACRC and other community groups.

With Clairvaux providing a stable home base, the ACRC has been able to provide crucial support services to the First Nations community for the past 27 years, from the heart of what is and always will be Dharug and Gundungurra traditional land. This site has played a vital role in the lives of many, becoming a safe haven and providing a long list of services. These include Aboriginal Family Support, which includes Koori playgroup, Positive Parenting Programs, Cultural Camps, Aboriginal Family Fun Days and connection with local schools; an Elders Support Service assisting older community members to continue to live independently and with dignity in their own homes; the Aboriginal Social Support Service, providing meal assistance, outings and day trips, friendly phone calls and visits, referral, advocacy and liaising with government departments; and the ACRC Community Transport Service, providing low-cost transport to access essential services, shopping, outings and appointments, which is reducing social isolation and improving the quality of life for our local Aboriginal community.

Blue Mountains ACRC is a place that gives hope that closing the gap is possible. Crucially, it also hosts cultural and community programs fostering a sense of place and belonging through language, song, dance, art, tool-making and yarnning, bringing Elders, young people and families together. This aging site may be in disrepair, but it is a place of special significance in my community. It has become a place of healing, recognition, culture and the coming together of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people—and, therefore, reconciliation. It was the site of initial storytelling meetings that led to The Gully being recognised and declared an Aboriginal Place, where annual Sorry Day gatherings happened over many years, where the first NAIDOC celebrations and many more events that strengthened our community were planned.

In light of all this, imagine the horror the ACRC community experienced upon being notified last year that they would be evicted from Clairvaux under the guise of the site needing renovations. Faced with the prospect of losing its permanent home, the entire service has been under threat. Shocked and shaken by this unexpected threat of eviction, the ACRC came to me and my colleague David Harris, the shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, seeking help to have the decision reversed. Local organisations have rallied to support the ACRC, including Blue Mountains City Council, Blue Mountains People for Reconciliation and ANTaR. The Blue Mountains community is one that values and respects its Aboriginal culture and history and it values the work of ACRC. There was a suggestion that another site could be found for the ACRC to move to, but this is not about a new office space. It is about spirit of place. The Clairvaux site, with its significant history, is imbued with presence.

For that reason, I sought a meeting between Minister Maclaren-Jones and ACRC, with an invitation for her to come to Katoomba and see for herself that Clairvaux is not just a property but the beating heart of the First Nations community in my community. Today I am pleased to report that the Minister accepted that invitation and last week took the time to visit Clairvaux and sit down with local First Nations people. She put her boots on country, walked through the site, witnessed firsthand what happens there, and she listened. I thank the Minister for taking the time and effort to do that with an open mind. I am now hopeful and optimistic that, after seeing firsthand the importance of this special place, the Minister will find a way for ACRC to continue to have a home at Clairvaux.

On a day when this Parliament marks the anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations, I reiterate my call on the Government to listen to local blackfella wisdom on what is best for their community—to work

together and make the investment needed to bring the Clairvaux site up to standard so that ACRC, the only centre of its kind throughout the entire Blue Mountains, can continue its vital work. Today Uncle Richard spoke of Clairvaux, here in this Chamber, as an example of government needing to walk its talk. Go to it.

### REGIONAL MANUFACTURING

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (19:38):** "The rumours of the demise of the US manufacturing industry are greatly exaggerated." This quote is attributed to Elon Musk, and it is a reminder that manufacturing in regional New South Wales suffers at times from the same gross and ignorant caricature. As I cross the electorate of Albury, I see the strength of our local regional manufacturing sector. From Howlong's Cool Off to Albury's Geofabrics and Albury Precision Engineering, it is a diverse, highly motivated portfolio of manufacturing businesses. Its burden is not a lack of success—many of these businesses already ship to major markets—but an ongoing risk that their needs and their capabilities might be left out of government planning decisions that focus on the Greater Sydney urban cluster. In New South Wales the Aerotropolis and Tech Central are underway in Sydney, demonstrating new ways for Government to facilitate the flourishing of private business through industry concentration in specific locations. This in turn provides a focus for government support to get things moving faster. I applaud the Government for its focus on manufacturing for New South Wales. Regional New South Wales wants to share in this new era.

We are following a line here. In 2018 New South Wales released the *NSW advanced manufacturing industry development strategy* to set out its objectives and practical initiatives to grow the sector, build the capability of businesses and continue to foster a supportive external business environment in the State. The strategy builds on the NSW Manufacturing Industry Action Plan 2012 and on the Commonwealth Government's Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre. Currently underway, the New South Wales Modern Manufacturing Taskforce, chaired by Tony Shepherd, AO, will report to the Government in the next few weeks with the results of its review. In my view, it is fundamentally critical that any such review incorporates a regional lens.

I reached out to Mr Shepherd, and it was pleasing to see his enthusiasm to meet some of Albury's manufacturing businesses and representatives of organisations which support them. A major part of the session held with Mr Shepherd involved making clear that regional manufacturers have a substantial role to play and have needs within the broader State planning for advanced manufacturing. Through a solutions-based discussion a number of key topics were raised, including procurement and supply chain issues; workforce; education and automation; connection with the tertiary sector; identifying markets and opportunities; and a concierge service for manufacturers to access knowledge, research, skills, funding opportunities and more.

Job creation and retention presents a real challenge regionally. Employers need to be able to offer skilled, valuable work for more than just two years or the life of a current project. Manufacturers tell me they must offer skilled staff a seven- to 10-year window. Are we having to attract skilled staff from outside the region, or can we grow our own talent? Can we develop regional centres of excellence and gain a reputation for advanced manufacturing from the regions? Can we have an eye on planning reforms that will see development application turnaround for small and medium-sized enterprises equal to the deal that big businesses enjoy?

One strong message from the taskforce chair was the importance of not just looking at the manufacturing ecosystem from a State perspective but from a national perspective. Another powerful point was the idea of updating the critical term "value" in government funding and support programs. We must incorporate the value of regional manufacturing activity, its economies and lower overheads, the employment it generates, and the rich array of skills, experience and entrepreneurship it offers the State. Albury is developing its unique manufacturing ecosystem, and this development can be accelerated through appropriate government support, helping drive advanced manufacturing success for the State while fulfilling a central workplace role in the Albury region.

Transport options are strong in Albury. As well as a modern airport, Albury has a rail hub at Ettamogah. We have an active council, which has taken a leading role in providing for industry expansion. We have manufacturers that are aware of the value of supporting each other, sharing knowledge and looking to grow the sector and its capabilities for the benefit of all. This is all part of building a flexible, fast-adapting regional advanced manufacturing ecosystem centred on cities like Albury, creating economic value for communities and for the nation. I thank Tony Shepherd and those in the Albury region who are engaged with me in productive discussion about how to work better and smarter as a manufacturing sector. I encourage the Government to continue to visit Albury and see the strengths and capabilities of our manufacturing ecosystem.

### NEWCASTLE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (19:43):** In a fortnight the New South Wales Government will deliver its last budget before it becomes the New South Wales Opposition. But that is no reason to be conservative. Go big before you go home! I would love to be able to say, "Wow, what a great budget! You've really delivered

for Newcastle." It has been clear throughout the past month or so that the Government has realised that there is an election around the corner and that it is about time it actually did something. After a decade of slash and burn, it has realised that TAFE is actually valuable. After months of pressure from the Opposition, it has seen that tolls are a huge expense for people in western Sydney. And it is now trying to placate the unions and public service workers with a slight rise to the wage cap—although I note that, in real terms, it is still a wage cut.

When we talk about what is next for Newcastle, though, it is the Broadmeadow area. It is the home of the Hunter Park development, and it is right on the preferred route for the extension of the light rail. But for Broadmeadow to move ahead we need two things: firstly, corridor preservation for the light rail route; and secondly, to actually get moving on Hunter Park. Unfortunately, even though Transport for NSW sent me correspondence suggesting otherwise, there has been next to no movement on securing the land needed for that light rail extension. There are development applications going on now that are smack bang on the preferred route. Despite this being drawn to the attention of Transport for NSW on more than one occasion, developers are in there right now, sweeping out the tumbleweed. Meanwhile, after years of having little to show for a flashy announcement, last year there was finally a step forward on Hunter Park, with money for the business case. That is something, but it took four years of pushing to get to that stage. At that glacial pace, how long will it be before we see real movement on the ground?

While we are looking to take one suburb to a new level, there is one that we desperately need to save. There has been progress towards a solution for erosion at Stockton Beach, but talk needs to become action. The Government has previously contributed to progressing work in Stockton and I would more than welcome another commitment. So let's work with council and get that moving. Another suburb that has spent a long time waiting is Hexham, which would sorely love to be connected to the Hunter Water sewer network. There are not even 100 houses out there, but despite hundreds of millions of dollars in dividends going down to Sydney from Hunter Water over many years, the people of Hexham are still waiting for that basic infrastructure.

What should be more than abundantly clear by now is that what the Government has invested in social and affordable housing is not even the tip of the iceberg, and what is being constructed is not replacing what has been sold. What we are seeing in Newcastle is three- and four-bedroom houses in suburbs like Stockton, which command quite a high property price, being flogged off while apartment blocks full of one- and two-bedroom apartments get thrown up out in Newcastle's western suburbs, further away from services, further away from public transport connections and where the land is a little—or a lot—cheaper. That is how the Government pumps up its numbers, but the number of properties is not the same as the number of bedrooms.

If a mother flees domestic violence with her children, is a one-bedroom apartment really suitable for them? That is rhetorical, because we all know that it is not. Inner-city Newcastle has been an absolute bonanza for developers constructing thousands of new apartments, but it is people from higher socio-economic groups who are benefiting from this, not the people who really need it. There are 50,000 applicants on the social housing waitlist in this State and almost 6,000 of those are considered to be priority. Of those applicants, 1,350 are in Newcastle. That number is higher than the year before, I might add. Piecemeal developments are not going to cut it. We need a large-scale plan with funding and follow-through to get on top of the housing crisis in this State.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:48):** I acknowledge the member for Newcastle's contribution and the irony of him talking about the extension of a light rail that he opposed throughout his career. In fact, I recall him getting on the heavy rail and protesting against it ending at Wallsend. The arrogance of a member coming into this place and accusing and abusing the Liberal-Nationals Government, which invested more in Newcastle and the Hunter region in its first few years in government than the Labor Government ever did in 16 years! I think it is pretty concerning that the member for Newcastle does not remember opposing the light rail time and time again.

**Ms Jodie Harrison:** Keep an eye on us. Keep loving us.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** We have ripped up heavy rail in Newcastle. We have opened up Newcastle. Being from the Hunter myself, I have spent plenty of time in Newcastle—so, thanks, member for Charlestown. Members opposite show hypocrisy in not recognising the significant investments of this Government. If we put our record in the Hunter against the record of those opposite, we would win every single day of the week.

#### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (19:50):** On Tuesday 31 May I joined the Newcastle Domestic Violence Committee [DVC] to celebrate the launch of a new website—[newcastledvc.au](http://newcastledvc.au)—which brings together agencies, organisations and community members across the Newcastle region. The site is a quick, safe way for those experiencing family or domestic violence to get the support they need in our local area. For too long, domestic and family violence was kept in the shadows—not talked about, barely acknowledged and unseen for

the society-wide scourge that we always knew it was. No social group is immune to domestic and family violence. Perpetrators do not heed economic class or ethnic divisions. But we know that the overwhelming majority of victim-survivors are women.

The statistics are daunting: Across the world, one in three women will experience physical or sexual violence in their life; being a woman is the single biggest risk factor for experiencing domestic, family or sexual violence in Australia; Aboriginal and First Nations women experience domestic violence at higher rates than women from non-Aboriginal backgrounds; and women living with a disability are more at risk than women without disabilities. They are our friends, family members and work colleagues. Even now after the issue has gained unprecedented awareness, uncertainty remains for so many victim-survivors. Many are second-guessing themselves, unsure whether what they experienced was really domestic violence. Many ask themselves, "How can I get help?"

For culturally and linguistically diverse victim-survivors, language barriers can present extra difficulties when accessing assistance. The lack of quantitative data about how widespread the problem is often prevents us from targeting our policy responses in the most effective way. It means that we do not know where to focus resources or how to ensure that what we are doing to meet the challenge is actually working. That is what makes the new website so important: It not only connects victim-survivors to support but also captures data that can help the committee to do its work. The committee has always recognised that domestic and family violence impacts people from across society. It connects victim-survivors with specific supports for older people, LGBTIQ+ people, people with disability, Aboriginal and First Nations people, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The site includes information about domestic and family violence—its causes, what it looks like and what can be done to address it. It links directly to local support services and is a repository of resources, including a plain English guide to apprehended domestic violence orders. That is vital for victim-survivors who may have difficulty navigating the complexities of courts, which, quite often, are ineffective. Just as importantly, the site includes professionally translated resources in a number of languages: Arabic, Chinese, Dan, Kiswahili, Kurdish, Thai and Vietnamese. Importantly, the website protects the safety and privacy of users. A person who is researching or using the site can click on a bar at the top of the page to close it instantly. They are redirected by Google to a new tab at weather.com and their immediate browser history is erased so that a perpetrator cannot reopen the page by clicking on the back arrow. The committee will never share or on-sell users' data. The data it collects is anonymised for general patterns.

I thank the chair of the Newcastle DVC, Lisa Ronneburg, for her leadership. I also thank the committee members and countless volunteers, who give freely of their time and energy to advance this important cause, and the professionals who work day in, day out to support victim-survivors through an impossibly difficult time. I acknowledge and thank the victim-survivors for their courage and truth-telling. We believe their truth and will never stop advocating for a better, safer future free from violence for everyone.

### SEXUAL CONSENT LAWS

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (19:54):** I speak on behalf of the people of the electorate of Newtown and The Greens. To all victim-survivors of sexual assault, all those who have been failed by the so-called justice system and all those who have been subjected to sexual violence, domestic abuse, coercive control and sexual assault, I say that we see you, we acknowledge you and, most importantly, we believe you. Last week the new sexual consent laws, which enshrine an international best-practice, communicative model of consent, came into effect in New South Wales. It was a monumental day, which finally completed a decades-long campaign by survivors, activists, advocates and allies to end the harm that our laws in New South Wales were causing to those who had experienced sexual violence.

It was so powerful to see Saxon Mullins front and centre in the reporting on the day. She is a young woman, a survivor-advocate and a true change maker, who gave more than anyone should be required to give to achieve the reforms. Many times in this Chamber I have congratulated the many other wonderful people who have contributed to achieving an affirmative consent model in New South Wales, so I will not list them all again. But they know who they are and I know they are very proud. They should all know that they have made a massive contribution to law reform in this State. The model of consent that we now have makes it much easier for juries, judges, police and prosecutors to understand and apply sexual assault law.

Critically, the new laws address the dangerous and damaging issue of rape myths—myths about how a survivor should look, behave or dress that are widely held—and make it easier for fact finders to separate those myths from the circumstances of an assault. This huge and important reform will have a massive impact on the treatment of survivors in the criminal justice system. But experts, campaigners and advocates have never been under the delusion that this law reform alone would be enough to fully address the enormous societal problems of

sexual violence, violence against women, the mistreatment of women and toxic masculinity. Law reform alone cannot address the huge numbers of assaults, massive rates of under-reporting and dramatically inadequate funding for support services.

Law reform alone cannot change how infrequently survivors are believed and properly supported to seek justice. For that, we need a shift in how we understand and recognise sexual violence at a societal level. Boosted by the Me Too movement, that shift is certainly underway. But the way that violence and victims of violence are routinely discussed in public discourse in the public domain continues to be a huge barrier to progress. Our society and so-called justice system are still dominated by the patriarchy and steeped in toxic masculinity. The horrific levels of public scrutiny and vitriol levelled at victim-survivors who seek justice in an often unjust system can cause significant further harm. Unrelenting and extremely damaging media coverage of, and public commentary on, high-profile assault cases, is often overtly skewed in favour of an abuser who is at the absolute pinnacle of privilege while the survivor is routinely mocked and derided.

The negative impact of that on people coming forward should not be underestimated. It did not take long before we saw the inevitable pile on during a recent high-profile case. What began as unhelpful, sensationalist reporting and commentary became weaponised by those who do not believe survivors—by abusers, sexists, apologists and obsessives who seek to centre themselves with no regard for the harm caused to others. What was the result? Once again, rape myths were perpetuated. As public figures with broad public reach, we have a responsibility to do better by always supporting survivors and placing them at the centre of our responses and reactions to instances of sexual violence.

We must all carefully consider the messages we are sending to the next young woman who is abused by a powerful man and recognise that what we say matters. How do our words sound to a survivor who is trying to find the courage to speak up and enter a justice system that we know to be so heavily flawed? Our words have an impact on the public discourse and on survivors. Our words send a message to everyday people who may one day end up on a jury. That is what we need to change. I make it clear right now to any survivors who may hear this that The Greens do believe them. I believe them. We support them, and we are committed to ensuring that they receive justice and the support they need.

#### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND HOMELESSNESS

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (19:59):** I raise my electorate's issue of housing affordability and homelessness, which has escalated significantly over the past couple of years. Since the creation of the unstoppable beast known as Airbnb and those other platforms, home owners in New South Wales' number one tourist destination outside of Sydney have decided to save a whole bunch of housing stock—their homes, their rooms, their facilities—for the occasional holidaymaker as opposed to long-term, permanent residents—families, single parents, single people, whatever the case may be, the people who used to sign six-month and 12-month leases. In my neck of the woods, it is true that you can run a very successful Airbnb by buying a house, renting it out for only weekend and holiday use and having it empty for somewhere in the vicinity of 200 or 250 nights of the year. It is true. The market will tell you that you can make more money by doing that. But where does that leave our society? When does the market and profitability become more important than a roof over people's heads?

Maslow's hierarchy talks about shelter, food and warmth. It does not talk about the free market. But every second or third day I have people coming into my office crying, desperate for assistance in finding accommodation, not short-term or crisis accommodation but long-term accommodation, in the town and the community in which they have grown up. They tell me stories about their rented home being sold, the new owners sending them out on their ears and the house going onto the Airbnb market. They speak about going to every single real estate agent in Cessnock trying to find an alternative home, a place for them and their partners and their children, so that their children can continue to go to the same school, they can continue to access the social networks in which they have grown up, they can continue to be a part of the community, they can continue to participate in the same sporting teams. There is nothing on the market. That is not a criticism of real estate agents. That is not a criticism of the people who have found themselves in this position. The reality is there is just nothing on the market.

There is nothing on the market for several reasons. One I have mentioned is Airbnb. The other is that we have generous wealth across our society in Australia and New South Wales at the moment—so generous that people can afford to have a second or third home that sits completely idle, except when those people might want to use them for the occasional weekend retreat. I wonder how many rooms and houses are empty on any given night. I am willing to bet that that number is bigger than the size of our homelessness problem. But there is no willingness to take any action to address this issue.

I go back to Maslow's hierarchy. The free market, the accumulation of wealth and property, does not sit inside our core needs as human beings. I urge our society to start thinking about human beings, our most

vulnerable, those who do not have the opportunity and the funds to invest in homes they can call their own or to meet all the market forces on bills, food, rent and insurance. Those people need long-term homes. They need to belong to communities. The way to do that is for them to get long-term leases in communities with which they identify. We have a massive problem in the electorate of Cessnock, but we are not alone. These problems exist all across New South Wales. In particular, they exist in highly popular tourism destinations. Madam Deputy Speaker, your economy in the Port Macquarie electorate would be one of these. The free market and Airbnb are not a solution to our homelessness. They are a cause. We need to address these issues as a society and as a Parliament.

### **DAVIDSON ELECTORATE ROAD TRAFFIC**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (20:04):** My electorate of Davidson covers the Ku-ring-gai and Northern Beaches local government areas as well as part of the City of Willoughby, at least until the next State election. It features a number of major roads, including the Pacific Highway and Warringah Road. Davidson experiences a lot of through traffic, destined largely for the Central Coast, the northern beaches and the Ryde area. The electorate must contend with a number of issues on its road network. The railway line divides its North Shore suburbs. This creates traffic funnels for drivers crossing from one side of the Pacific Highway to the other, over and under the railway line, at limited traversing points. Middle Harbour too is a major natural division for road travel, Roseville Bridge being one of only two bridges, along with the Spit Bridge, over this large expanse of water. The entrances to Roseville Bridge create another major funnelling effect, along Boundary Street and Babbage Road in Roseville and along Warringah Road to the east.

Transport for NSW is legislated to control all traffic under the Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Act 1999. To effectively deal with these traffic matters, Transport for NSW delegates certain aspects of local traffic to councils. However, Transport for NSW retains control of all classified State roads and traffic signals on all roads. I will make a few comments in relation to councils and traffic committees. Councils are limited in their prescription of traffic control devices and must obtain advice from Transport for NSW and police before proceeding with relevant changes. This is most commonly achieved through the use of local council traffic committees, who advise, rather than make binding decisions, and primarily provide a mechanism for technical review. Our local traffic committee comprises four formal members, each with one vote. The members include a representative from council, the police and Transport for NSW and the local member of State Parliament or their nominee.

These committees are integral to ensuring that major traffic corridors and local roads operate effectively and run smoothly. Local councils and State government electorate offices receive local constituents' feedback and suggest topics for inclusion on the agendas. There is also the opportunity for members of the public and other stakeholders to attend and address a meeting. Traffic committee items are often raised due to changes in local traffic conditions as a result of new developments, increased school enrolments, shopping precinct changes or drivers increasingly using local rat runs to avoid main roads. Pedestrian and commuter safety is often a critical reason for traffic changes recommended by these committees.

In Davidson I have two excellent traffic committee representatives often acting on my behalf, Michael Lane for Ku-ring-gai Council and Phil Corbett for Northern Beaches Council. They are both well experienced and demonstrate sound judgement. I place on the record my appreciation of both Michael and Phil for their excellent contributions. I also acknowledge the important work done by the relevant councillors and council officers to help manage local traffic matters in my electorate through their participation in these committees. They all provide a very valuable community service.

### **TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL 150TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (20:09):** In 2021 Sydney Trades Hall celebrated 150 years of fighting for working people. However, the actual celebrations had to wait like so many other celebrations and milestones. On 25 May I joined many friends and colleagues at Pyrmont for the New South Wales Trades and Labour Council 150th anniversary dinner. What we now know as Unions NSW began in 1871 as the Trades & Labor Council of Sydney and was formed by six unions. Original union shareholders included the iron moulders, shipwrights, bricklayers, boilermakers, stonemasons, journeymen tailors, carpenters and joiners, typographers, plumbers, gasfitters, ironworkers, coachmakers, journeymen farriers, drapers, coopers, and saddle, harness and collar makers. How many have changed since then.

The history of Unions NSW, in all its iterations, is a storied one. It is the industrial wing of a movement that intersects with a political wing I proudly serve. Oftentimes this history was tumultuous. As a lover of history and a former teacher, I note the 1890s great strikes of maritime workers and Broken Hill miners, the unveiling of iconic trade union banners, the birth of the Australian Labor Party, opposing boyhood conscription in World War I, surviving the Great Depression, forming the Australian Council of Trade Unions and fighting for better working

conditions. However, the history of Unions NSW is not just a history of tumult or institutionalised opposition to its existence from conservative governments and industry. It is a history of accomplishment.

Listening to the Government rave about unions, I am reminded of the Monty Python sketch in *Life of Brian*, "What have the Romans ever done for us?" So to those who say, "What have the unions ever done for us?", I remind them of the successful eight-hour day campaign in the 1800s advanced by New South Wales unions, particularly the Stonemasons Society in 1855. In the 1920s this was achieved nationally, followed thereafter by a 40-hour, five-day working week. During World War I, Australia and South Africa were the only two nations at war not to introduce conscription, and this was because of the successful campaign by Australian unions to defeat conscription in two referendums. In 1984 unions and government negotiated the Prices and Incomes Accord, working with government to increase productivity, wages and reform the industrial relations system. When the Howard Government went too far, the union movement was instrumental in defeating WorkChoices.

The legislative protections we enjoy were first agitated for on the streets, including things such as anti-discrimination legislation, unfair dismissal protections, equal pay legislation, whistleblower protections and modern slavery legislation. Like others in this place, I came to politics later in life. My passion and purpose, as you all know, was and is in education. I loved teaching and the privilege of being a school principal. Throughout it all, I maintained my membership with the NSW Teachers Federation. In doing so, I stood in solidarity with 67,000 other educators because I believe in the principle that we rise and fall as one and that we advance the most when we advance together. Since coming to this place, I have become acquainted with so many other union bodies for whom I have the utmost respect and appreciation. I may not always agree with them on every single element, but I will always respect the sincerity and the decency of purpose with which they make their case on behalf of members.

To that end, I acknowledge people whom I have worked closely with, including Mark Morey, the Secretary of Unions NSW, Angelo Gavrielatos—who, incidentally, was a student of Punchbowl Boys High School back in the day, and I heard he was not too naughty either—the President of the Teachers Federation, and John Quessy, the secretary of the Independent Education Union. Given the number of healthcare and transport workers I represent, I also value my relationships with Gerard Hayes from the Health Services Union and Alex Claassens at the Rail, Tram and Bus Union. In my current portfolios, I do a lot of work with—and I really appreciate the work of—the Fire Brigade Employees Union and Leighton Drury. With the Climate Change portfolio, I am doing some work with the Hunter Jobs Alliance and have a close collaboration with the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union.

Now that we have celebrated the 150-year anniversary of unions, I turn to the future and the enduring relevance of unionism. During the pandemic, to the likely chagrin of the New South Wales Government, union membership increased. This is because we have an economic model built on flatlining wages and insecure work. The turbulence of this model left our most vulnerable workers exposed and highlighted the importance of unionised workforces and the wider union movement. But even before the pandemic we had a government addicted to building things overseas at the expense of local jobs. The union movement will always be relevant when there are people in this place and New South Wales who do not think we can make the best trains, buses and ferries in the world. In that spirit, I acknowledge and celebrate Unions NSW—formerly known as the New South Wales Trades and Labour Council—for 150 years of protecting and advancing the interests of workers across the State.

### CANTERBURY ELECTORATE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (20:14):** I would like to talk about climate change and the environment, particularly how climate change has affected the Wollli Creek Regional Park but also the Parry Steps track, which starts on Bayview Lane, Earlwood. The Parry Steps track is a short historical walking track that has been seriously neglected for many years by all levels of government. I urge the State Government, particularly the Ministers responsible, to heed the correspondence that I have sent them and to sit down with me and the Wollli Creek Preservation Society and the many activists in my community to come up with a holistic plan that also has funding attached to it. With the unprecedented La Niña weather event we endured recently, my community saw the Parry Steps and surrounding streets flooded and overcome with stormwater run-off. This has caused significant structural damage to the track and its flora as well as to the surrounding homes. Local residents have shared multiple photographs and videos of this run-off.

I have written to the Minister for Environment and Heritage and the local council urging them to listen to what my community has to say. I found this issue difficult in terms of who is taking responsibility, particularly for the Cooks River—I have written to both the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Lands and Water. This has been an ongoing issue in my community. No department is willing to take responsibility or provide any funding. We have serious problems, particularly when it comes to some of our very important and significant environmental areas in my community. My local residents have raised significant issues. In particular,

residents have informed me that the significant flooding seen on the Parry Steps is due to inadequate stormwater management, including outdated and blocked pipes and drains that have not been looked after very well. Whether or not that is due to a lack of funding, it needs to be addressed immediately.

Anybody who knows Earlwood will be aware that it is partly hilly with major cliffs. You can see the erosion around the cliffs caused by climate change. Native flora in the green space has been overcome by invasive species that have severely harmed the overall health of this local ecosystem. Concerned residents have stated that there has been no action by the Government to care for the few remaining species nor to cull the introduced species and/or weeds. They informed me that nearby elderly residents, who are directly affected by this problem, have attempted to clear some of the weeds themselves, which poses a serious risk to their wellbeing due to the steep incline of the land. With respect to the soil and rock erosion, the recent flooding and rains have caused significant rock erosion, which has not been addressed by the Government.

There is evidentially a temporary mitigation strategy to slow this erosion, primarily using tensioned rock bolts. But the rock bolts are disadvantageous to the environment as there is the potential for slippage and breakage, which will damage their load-bearing capacity. The Parry Steps is a beloved part of my community, which has been neglected for far too long. I urge the State Government to act—as I have said, I have written to the relevant Ministers and to the local council. I am happy to sit down, devise a holistic plan and advocate with our local Federal member, the member for Barton, Linda Burney—who is now the Minister for Indigenous Australians—for some Federal funding as well. We need to look after these very important and rare environmental areas in our community. As I keep saying in this place, my community has suffered from overdevelopment. These are a very few beautiful, open, recreational spaces that need to be cared for. I also acknowledge and pay my respects to the many volunteers.

#### *Community Recognition Notices*

#### **BANKSTOWN POLICE AREA COMMAND MEDAL AND AWARD PRESENTATION CEREMONY**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)**—I was delighted to attend the Bankstown Police Area Command Medal and Awards Presentation Ceremony on 5 May 2022 at the Revesby Workers' Club. I would like to thank Superintendent Adam Johnson, Commander of the Bankstown Police Command and Assistant Superintendent Darren Sly of the Bankstown Police Command for their kind invitation. I would also like to acknowledge special guests, Assistant Commissioner Stuart Smith APM, Commander South West Metropolitan Region, Father Paul Donoghue, NSW Police Force Chaplain, Dr Father Fadi Nemme and, indeed all the award recipients. I thank Superintendent Adam Johnson for his leadership of our police command. Police work is often underappreciated and as such, it is critical that the Officers who are prepared to go beyond their daily duties be acknowledged and commended. The giving of these medals and awards help to encourage our police command and serve as a reminder to our community that police work is challenging and demanding. I am pleased to be able to offer my congratulations and commend these officers on receiving such a prestigious accolade.

#### **BANKSTOWN SPORTS WOMEN'S CRICKET CLUB**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)**—I was delighted to attend the Bankstown Sports Women's Cricket Club 2021-2022 End of Season Presentation Dinner at Bankstown Sports Club on 14 May 2022. I take this opportunity to recognise the following award recipients for their fantastic achievements; Samantha Devlin (Presidents Award), Justin Newman (Life Membership), Bianca Vella (5 Year Service), Chrissa Stathis (5 Year Service & U18 Max McCleay Memorial Trophy), Maeve Martin (5 Year Service), Mridula Thirupathy (5 Year Service), Shekinah Lowe (5 Year Service), Daniella Moyes & Annie Pham (15 Years Service), Jade Errington (Wicketkeeper of the Year), Shannon Mazurkiewicz (Rookie of the Year), and Madison Rutherford (Dick Phillips Award). Congratulations once again to all award recipients, and indeed to all players for a successful season. I also wish to acknowledge Bankstown Women's Cricket Club President Robert Smith, Vice-President Gus Fernando, and Secretary Virginia Errington for their terrific work in promoting cricket in our local community, and special guests Brian Freedman from the Bankstown District Cricket Club and Chris Benham and Andrew Divan from Bankstown Districts Cricket Association. It was a pleasure to hear from Bankstown's own Ashleigh Gardner, the first Indigenous Australian woman to play in a cricket World Cup.

#### **BOISHAKHI MELA FESTIVAL**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)**—I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Bangabandhu Porishad Sydney Society Inc on their 'Boishakhi Mela' festival held on Saturday, 28th May 2022 at Bankstown Paceway. Bangabandhu Porishad Sydney Society Inc was founded in 1989 by the late Gazi Ruhul Haque. The Society has organised many cultural and social events, including the Boishakhi Mela festival. The Society also participates in many charitable causes and other community activities. The 'Boishakhi Mela' festival is a celebration of the Bangla New Year, attracting thousands of visitors annually. The day long fair included many

educational and recreational activities which highlighted the rich cultural heritage of Bangladesh. This year's special guest of honour was Mrs Momtaz Begum MP, a member of the Bangladesh Parliament, and the concluding ceremony was performed by well-known Bangladesh folk singer, "Empress of Folk." I acknowledge Bangabondhu Porishad Sydney Society Inc's President Dr Masudul Haque, and General Secretary and Convenor of the Festival Committee, M.D. Gausul Alam for their terrific work in organising this wonderful event.

#### **ROBERT "BOBBY" LOVELL**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)**—I pay tribute to Robert ("Bobby") Lovell, late of Kurnell, who passed away in May. Bobby was a Life Member of North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club, former President of Kurnell Community Sport and Recreation Club, and the 2018 Cronulla Senior of the Year. Over his many decades of service to North Cronulla SLSC, Bobby held numerous positions within the Senior and Nippers Sections, ranging from volunteer through to the board and executive level. Bobby also made outstanding contributions to Kurnell Public School. He is fondly remembered for his volunteering at school events and the maintenance of school grounds. Bobby ran garage sales and stalls, assisted with school fundraising efforts, drove the minibus and marked out tracks for sports carnivals. I extend my sincere sympathy to his wife Joan; children Tracey, Dianne and Craig; their partners Craig, Scott and Karen; and grandchildren Gabrielle, Harrison, Jordi, Tyler and Eli.

#### **BOER WAR DAY COMMEMORATION SERVICE IN NOWRA**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—On Sunday 29 May 2022, I was honoured to lay a tribute wreath at the Boer War Day Commemoration Service hosted by the Nowra RSL Sub-Branch in Rauch Park, Nowra. The Boer War was a conflict fought between the British Empire and the two Boer Republics over the Empire's influence in Southern Africa from 1899 to 1902. About 16,000 Australians fought in the Boer War and there were about 600 casualties and deaths. Six Australian soldiers were decorated with a Victoria Cross. I would like to acknowledge the Nowra RSL Sub-Branch President Mr Robert Grant who gave the welcome address, Chaplain Max Walker who delivered the opening prayer, Lt Matthew Sutcliffe who delivered the Prayer for Peace and Benediction, and Commodore Tim Rutherford RAN, Executive Officer from HMAS Albatross who delivered the Commemoration Address. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Nowra RSL Sub-Branch Secretary Debby Rayner, Vice-President Mr Barry Tait, and Bugler Peter Williams who performed the Last Post.

#### **TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF RAY THORBURN, OAM**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of NSW pays tribute to the life of Ray Thorburn OAM. Ray joined Kiama Rotary Club in 1976. He served as President in 1986-1986 and as Assistant District Governor of Rotary in 1986-1987 and as District Conference Governor in 1988. He also received a Paul Harris Fellow Award from Kiama Rotary Club in 1988 and an Order of Australia Medal in 1989 for his outstanding contribution to our local community. Ray served our local community strongly right up until his sad passing. He was a key member in the re-establishment of the Kiama Pipe Band in 2013, being a valued judge in Highland Games throughout NSW, and having an active participation in the Berry and Bundanoon Celtic Festivals. Ray Thorburn OAM was the embodiment of the motto 'service before self' and will be sorely missed and remembered by many in our local community. Rest in Peace Ray.

#### **CHILDREN'S MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE GERRINGONG COMMITTEE**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of NSW acknowledges the Children's Medical Research Institute – Gerringong Committee. They recently hosted a Mother's Day event and Fashion Parade to raise funds for research conducted at the Children's Medical Research Institute laboratories which is central to their cause. In 1959 when Gerringong resident Dorothy Bailey contracted rubella while pregnant, her son was born with a congenital heart problem which led her to meeting CMRI's founder Sir Lorimer Dods. When he asked her to return home and fundraise to establish a new research facility, dedicated to the welfare of children, she became passionate about the cause and that spirit still lives on today. In 2019, during their 60th year, the Gerringong Committee was nominated for a Kiama Council's Australia Day Community Group of the Year and were announced as winners at a ceremony at Gerringong Town Hall. I acknowledge and thank the Gerringong Committee President Rosalie Cronin and Secretary Lorraine Peade. I also thank the many small businesses and organisations in Gerringong who helped by generously donating many items.

#### **BELMONT CHRISTIAN COLLEGE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEADERS 2022**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)**—Today I acknowledge Jordan Bell, Joshua Dalgety, Holly Blowes and Ruby Henderson who have been elected as the Belmont Christian College Primary School 2022 school leaders. Jordan, Joshua, Holly and Ruby are all hard working students that have consistently shown their dedication to the Belmont Christian College Primary School community. Each of these students have been

involved in many school activities over the years and continuously strive to do their best in their studies and act as role models for their peers. Being elected as the Belmont Christian College Primary School leaders for 2022 is a testament to each of these students. I am sure they will carry out their new leadership roles with great pride and develop skills that they will find beneficial in the future. I congratulate Jordan, Joshua, Holly and Ruby on their achievement and wish them all the best for the year ahead.

#### **ANDREW KELSO**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)**—Today I acknowledge Andrew Kelso who received the Long Service Medal for completing 16 years of service as a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service Somersby, Kariong, Kurnell and Lake Munmorah Brigades. The NSW Rural Fire Service is that largest volunteer fire service in the world. For over a century, their volunteers have worked and trained to mitigate fire risks through comprehensive risk management programs and the development of regulations for bush fire prone areas. Andrew was awarded the medal at the Central Coast Volunteer Appreciation Day and District Medals Presentation last month, which was held to recognise the region's hard working firefighters who go above and beyond to ensure that the local community is protected against fire dangers and other hazards. I had the privilege of attending the award ceremony and it was great to see NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers, including Andrew being honoured in this way. I congratulate Andrew on receiving the Long Service Medal and thank him for his efforts to keep the people of the Central Coast safe.

#### **BRAYDEN BURGESS**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)**—Today I acknowledge Brayden Burgess of Belmont on being announced as the 2022 HIA Jim Brookes Australian Apprentice winner. Brayden is a 22 year old carpenter and has been working for PB Quality Constructions since he commenced his apprenticeship in 2017. Since then Brayden has consistently demonstrated his commitment and passion for carpentry through his high standard of workmanship and leadership skills. He has also taken on supervisory roles and completed a Certificate IV in Building Construction, as well as a Bachelor of Construction Management. The HIA Jim Brookes Australian Apprentice award celebrates the outstanding achievements of up-and-coming tradies, like Brayden, by recognising their trade knowledge and skills. I know that Brayden is a hard worker who is a deserving recipient of this award. I congratulate Brayden on being named the HIA Jim Brookes Australian Apprentice winner for 2022 and wish him all the best with his future endeavours.

#### **ALAN CRAMOND**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)**—I congratulate Caringbah South resident Alan Cramond on his 100th birthday on 20 May. Alan's story is one of generous and selfless contribution to his country and local communities. Alan played in lower grades for Western Suburbs Cricket Club in 1940-41. He enlisted in the Australian Army in December 1941. He went to New Guinea in July 1942 to fight the invading Japanese. Alan was wounded at Bougainville in early 1945. After recovering from his injuries, he was discharged from the Army in February 1946. Alan played for Central Cumberland (later Parramatta) from 1946-47 until 1968-69. In all grades, he took 612 wickets at an average of 18.13 and scored 4691 runs at 16.58 (highest score 94). Alan and his wife Jill moved to the Sutherland Shire in the 1970s. They ran a successful smallgoods distribution business for many years. From 1976 to 1988, Alan was President of Sutherland District Cricket Club. From 1988 to 2002, he was patron of the club. Alan is a Life Member of Parramatta and Sutherland clubs. He is much loved by the organisations he has served and holds a special place in the hearts of everyone at Sutherland District Cricket Club.

#### **INTERNATIONAL BALLERINA LILY BONES-GONSCAK OPENS SCHOOL OF DANCE ART IN HENTY**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I would like to acknowledge Lily Bones-Gonscak, a ballerina whose career has taken her from Lavington to international ballet companies and now to Henty. A former student of Murray High School in Lavington, Lily has now returned home to Australia, to teach the Royal Academy of Dance syllabus, offering classes to children and teenagers at the School of Dance Art in Henty. Lily's passion in dance began when she was only 7; she has danced for theatre productions and has performed for members of the British and Danish royal families as well as for the Prince of Monaco. Lily has also danced in the Royal New Zealand Ballet, and with the Chinese company Guangzhou Ballet where she danced in Swan Lake. For 18 years she has followed her passion for dance and now wants to play an instrumental role in the lives of young people who also aspire to dance. Welcome home Lily, and best wishes for your studio and students in Henty.

#### **MERCURE HOTEL ALBURY**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I would like to congratulate the team at the Mercure Hotel in Albury, for winning the 2022 national award for 'Travellers choice' sponsored by TripAdvisor. The award is a celebration

of businesses that have received a positive 'five-star' review from travellers in the last 12 months. Ranking takes place globally and takes into consideration the accommodation, quality of room service, customer service and restaurant dining. General Manager Adrian Yates, former GM Meagan Gardner and long term staff such as Vishnu Gaundewasr and the team have worked hard to create a hotel experience worthy of this award and national recognition. The hotel has been delivering beyond customers' expectations, emphasising how customers are welcomed and taken care of when staying at the hotel. Thank you to Adrian and staff for the impeccable service you are providing for visitors to Albury.

### **STARS OF THE BORDER DANCE FOR CANCER 2022**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—The 2022 Stars of the Border Dance for Cancer in Albury was a great success, with this year's fundraiser delivering a record breaking \$300,215 to fight cancer. This year's event marks the eighth such occasion for our cross-border community; and saw an egg farmer, radio presenter and dentist amongst the 12 border individuals strutting their stuff on the dance floor. Participants ranging from business leaders to community representatives undertake an eight week schedule working towards raising funds for Cancer, whilst learning various dance steps under the tutelage of local talented dance teachers. The event explodes into a gala night filled with spectacular fun, food, awards and performances. Funds raised go towards research, prevention, advocacy and programs such as Border Transport for Treatment, which is a free transport service available to eligible patients. A great result for our Border communities and well done to all those who supported the worthy event.

### **GAZA CHILDREN'S FUND**

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)**—I recognise the Gaza Children's Fund which is a not for profit organisation that was founded by a group of volunteers and social activists. This organisation supports disadvantaged Palestinian children, orphans, widows and families in need in Gaza. Among other things it supplies safe lighting, food vouchers, essential medicine vouchers, bedsheets and mattresses, and roofing. Granted the conditions in Gaza which I saw myself several years ago, such efforts are invaluable. They hold an annual event featuring a documentary about Palestine. This year's event was held on Saturday 5 March 2022 at the Bryan Brown theatre in Bankstown. This year the film was about the 2021 War in Gaza. The function also featured a number of speakers and a series of fundraising auctions to help raise funds for the organisation's activities. This organisation does good and important work and I'm happy to acknowledge it and its members.

### **EURO PATISSERIE**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—The Local Business Awards, run by Precedent Productions, were established in 1985 and currently see around 38,000 businesses nominated for an award annually. The awards are well respected and recognise successful and outstanding businesses in their local region. Euro Patisserie, located in New Lambton, were selected as the winner in their category of Outstanding Bakery/Cake Business in the 2021 Hunter Local Business Awards. The win showcases the talented team at Euro Patisserie, highlighting the standard and dedication they maintained during COVID-19 and follows on from them being finalists in 2020, and winners in 2019. Co-Directors Jennifer and Darren Smith worked together with their staff, altering their business model to suit the changing COVID-19 restrictions by offering meals and products more appropriate to takeaway. Euro Patisserie serves breakfast and lunch seven days a week, as well as their freshly baked pastries, desserts and their specialty, custom made cakes. Hats off to Jennifer, Darren and the team at Euro Patisserie, I applaud you for your award and for being such a versatile business.

### **BJL WELDING & FABRICATION**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—The Local Business Awards, run by Precedent Productions, were established in 1985 and currently see around 38,000 businesses nominated for an award annually. The awards are well respected and recognise successful and outstanding businesses in their local region. B JL Welding & Fabrication, located in Beresfield, were selected as the winner in their category of Outstanding Building Services in the 2021 Hunter Local Business Awards. The win acknowledges B JL Welding & Fabrication's quality workmanship and dedication to their clients, and shows the team that their hard work is paying off and that they are appreciated. Brad Lloyd founded B JL Welding & Fabrication in 2005 and has grown his company to a team of 15 highly skilled workers. The team is not only trained in their trade, but also in communication, conflict resolution and leadership programs, ensuring they have the necessary skills to exceed their client's expectations. The company specialise in structural steel and metalwork fabrication and installation, with their clients including commercial and residential builders, the government and the general public. Congratulations to Brad and the B JL Welding & Fabrication team on your win!

**IAN KIDD**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—March 21 marked the completion of Ian Kidd's charity ride from Lake Eyre to Mount Kosciuszko for local anti-domestic violence charity Got Your Back Sista. Starting on March 5, Ian made the 1770 kilometre ride, aiming to raise \$10,000. The ride took him 14 days, with only a slight navigational hitch on the latter half of the ride setting him back 56km. This was not Ian's first long-distance ride, but it was his first solo unsupported ride. He cycled between four to six hours a day in preparation for the charity ride. Ian managed to raise just over \$9000, providing much-needed funds for Got Your Back Sista to continue its work in supporting victims of domestic violence within the local community. I would like to congratulate Ian on both his fundraising efforts and also the effort of the ride itself. Cycling 1770 kilometres is no small feat, and the money he raised will provide support to those in need. I would also like to offer thanks to Got Your Back Sista for the important work they do in the local community.

**NERIDA REID**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I would like to recognise Nerida Reid of Hay for her extensive contributions to the Hay community and the change she has created in her town. Nerida's many contributions across local community groups cannot be understated, ranging from education, firefighting, and more. During Nerida's time as the P&F president for Hay War Memorial School, one of her most significant achievements was securing a school bus, ensuring children had more access to school excursions and transport. During this time, she was also a member of the Rural Fire Service, serving for 42 years, while simultaneously contributing to another 13 organisations. For her efforts, Nerida has received a myriad of awards, including Hay Shire Council's Australian of the year and receiving an Order of Australia Medal, and I am honoured to further recognise her contributions to her community. Congratulations Nerida, and I look forward to seeing your many contributions to come.

**COBY SMITH, TYRON ROSS-GARDEN AND KOBI BAXTER**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I would like to recognise Coby Smith, Tyron Ross-Garden and Kobi Baxter, proud Wamba Wamba Perrepa Perrepa young leaders, and the first students to undertake a local program aiming to build the skills and understanding to responsibly care for and work on country. The program, a collaboration between Deniliquin High School, TAFE NSW, Murray Local Land Services, NSW National Parks and the Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre, involves undertaking a Certificate II in Conservation and Ecosystem Management, and utilising these skills on Country. Being the first participants in the program, not only are they furthering their education, but they are supporting a program that can improve the outcomes and opportunities for young people, particularly Indigenous men. I would like to thank these organisations for their work in establishing this program, and I wish Coby, Tyron and Kobi the best of luck as they continue their work in their traineeship.

**KU-RING-GAI HERITAGE FESTIVAL**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)**—I acknowledge Ku-ring-gai Council for their initiative in continuing with Ku-ring-gai Heritage Festival, which ran from 18 April to 19 May and which included many of the natural and manmade features of my electorate of Davidson and the neighbouring Ku-ring-gai electorate. The Heritage Festival for this year included a diverse range of sights and activities, including photographic local history displays, a family history short course, an introduction by prolific author Peter Fitzsimons of his new book on the Sydney Opera House and a tour of historic "Woodlands", home of Ethel Turner and recent recipient of a historic state government Blue Plaque. I spoke at the Woodlands Open Day on Sunday 15 May and was impressed by the dedication of the owners Albert and Eva Lim who have been faithfully restoring parts of the house to the time when Turner lived there. The festival highlighted the many natural and social features of the Ku-ring-gai LGA. It is also very pleasing to see the council focus strongly on the indigenous heritage of the area with presentations and bush tucker walks through the magnificent Wildflower Garden in St Ives. I commend Ku-ring-gai Council and all those involved on this initiative.

**MAHBOBA'S PROMISE IFTAR FUNDRAISER**

**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 Mahboba's Promise for hosting me at their iftar fundraiser on 15 April. Mahboba's Promise is an Australian charity dedicated to raising funds for projects in Afghanistan that support orphans and widows as well as refugees in Australia. It is an honour to be part of their community. I thank Mahboba Rawi 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 help one another. Eid Mubarak.

#### **MICHAEL BOWMAN**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I recognise President Michael Bowman of Port Macquarie Race Club who is preparing to retire from the position after serving 36 years as a stalwart Member since moving to the area in 1986. Michael Bowman is widely known as an icon of the local racing industry after his determined efforts to revitalise the complex, address an aging membership and transform the events program. Today, the organisation is a shadow of the former facility with the construction of a new grandstand facility and new day stalls. Michael will call it quits at the next Annual General Meeting when a new President is appointed and is looking forward to taking a backseat at the upcoming 2022 Port Macquarie Cup Carnival scheduled for 7-8 October 2022. After a tough couple of years, the Port Macquarie Race Club are excited to host again their annual Cup Carnival with up to \$500,000 in prize money offered on the Friday and \$168,000 on the Saturday, with fifteen races on the program. An extraordinary achievement by a man passionate about improving and innovating the local racing industry in Port Macquarie. I thank Michael for his contribution and wish him well for the future.

#### **HARRINGTON LITTLE ATHLETICS RESULTS**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—Today I congratulate the award recipients of Harrington Little Athletics who were honoured at the Annual Gala Presentation Evening held on 7th May 2022 at Club Harrington. Harrington was able to celebrate a season of triumphs for its junior athletes recognising those participants who dominated the field and track events and excelled in effort and dedication over the past year. Today I acknowledge the winners who performed superbly and achieved impressive milestones in the 2021-2022 sporting season. In the Junior category Skylah Peters was awarded Champion, while Summer Lindsay placed 2nd and Spencer Benjamin a commendable 3rd. In the Intermediate section Gracie Farrell was crowned Champion, while Lily Palmer achieved 2nd place and Isla Duncan a deserving 3rd ranking. The Senior accolades were awarded to Dakota Leach who took out Champion, with Evelyn Eyles securing 2nd place and Lilyana Wade a well-deserved 3rd position. I applaud the Club Champions Evelyn Eyles and Makayla Saunders who were standout performers and team role models. Makayla was also honoured with the prestigious Hall of Fame shield for her longstanding commitment as an Under 13 competitor and more recently an Under 17 participant. Congratulations.

#### **TREK4KIDZ**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—Today I acknowledge Hastings Valley Vikings legend Teale Bryan for participating in the Trek4Kidz fundraiser for the Starlight Foundation. Embarking on a journey from Inverell to Coonabarabran, Cobar, Broken Hill, Griffith and concluding in Goulburn, the Rugby Union stalwart is hoping to coordinate a fundraising storm to support the tremendous efforts of Captain Starlight and his team who strive to brighten up a child's day in hospital. Rallying behind Teale's cause, the Hastings Valley Vikings versus Coffs Harbour Sappers Upper Mid North Coast Rugby Union match was held on June 4th with teammates and rivals raising valuable funds towards the trek. The Trek4Kidz fundraiser began in 1997 by a modest group of like-minded people from Tuross Head in NSW, all focused on changing the lives of sick children through social activity, charitable work and a passion for traveling Australia. Today, the Trek has visited 470 towns, 55 schools and raised over \$2,254,190 for the Starlight Foundation. On 20th August Teale will commence the Trek in NSW with loving thoughts of his niece who sadly has a history of ill health and hospital visitations. I wish Teale all the best in his fundraising efforts.

#### **LAKEMBA RSL-SUB BRANCH - ANZAC DAY**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)**—Every year I join my community at the Lakemba War Memorial to commemorate the sacrifice of the ANZACs. It is always powerful joining the Lakemba RSL Sub-Branch for their ANZAC Day service, listening to veterans' stories, laying a wreath and paying tribute. It was beautiful to see the community come together for such an important commemoration. Councillor Karl Saleh, Reverend Ken Fisher, Auntie Lyn Martin, Reverend Graham Watson, Reverend Viliame Bolabiu, Students from St Therese Catholic Primary School, Holy Spirit Catholic College and Wiley Park Girls High School joined in the march from Lakemba Club to the War Memorial. Built in 1953 the Lakemba War Memorial commemorates all Lakemba veterans. The commemorative column was specifically designed to look broken to remind us of the ANZACs' sacrifice for future generations of Australia, even when it left so many men and women broken. I want to acknowledge the President of Lakemba RSL Sub-Branch, Ann Garland OAM, and Secretary of Lakemba RSL Sub-Branch, Tim McCaw, for ensuring that ANZAC Day Services is always a moving commemoration. Thank you to the community who came to pay tribute to the many brave men and women who served our nation.

### PREMIER'S IFTAR DINNER

**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 Minister for Multiculturalism for hosting me at the Premier's Iftar Dinner on 12 April. I'm so pleased that an event commenced years ago by Bob Carr is continuing to thrive. It represents the best of bipartisanship and our community. I thank Minister Mark Coure for the invitation and for his attendance at so many other community iftars. 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.

### DAVID DELANY - FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD 2022

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)**—I wish to congratulate Pastor David Delany of the Salvation Army, who has been named as one of the recipients of the Fairfield Electorate Community Service Award for 2022. Pastor David is no stranger to Fairfield as he was the head of the Salvation Army Church at Wakeley for many years. He has always been a driving force for good in our community, supporting local residents through tough times. David's church is always on hand to assist all local residents, never turning away anyone who needs assistance. David's work in helping the community was born out of his experience as a refugee from Sierra Leone, truly understanding the pressures facing people every day. The presentation of the Fairfield Electorate Community Service Award was a bittersweet moment as David has now moved to the St George district to assist the community at the Hurstville Salvation Army Church. On behalf of the Fairfield community I congratulate and wish David and his family well and thank him for his service to the local Fairfield and South Western Sydney community.

### ITALIAN NATIONAL BALL 2022

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)**—After a two year absence the Italian National Ball was hosted by Co.As.It. in Sydney on Saturday 28th May 2022. Co.As.It. is the pre-eminent Italian social welfare agency in NSW providing care to ageing Italians, bilingual classes to students and social support to the community. This year's ball was extra special with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese making his first address at a community event. Also presented to the PM was a framed Italian flag in recognition of his Italian heritage and his election as the first Australian PM of Italian-Irish heritage. The night was also a chance to raise funds for Bowel Cancer awareness and research. Co.As.It will be assisting NSW Health and the Federal Government in spreading awareness and educating the Italian and wider community about the impacts of Bowel Cancer. I would like to acknowledge Co.As.It CEO Mr Thomas Camporeale, Chairman Mr Lorenzo Fazzini, Board of Directors, Staff and volunteers for their commitment and work in the Italian community. I congratulate the Italian National Ball organisers for hosting a wonderful event.

### VERONA COMMUNITY DAY

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)**—On Tuesday 31 May 2022, I attended Verona School Community Day, a day in which parents, careers, friends, and school staff gathered to celebrate the fantastic achievements of students and members of the Verona community. The event included an array of delicious food from various cultural backgrounds, games, activities and even a mechanical bull. I was fortunate enough to present both the Student Leadership Council Representative Certificates and the Community Service Awards on the day. The recipients of the Community Service Awards included Glenn Clarke - Police Liaison Officer, Tony Corelli - Store Manager Woolworths Chester Hill, and Jodie Rinkin - Community Liaison Officer Bunnings Warehouse. The award acknowledged and thanked the recipients for their dedication and support to the Verona School. I also spoke with Ms Soula Stillianesis about the very generous donations the school receives from organisations including Good360 Australia, Woolworths, Bunnings, OzHarvest, and Bakers Delight. The event highlighted the warmth and strength of our community. I commend Principal, Carla Scott, and school staff for organising this event and for their tireless dedication in shaping our young people.

### PENRITH 2022 SENIORS FESTIVAL

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney)**—It was my pleasure to present four seniors with Local Achievement Awards as part of the recent 2022 NSW Seniors Festival. Recipients included: Valentina Nadj for volunteer service to York Public School, Frank Portelli for service to the Penrith community through the RSL & Rotary, Jennifer Hotop for service to the Penrith Regional Gallery and Terry King for service to the Nepean Blue

Mountains Parkinson's Support Group. Frank, Valentina, Terry and Jennifer display the qualities of seniors who make our region such an inspirational place to live and I thank them for their generous contributions.

#### **SHELLHARBOUR CITIZENS OF THE YEAR - LAURIE BOYLE AND RYAN SCHEU**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to extend my congratulations to the two Warilla residents who were honoured for their contributions to the community at the Shellharbour City Council Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year Awards on January 26th. Laurie Boyle was announced as citizen of the year, commended for his activities with Warilla Barrack Point Surf Life Saving Club through many roles including secretary and volunteer lifesaver and helping to develop junior club members. In 2021, Laurie spent time supporting cancer research funding and providing care and support to other members of the community who were struggling with illness, the pandemic, or other adversity. Ryan Scheu was announced as young Citizen of the year; he was Warilla High School captain and involved in many events and campaigns at the school, including the return and earn program, where he and his team raised money for school improvements. As a blue belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and black belt in Taekwondo, Ryan is a leader to others in sport, and was praised as a fantastic role model for the students of Warilla High School. Congratulations again to Laurie and Ryan!

#### **2021 HSC HIGH ACHIEVERS**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to all students who completed their Higher School Certificate at the end of 2021 and recently received their results. These students faced huge adversity throughout their senior years, having to complete the majority of their year 11 and 12 studies online. Each and every student should be commended on their efforts and the resilience they showed to be able to complete these difficult schooling years and the final exams that followed. In particular, I'd like to recognise Corpus Christi Catholic High School students Caitlin Daly and Cameron Deguara who were recognised as "All-Round Achievers", receiving marks of 90 or higher in all subjects; a truly outstanding achievement. Another fantastic result came from Dapto High School, with recent graduate Ashley Donovan being named as a top achiever, coming 16th in the state in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. What fantastic results from these young adults in my electorate. Congratulations again to Caitlin, Cameron and Ashley on your outstanding efforts, along with every student who received their HSC results recently. I look forward to seeing what the future holds for you all.

#### **COMMUNITY HERO**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)**—Community Hero awards celebrate the work of volunteers who contribute to their local communities. On Monday this week I handed a Community Hero award to Gay Balasubramanian of East Killara. Gay helps with the Crime Update eNewsletter distributed by Ku-ring-gai & Hornsby Neighbourhood Watch and has been sharing the role of its Joint Coordinator since May 2021. Gay also helps with quarterly meetings, online issues and other behind-the-scenes jobs. She regularly turns up to crime prevention stalls at community events and represents her local Neighbourhood Watch at Community Safety Precinct Committee meetings at Hornsby Police Station. Gay is an IT professional who uses her skills to prepare the weekly newsletter and maintain the website. She is known as a loving and caring person who wants to keep her community safe. I commend her for the valuable contribution she makes to our local community through Neighbourhood Watch.

#### **UPPER HUNTER FINALISTS - 2022 NSW WOMEN IN MINING AWARDS**

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter)**—The NSW Women in Mining Awards will this month celebrate women and gender diversity champions from across the industry including four Hunter Valley finalists. I congratulate Ebony Ford, Samar Obeid, Michelle Eckersley and Rebecca Jackson on being contenders for the awards. BHP Mt Arthur Coal has Ebony Ford among the four finalists in the Outstanding Trade, Operator or Technician Award and is represented by Samar Obeid in the Exceptional Young Woman Award. Ebony, who grew up in Singleton, is a qualified High Voltage Electrician at Mt Arthur. Samar, a production engineer at Mt Arthur, emigrated from war-torn Lebanon to Australia just 12 years ago and has subsequently excelled professionally and personally including through community volunteer work. Michelle Eckersley, who is employed by Thiess as Environment and Community Officer at the Mount Pleasant Operation, is a finalist in the Technological Innovation Award for mine site rehabilitation. Yancoal Australia's Exploration Manager, Rebecca Jackson, is an Exceptional Woman Award finalist for recruiting women to mining, including taking time to mentor and advise young women candidates. The NSW Women in Mining Awards winners will be announced on Thursday 23 June.

#### **SINGLETON FIRELIGHT FESTIVAL 2022**

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter)**—I congratulate Singleton Council on the success of this year's Singleton Firelight Festival which was supported by the NSW Government's Regional Events Acceleration Fund.

The free, ticketed event was held over nine nights during May 14-22 attracting a record crowd of over 23,000 people. More than 5,000 people turned out on the opening weekend to launch the festival. The Firewalk lighting spectacular in Cook Park offered a unique lighting spectacular that combined hologram and immersive laser light displays. Celebrating the diversity and creativity of the Singleton area it recognised the local horticultural and viticulture heritage, the association with the School of Infantry and the vibrant arts scene. Firelight After Dark was the main event of the Firelight Festival. It featured vibrant fire performers and live entertainment, attractions for kids and teenagers including stilt walkers, illuminated giant puppets and neon street games. World-renowned lighting experts, Laservision, produced laser and light show installations including projections of artwork by local Wanaruah artist Debbie Becker. Singleton Council is already keen to stage Firelight in 2023 and I wish the organisers well in their efforts to make the festival a signature annual event for the Upper Hunter electorate.

#### **ASHFIELD LOCAL POWERLIFTERS TO REPRESENT AUSTRALIA INTERNATIONALLY**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)**—Congratulations to Chris Aslan, Pei Boccanfuso and Viola Jokudu – powerlifters from the Ashfield gym, Alpha Athletes – who will be representing Australia at the International Powerlifting Federation World Championships in Sun City, South Africa. The competition will be taking place from 6 to 11 June and will see the world's most elite athletes come together to prove their strength. Australia will be sending a total of nine athletes to the World Championships – three of which have been training in the same gym here in the Inner West. Chris Aslan, who runs Alpha Athletes in Ashfield, will be representing Australia in the men's 105kg category. Pei Boccanfuso and Viola Jokudu, two fellow powerlifters training under Chris at the Ashfield gym will compete in the women's under-52kg and under-69kg categories respectively. At Alpha Athletes, all three powerlifters have been consistently pushing their physical limits in the three lifts that will be judged in South Africa next week: squat, bench press, and deadlift. The Ashfield athletes show great promise and all of us across the Inner West wish them all the best for the World Championships.

#### **MUSIC TOGETHER: DROP-IN PLAYGROUP FOR INNER WEST KIDS**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)**—Children of the Inner West still have the opportunity to participate in the Music Together Playgroup that will be running every week until 29 June at the Plumtree Children's Services in Jarvie Park, Marrickville. The musical drop-in sessions take place weekly from 10am to 10:45am on Wednesdays and are aimed to assist children ages 3-5 years who live with disability, developmental delay or who are neurodivergent. The Playgroup is facilitated by experienced music specialist, Dr Amanda Niland, and also run by early childhood teacher, Daniel Rose who have harnessed singing, playing instruments, dancing and storytelling to help develop early childhood social play skills. The program has been running since 4 May, and has given many Inner West kids the opportunity to build confidence and explore new communication styles through musical creativity. To help support children and their families, Music Together welcomes the involvement of parents, grandparents and siblings in these weekly play sessions. It has proven to be a great opportunity for a whole family affair. Thank you to Plumtree, Dr Amanda Niland and Daniel Rose for this fantastic contribution to the Inner West community.

#### **SMALL FRY ROCK: JOSH PYKE AND MATTHEW TOW**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)**—On Sunday 29 May, music-loving parents were able to take their kids out to a special family-friendly concert at Marrickville's own cultural hub, The Great Club. Multi-ARIA Award winning artist Josh Pyke as well as multi-instrumentalist Matthew J. Tow played an acoustic show that was enjoyed by both parents and children alike. During an up-close performance with the artists, Pyke and Tow took song requests from the crowd. Throughout the night, those in attendance of the Inner West venue rocked out to some family-friendly classics like Crocodile Rock and Humpty Dumpty. The concert was a part of the tour series, Small Fry Rock which has set out to host gigs around Australia that reconnect busy parents to their love of music in a child-friendly environment. Congratulations to both Josh Pyke and Matthew J. Tow, as well as the organisers of Small Fry Rock for inspiring a new generation of kids in the Inner West to love live music.

#### **MR AND MRS IDEMA'S 68TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

**Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)**—I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr John and Mrs Wilhelmina Idema of Sutherland on their 68th Wedding Anniversary which was celebrated on 5th June 2022. 68 years of marriage is a wonderful milestone and I hope they enjoyed their anniversary. I wish them many more years of fun, enjoyment, happiness and good health.

#### **KITCH AND SONS**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)**—It is the end of an era in Wellington, with Kitch & Sons closing its doors after more than century. It was first established as a sulky business by Arthur Soloman Kitch in 1906. Over the years there's been many iterations: A Kitch & Sons sold wagons and transport materials in Maughan Street; under Arthur Harold Junior it evolved

into a second-hand furniture store; after 1925 they added giftware and hardware, and the saying around town was "if Kitch's don't have it, no-one will!" By the 1970s there were seven other hardware stores in town – nevertheless Kitch's became Wellington's go-to for all things hardware! Craig took over in 1995, and the store continued to go from strength to strength. Sadly, 20 years ago Craig was diagnosed with Parkinson's, and now he and wife Tanya are starting their well-earned retirement. The couple closed the doors for the last time on May 26 after 116 years of trading. I know it must be devastating for the Kitch's to say goodbye after over a century in business, but they should be incredibly proud of the contribution their family has made to the Wellington community over generations.

### WELLINGTON REPATRIATION

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)**—The remains of four Aboriginal ancestors have finally been laid to rest on Country, after being returned to the Wellington Aboriginal community. An emotional, traditional burial ceremony completed the repatriation process for 13 ancestral remains ... that were taken from the area from the late 1800s to the 1970s. In 2015, the Wellington Local Aboriginal Land Council and Heritage NSW requested the return of several sets of remains from the Australia Museum. In reality, the fight's gone on far longer than that. But now they're home. Local elder Uncle Barry Smith called the repatriation "the greatest thing that's ever happened to Wellington". "Our ancestors should not have been taken", he said, "but we can now finally lay them to rest". Many people have been involved in this decade's long fight – too many to name – but I do want to acknowledge just a few of them: Elders Uncle Barry Smith, Aunt Ursula Semmler, Uncle William Stanley and Uncle Paul West; From the Land Council: Tara Stanley, Lance Kerr, Talisa Stanley and Brendon Brindley; Local community member Jackson Togo; Heritage NSW and the Wellington Caves. Thank you for bringing these ancestors home.

### ILLAWONG PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)**—I congratulate the newly elected leadership team of Illawong Public School on their appointment. Illawong Public School is home to an incredible group of bright and diligent students. Led by new Principal Sarah Hillyer, students have launched themselves into learning new skills and have enjoyed many school events including the school cross country carnival, Mother's Day morning tea and the DisGLOW Disco Party where students were able to show off their favourite dance moves. Leading by example is the 2022 leadership team who truly embody the values that make Illawong Public School such a wonderful place to learn and grow. I congratulate School Captains Rhys and Maria, Vice Captains Matthew and Anisa, Prefect Lachlan as well as House Captains Mitchell, Isabella, Oliver, Dalia, Jackson, Emma, Lewis, Summer, Bailey, Sienna, Anthony, Caitlin, Jake, Louina, Cody and Chloe. To be elected by your peers is an incredible achievement of which these students should be proud, and I look forward to seeing the opportunities they embrace throughout the year. I commend the student leaders from Illawong Public School on their success and extend my best wishes for the 2022 school year.

### MENAI HIGH SCHOOL

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)**—I congratulate the newly elected leadership team of Menai High School on their appointment. Established in 1988, Menai High School prides itself on the wide range of subjects offered including their unique learning programs that reflect the area's rural background. Led by Relieving Principal Ekbal Sayed-Rich, 2022 has offered many exciting opportunities for students including the school cross country carnival, the World's Greatest Shave and Feel Good Friday's which involves each year group and the SRC to implement a well-being event for the entire school during lunch times. Leading by example is the 2022 leadership team who truly embody the values that have made Menai High School the incredible learning environment it is. I congratulate School Captains Jorja Paes and Andre Ferreira and Vice Captains Hannah Barrie, Grace Hawksworth, Jaylen Chasle and Jack Ellery. To be elected by your peers is an incredible achievement of which these students should be proud, and I look forward to seeing the opportunities they embrace throughout the year. I commend the student leaders from Menai High School on their success and extend my best wishes for the 2022 school year.

### SYDNEY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)**—I acknowledge six talented young musicians in the Miranda electorate who have been selected in Sydney Youth Orchestras' 2022 program. Sydney Youth Orchestras is the largest youth orchestral training organisation in Australia and the only program which supports musicians from beginner to professional level. Since 1973, Sydney Youth Orchestras have provided a pathway for over 6,000 young musicians to connect, create and champion orchestral music. Our six young locals join 530 of the finest musicians aged 6 to 24 and from across NSW. I take this opportunity to congratulate these brilliant young musicians for achieving a place in Sydney Youth Orchestras' 2022 program. I recognise Alexandra Drury, Emma Faulkes and Hayden Lewis of Como, Edmund Huang of

Sylvania, and James McNaughton and Mason Fok of Kareela for this incredible achievement. I extend my best wishes to these bright individuals as they embark on this exciting musical journey.

#### **SOUTHERN NSW REGION DRAGON BOAT TEAM**

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)**—I would like to recognise and congratulate five members of the Merimbula Water Dragons and seven members of Moruya's Nature Coast Dragon Boat Club who recently competed in the Australian Dragon Boat Championships as part of the Southern NSW Region Team. The AusChamps is an annual event held in a different state or territory each year, with this rapidly growing sport attracting approximately 2500-3000 competitors to this one event alone. Competing at the National Championships against teams from all over the country, the Southern NSW Region team swept to glory in the 1km pursuit event claiming the gold medal. The team also fought hard and secured bronze medals racing in the Women's 10s 500m and the Mixed 20s 500m events. I congratulate all members of the Southern NSW Region Team and especially those hailing from the Bega electorate on a fantastic result.

#### **SENIOR CONSTABLE MARK DAWES (RETD.)**

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)**—I would like to recognise and congratulate the service of Senior Constable Mark Dawes of the Batemans Bay Police Station for his 35 years of service to the community and the South Coast district. S/Cst Dawes served his last day with the Batemans Bay and South Coast Police District last month receiving a fitting farewell with Commander of Traffic South, Superintendent Joe Thone, describing S/Cst Dawes as a mentor for those who had joined the force over his many years. S/Cst Dawes has amassed numerous complimentary remarks and commendations for his exemplary driving and professionalism during his service, including the Commissioner's Commendation for courage shown during a siege at Mogo in the 1990s. After joining the force in 1988, S/Cst Dawes made the move to Highway Patrol in 1997 as a founding member in Batemans Bay where he saw out the rest of his career assisting to keep motorists safe across the Eurobodalla. On behalf of the Bega electorate we thank you for your service and wish you best for your retirement.

#### **SOUTH COAST COMMUNITY KITCHEN**

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)**—On behalf of the Bega Electorate, I would like to recognise the important work being done by Moruya local, Ms Sarah O'Riley and the group of community volunteers at South Coast Community Kitchen. For the past 3 years Ms O'Riley has been providing a lifeline to those in our community by offering free meals to those most in need. After bringing Moruya Street Kitchen to life at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (which formed the model for the SCCK), Ms O'Riley has continued to service low-income households in Batemans Bay and Moruya by delivering much needed food packages with the help of the Second-Bite program. Along with volunteers Lisa Newman and Ray Howell, the organisation currently delivers to over 35 families a week, giving them access to not only fresh and healthy food but also food education. Thank you to Ms O'Riley and all the South Coast Community Kitchen volunteers for their great work in supporting our most vulnerable. I congratulate this fantastic initiative helping those in the Bega Electorate.

#### **JOHN 'JACK' KEOUGH**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—Today I recognise the exceptional career and service to our community by John 'Jack' Keough, who recently marked 50 years of service as a NSW Police Officer. Sergeant Keough began his career in 1972 at the Redfern Academy in Sydney before transferring to Juneee in 1976. He moved to Byron Bay in 1982 and has remained there to this day, serving the people of the Tweed Byron Police District. Reaching a 50-year mark as a police officer is an outstanding and rare achievement – all the more remarkable for the fact that Jack's service has been as a fully operational frontline general duties officer. This is believed to be an unprecedented record, and one that is unlikely ever to be matched. Jack has served under 12 police commissioners and 16 NSW premiers, and has seen a lot of changes over his career. Jack's commitment to the people of the region has been marked by professionalism, decency and community spirit. He has set an exceptional example for his fellow officers, and I wish him every joy and happiness in his retirement.

#### **MERINO BREWERY**

**Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)**—Congratulations to Merino Brewery in Narellan who was recently awarded a Bronze Medal at the Australian International Beer Awards. The Australian International Beer Awards is the worlds largest annual beer competition with over 2,600 entries received from more than 350 exhibitors in 19 countries. Merino Brewery won Bronze for their Cream Ale, Draught in the " Other Speciality Beer" class. This is an incredible achievement for Merino Brewery after only 12 weeks into business. Congratulations once again, and I wish you continued success in your business and in the Australian International Beer Awards next year.

### THOMAS GRICE

**Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)**—A well-deserved congratulations to Cobbitty resident Thomas Grice who recently picked up a Gold Medal for Australia at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Grand Prix in Granada, Spain. Thomas had an incredibly dominant performance in his qualification round shooting a near perfect 124/125. Thomas secured himself a spot in the semi-final where he scored 24/25 to finish first place qualifying for the medal match. Thomas shot 31/33 in the final to secure the Gold Medal, beating Spain and Sweden for the glory. His form did not stop there, Thomas was also part of The Australian Men's Shooting Team which the next day scored a Silver Medal at the ISSF. Congratulations Thomas.

### WORLD BUTCHERS' CHALLENGE

**Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)**—Congratulations to Prydes Meats Narellan butcher Brett Laws who was one of six selected for Team Australia in the World Butchers' Challenge to be held in California in September. The Aussies will go up against 14 other countries in the tournament. The meat maestros will have three hours and 15 mins to make as many top-quality products as they can from half a body of beef, two lambs, half a pig and eight chickens. The team holds practice runs beforehand to prepare for the MasterChef-like pressure of the event which will be held at an NBA Stadium in Sacramento. Congratulations once again Brett and I wish you all the best of luck as you and Team Australia prepare for the World Butchers' Challenge.

### SOPHIE FLETCHER

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I recognise Sophie Fletcher. Sophie is a new graduate Social Worker at Orange Health Service. Within her first year, Sophie identified areas for capacity building for the Social Work team, sought out professional development and apply for grants to provide the required training. Sophie possesses a thoughtful and considered attitude towards clients and their carer's, and is respected as a highly competent professional, due to her ethical approach to practice and respectful multidisciplinary and holistic care. Sophie is kind, caring and compassionate in her approach to patient care and to those with whom she comes into contact in the course of her work. Sophie was nominated for the NSW Health Excellence in Allied Health Awards 2021. The annual Awards exemplify the wonderful contributions allied health deliver every day in NSW Health, and recognise excellence in practice, education, research and leadership. Sophie was named a finalist in the Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year category, along with a speech pathologist from Murrumbidgee, a radiographer from Nepean Blue Mountains and a psychologist from Sydney. Earlier this year Sophie was named winner of her category. I congratulate Sophie on this outstanding award and wish her well for a bright career.

### FAITH GREEN

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I wish to recognise Miss Faith Green, of Goonumbla. 16-year-old Faith has been riding since she was a young girl, transitioning from Pony Club to western pleasure riding with the popular Quarter Horse breed, finding her passion in this equestrian discipline. Faith and her Quarter Horse, named Storm, travelled to Tamworth before Easter for the National Western Pleasure Riding Titles. Faith and her mount took out their hunt seat equitation class in the novice youth category, and Faith was named in the Australian Quarter Horse Youth Team squad for their next big event - the Trans-Tasman Challenge. Faith achieved her first blue ribbon at the Australian Quarter Horse Association National Championship Show on Storm, a horse which her family bred and which she trained herself. The Green family have supported Faith's passion for horse riding and her competitive pursuits; developing their Quarter Horse bloodline to complement Faith's horsemanship and riding talents. I congratulate Faith on her recent sporting accomplishments and on being named in the Australian Quarter Horse Youth Team representative squad in the upcoming Trans-Tasman Challenge. I wish her the best of luck and I look forward to seeing her riding career and horse breeding endeavours flourish.

### GLENN WALKER - NSW GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—It was great to visit Girraween Public School on Thursday 2nd June to present its former Principal Glenn Walker with a NSW Government Community Service Award for his contributions to Girraween Public School and the wider community. Glenn started at Girraween Public School in January 2012 and Retired in September 2021. During his time at Girraween PS the school population grew from 745 students to 1330. At Girraween Public School Glenn promoted a culture of high expectations and achievement for all students. Under Glenn's strong leadership, the school provided future focused learning in a diverse and growing population. He created an optimal learning environment where every student is known, cared, and valued. He sustained strong community confidence and worked in partnership with parents to create a shared vision of high aspiration and excellence. Through culturally inclusive practices he ensured every student is engaged and challenged to continue to learn, to thrive and succeed, and to achieve their educational potential to become responsible citizens. Congratulations to Glenn Walker on receiving this award. You are truly a worthy recipient of this award and an asset to our community.

**NSW POLICE FORCE COMMISSIONER KAREN WEBB - ROTARY CLUB OF SYDNEY  
HONORARY AWARD**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—I would like to offer our community's and my personal congratulations to NSW Police Force Commissioner Karen Webb on being awarded honorary membership of the Rotary Club of Sydney on Tuesday 31st May. Commissioner Webb has served as the Commissioner of the NSW Police since November 2021. She is the first woman to hold the position of NSW Police Force Commissioner in the history of our state. Commissioner Webb has previously served as the Deputy State Emergency Controller and worked closely with the emergency service agencies during the bushfires, floods and COVID-19 pandemic. She has also served on the State Rescue Board. Given Commissioner Webb's experience and commitment working with emergency services, it is therefore fitting that she has been awarded this honorary membership by the Rotary Club of Sydney. This is because the Rotary Club is an organisation which acknowledges the hard work of our emergency service workers. Congratulations again to NSW Police Force Commissioner Webb. Thank you for your service to our community, both in Western Sydney and across NSW. I look forward to further working with you in the future.

**THANUJ DIVI - YOUTH PARLIAMENT MEMBER FOR PROSPECT**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—I would like to offer our community's and my personal congratulations to Thanuj Divi, for being selected as the YMCA Youth Parliament Member the Electorate of Prospect. The NSW Youth Parliament is an empowerment and advocacy program that provides a platform for young people to have their voices heard through legislative debate and decision making. Aimed at young people in years 10, 11 and 12 or equivalent age throughout the state, Youth Parliament highlights the power of young people speaking on issues that are important to them. Thanuj is a year 11 student at Parramatta High School who is involved in a number of other leadership programs in our Western Sydney community. I met with him in my Electorate Office on 1st June to give him advice for this role. It is so good to see that Thanuj is passionate about politics and representing our community at such a young age. Congratulations again to Thanuj on your new role representing our Electorate. I am sure you will do a fantastic job and I look forward to seeing you become a successful community leader.

**JOHN MCKENNA**

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)**—I offer my congratulations and thanks to John McKenna on his upcoming retirement. John has been the Chief Executive Officer of North Coast Community Housing (NCCH) for more than 12 years and he has done a fantastic job in a very important, but difficult area. During this time, John has continued to ensure that the number of affordable community housing properties has continued to grow to more than 1,000 properties and this has allowed NCCH to provide secure and affordable housing for more than 5,000 people. John has been a fierce advocate with all levels of government to improve the amount of housing available to the community and it is through his leadership that we have seen the amount of social housing slowly increase. I wish John a long and happy retirement and my sincere thanks for his advocacy for those less fortunate within the community.

**DRUMMOYNE WOMAN OF THE YEAR 07 JUNE 2022**

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne)**—I would like to congratulate the 2022 Drummoyne Woman of the Year, Ms Marie Piccin. Marie is a treasured and respected member of my local community, always willing to lend a hand and passionate about helping others. Marie owned and operated Angelo's on the Bay restaurant in Cabarita for many years, a successful family business. She is a current committee member of the Majors Bay Chamber of Commerce, and a current board member of the Foundation for a Bloody Great Cause, raising funds for world-leading blood cancer trials at Concord Hospital. She also supports the St Patrick's Mortlake Parish as a serving committee member and organises local community events. Congratulations Marie - a truly worthy recipient.

**BINGARA YOUTH WEEK 2022**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise Bilsborough Bus Service, Wades Horses, Robyn Phillips at the Roxy Theatre, and Bingara Lions Club for their support and contribution to Youth Week and young people across the Gwydir Shire. Youth Services Co-ordinator Chloe Taylor organised transport, a fabulous two hour horse ride along the Gwydir River followed by a picnic lunch and games on the picturesque riverbank. The day finished at the Roxy Theatre where participants were treated to a movie with all the trimmings, popcorn, lollies, and a drink. This was truly a fun day to remember made possible by the community involvement so characteristic of the Northern Tablelands. I congratulate Chloe on the success of Youth Week 2022 at Bingara. I commend Bilsborough Bus Service, Wades Horses, the Roxy Theatre, and Bingara Lions Club for their interest in young people and reinforcing the message that young people matter.

### THINKING OF OUR FELLOW FARMERS FLOOD APPEAL

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise Colin Say & Company and the NSW Farmers Glen Innes Branch for organising the Thinking of our Fellow Farmers Flood Appeal. It is hoped that the \$5 dollar donation for every head of cattle yarded plus the donations from individual cattle farmers and brokers will reach the \$40,000 goal to support flood affected farmers in the Northern Rivers. Agent Shad Bailey was happy to take a donation from Sally and Gordon Wollen who "didn't give a second thought" to donate their full steer to the flood appeal. During the extended drought regional communities supported each other. Now that the coast has endured too much rain, Northern Tablelands farmers who have experienced top cattle prices are eager to give back to their coastal cousins. I congratulate Colin Say & Company and the NSW Farmers-Glen Innes Branch for the overwhelming response to their flood appeal. I commend Northern Tablelands farmers for their compassion and generosity towards other farmers which encompasses a generosity of spirit generally.

### THE ARMIDALE SCHOOL - ROWING SQUADS

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise the rowing crews at The Armidale School for their excellent performances at the NSW Rowing Schoolgirl/Schoolboy Head of the River event in Sydney. After a season of postponements the event finally took place relocating the championships from the Sydney International Regatta Centre to the Parramatta River at Iron Cove and changing the distance from 2000 metres to 1680 metres. In spite of the challenges double scullers Isabella Crawford and Matilda Cullen were awarded a medal being the first Year 10 TAS girls to compete at a Head of the River. Cox Emma Benham, Zara Sherwood, Jemina Thibault, Noushi Byrne, Sofia Paris came third in the final of the Schoolgirl Coxed Quad. Congratulations to Alexander Zuber, Stirling Munsie, Fred Kearney, Louis Ross and cox Eliza Crawford who competed strongly. Coach Stephen Cotter praises the competitors for maintaining their enthusiasm and training in spite of delays and for the enthusiastic support of parents. I congratulate the competitors and Coach Cotter. I commend The Armidale School for its strong commitment to sport as an important part of the school curriculum.

### RAY WILLIAMS ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD 2022

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)**—Every year it is my pleasure to issue the Ray Williams Encouragement Award to a Year 6 or Year 7 student in every school within my electorate. This award is an opportunity to highlight particular students who try their very best, both at school and within the broader community. It is to reward hard work, persistence, respect for others and a positive attitude. This year the recipients of the award were: Harrison Carter, Dana Jang, Jessica Wilson, Jessica West, Gurman Jit Singh Sambih, Alice Wilson, Sophie Hirst, Julian Rafael- Melgar, Susannah Mackay, Preston Cooper, Amber Gehret, Gabriel Bazan-Koltai, Zahra Waqas, Jai Wilk, Malenna Graczyk, Brian Chohaili, Quinn Care-Wickham, Lillian Lovett, David Lievano Monje, Evie Borg, Jack Goodwin, Cleo Tucker, Connor Paton, Damon Dos Santos, Parth Acharyu, Menaya Wisesinghe, Jafira Mendi, Jack Wallace, Dheeksha Chintapally, Sonya Clarke and Eden Millhouse. My congratulations go out to all award winners, and I wish them all the best for their future studies.

### GUISEPPE AND ANNUNZIATA CACCAMO

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)**—Congratulations to local Middleton Grange residents, Guiseppe and Annunziata Caccamo who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on 15 April. Guiseppe and Annunziata were married in St Gertrude's Church in Smithfield in 1962. What an incredible achievement and milestone this anniversary is! I wish them both all the best and hope they had a wonderful day surrounded by many family and friends for this momentous occasion. Happy 60th wedding anniversary Guiseppe and Annunziata!

### GUISEPPE AND ROSA PEDAVOLI

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)**—Congratulations to Guiseppe and Rosa Pedavoli, who celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on 27 April. Guiseppe and Rosa were married in Holy Trinity Church in Granville in 1957 and have spent the last six and a half decades showing that the odds can be beaten and prove that marriages can work through love, compassion and communication. What an incredible achievement and milestone this anniversary is! I wish them both all the best and hope they had a wonderful day surrounded by many family and friends for this momentous occasion. Happy 65th wedding anniversary Guiseppe and Rosa!

### ARMENIAN FILM FESTIVAL AUSTRALIA

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)**—The Armenian Film Festival Australia will be held in both Sydney and Melbourne this month. I know members of my local Armenian community in Davidson will be supporting this Festival, which will include drama, comedy and documentaries. Along with some colleagues, I look forward to attending the Sydney Opening Night Gala on Saturday 11 June, with Mr George Donikian acting as the Master of Ceremonies. The feature film on the night 'Gate to Heaven' has won numerous awards internationally. The Film Festival will run in Sydney from 10 to 19 June.

**RICHARD AND ROBYN TURTON**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)**—Congratulations to local Glenmore Park residents, Richard and Robyn Turton, who celebrated their Golden 50th wedding anniversary earlier this year. Richard and Robyn were married on 8 April in 1972 and have spent the last five decades showing that the odds can be beaten and prove that marriages can work through love, compassion and communication. What an incredible achievement and milestone this anniversary is! I wish them both all the best and hope they had a wonderful day surrounded by many family and friends for this momentous occasion. Happy 50th wedding anniversary Richard and Robyn!

**DANDELION SUPPORT NETWORK**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)**—Today I congratulate the Dandelion Support Network for their outstanding contributions to our local community, having been awarded with a 2021 St George Community Group Award. Founded in 2012, Dandelion Support Network endeavours to ensure that all babies and children have access to nursery items essential for their safety, well-being and development. The Dandelion Support Network specifically focuses on empowering vulnerable families to focus on the health of their children. This allows parents to have their financial stress reduced, experience improvements in their mental health, and generally feel supported by their community. Speaker, their dedication to the community during the recent lockdown was unparalleled, as they remained open to support vulnerable families. Whilst the team at Dandelion Support Network faced incredible challenges during this period, they confronted them head on with optimism and vigour. I would like to thank Cathy Nisbet for receiving the award, and also chair member of the board, Kathryn Brennan. The work you all do is absolutely phenomenal. I would like to congratulate Dandelion Support Network again for receiving this award. I wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

**KELLY ENGLISH**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)**—Today I thank and congratulate a wonderful member of our local community, Kelly English, for her contributions to the McGrath Foundation through the Frannie's Day fundraiser. Kelly's achievements were recently recognised by a 2021 St George Community Award, as she received an Individual Volunteer Achievement Award for her efforts in raising money for breast cancer treatment and awareness. Kelly started Frannie's Day in 2010 in honour of her late mother, Frannie. The event is held at Grandviews bowling club and truly is a spectacular day out. There is a barefoot bowls competition, a silent auction, guest speakers, entertainment and everyone dresses in pink in support of Australians diagnosed with breast cancer. Over the many years that Kelly has run Frannie's Day, she has raised over \$50,000 for the McGrath Foundation, which is an extraordinary effort. She has been an outstanding ambassador for the McGrath Foundation and keeps her mum's memory alive through this wonderful cause. I would like to congratulate Kelly again for receiving this award, and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

**NADINE DAY**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)**—Today I thank and congratulate a member of my local community, Nadine Day, for her contributions to the 3 Bridges Community Early Years Support Service. Having been recently awarded with a 2021 St George Community Group Award, Nadine has offered her time, knowledge and skills to help assist vulnerable mothers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. She has displayed a sense of commitment and reliability since starting with 3 Bridges in February last year. The Early Years Support Service is a wonderful initiative run by the 3 Bridges Community which assists vulnerable mothers throughout the St George Area. This is not to mention that the service is entirely volunteer based. During the recent COVID-19 lockdown, Nadine continued to offer phone support when many new mothers felt isolated, overwhelmed or trapped in their homes. I would like to commend Nadine on her fantastic efforts during a period which was so difficult for the entire community. I would like to congratulate Nadine for receiving this award. I wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

**PETER DRAIN (NSW RFS)**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)**—I acknowledge Peter Drain on his 27 years of service with the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS). He joined the Lochinvar Brigade in 1994 and remains an active member to this day. Over this time, Peter has held the roles of permit issuing officer, callout officer, treasurer, training officer and equipment officer. He's also been Deputy Captain, Senior Deputy Captain and Captain. Peter sets an inspiring example in his continuation to strive for excellence and has achieved outstanding results through hard work. His distinguished service to the community and NSW RFS, devotion, care and equality has acquired him the respect of his peers. Peter has been involved in a vast number of incidents throughout the Lower Hunter, while being a regular volunteer for out of area deployments. He was awarded Life Membership at Lochinvar in 2016. Peter is a worthy recipient of the National Medal 1st Clasp. Congratulations Peter and thank you for your service.

**PETER HORD (NSW RFS)**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)**—I congratulate Lower Hunter's Peter Hord on his four decades of service with the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS). He started with the West Pennant Hills Brigade in 1979, later joining Louth Park in 1994, which later became East Maitland in 2015. Peter has held the roles of equipment officer, permit issuing officer, training officer and secretary, the rank of Captain for 7 years (2008-2014) and Senior Deputy Captain for 5 years (2002-2007). He is currently the East Maitland Brigade president, membership officer and now a Deputy Captain. Peter has always been an advocate for community education events, delivering fire safety lessons at schools or displays at local shows, and fundraising throughout the NSW RFS. He's been instrumental in starting the process of gaining funding and approvals for major extensions to the station, too. In 2009, in recognition of his commitment to the brigade, he was awarded Life Membership of Louth Park. Peter's a worthy recipient of the National Medal 2nd Clasp and Long Service 3rd Clasp. Congratulations and thank you for your service Peter.

**ALISON MUTTON (NSW RFS)**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)**—With almost four decades of service under her belt, Alison Mutton is a worthy recipient of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) National Medal and 1st Clasp. She began her career in 1985 with the Bolwarra-Largs Brigade and, as a member, attended bush and grass fires, structure blazes, as well as MVAs, storm and flood damage. Later on, Alison started to provide more operational assistance, firstly as a brigade callout officer for Bolwarra-Largs but also to Maitland's Deputy Fire Control officer and eventually Lower Hunter Group 2. It is in this role her experience and fire ground acumen have delivered invaluable support across both local and intrastate emergencies. When providing operational assistance to Group 2, Alison can often be seen with an iPad or paper map clutched in hand, taking down observations of fire behaviour or movement, or relaying the same information back to the incident IMT. Congratulations Alison, this honour is well-deserved.

**DIGGERS DAY RAISES \$5,000 FOR LEGACY**

**Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)**—I commend the outstanding efforts of the Coolamatong Snowy Mountains Country Golf Club who recently held a Diggers Golf Day at their club in Berridale. I am pleased to say that the club raised \$5,000 for the Cooma/Bombala Legacy Group. I make particular note of Arthur Owens, manager of the Coolamatong Club for his efforts and support in this worthy event. I would also like to recognise the outstanding work of Club senior members Ross and Betty Thompson. I wholeheartedly thank everyone involved in this event and for making it the success it was. These events are intertwined in the social fabric of regional towns and the people of Berridale are a community with a lot to be proud of.

**HILLTOPS SAYS NO**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)**—I would like to thank the Young Crisis Accommodation Centre as they teamed up with other local organisations and community groups in arranging a family friendly event, to raise awareness and promote a zero-tolerance to family and domestic violence. On Saturday, 21st May the event kicked off at the Corner of Clarke and Anderson Streets with participants walking up the main street, banners and signs in hand to Anderson park. Participants wore purple in support of the event. The Young Crisis Accommodation Centre has teamed up with the Hilltops Community Hub, Department of Health, Department of Community Justice and local Police to form a group called the "Young Domestic Violence Awareness Group" who meet bi-monthly. Across 2020 and 2021 the Young Crisis Accommodation Centre has supported over 189 individuals locally with matters regarding family and domestic violence. I would like to again extend my sincerest thanks and appreciation to the Young Crisis Accommodation Centre as well as other community organisations and groups for their involvement and support for this event.

**RAY SMITH**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)**—I take this opportunity to express my gratitude and congratulations to immediate past General Manager of Bland Shire Council, Mr Ray Smith. Ray has been working in the Public Service for over 51 years with 12 of these years serving as Bland Shire's General Manager. Ray started as a trainee rates clerk at the Baulkham Hills Shire Council in Sydney, and subsequently worked at the Hornsby Shire, Penrith and Waverley Municipal councils in Sydney. He was first appointed general manager of Grafton City Council in 1993 and went on to hold the position at the Cobar Shire for five years, before moving to the Bland Shire Council. Ray leaves behind many legacy project's and accomplishments which have set the town of West Wyalong and its neighbouring villages up for a very long and prosperous future. It has been an honour to have worked alongside Ray over the past 7 years on all matters Bland related. Congratulations and thank you for your leadership,

friendship and sacrifices over many decades in service to the people of the Bland Shire and NSW. Well wishes to yourself and wife, Donna and all the very best in your retirement.

#### **TEMORA HIGH GOES BLUE FOR DOLLY**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)**—I would like to recognise the efforts made by Temora High School's student representative council and the student-led initiative of wearing blue on May 13 for Do It For Dolly Day. The foundation, Dolly's Dream, aims to raise awareness of the impacts and harms of bullying, and Do It For Dolly Day is the annual day dedicated to awareness. Participants wear blue, Dolly's favourite colour and raise funds to support the foundation's anti-bullying programs. Years seven to 10 participated in lessons focusing on kindness, compassion and understanding to help equip them with the tools needed to speak out and stand up against bullying. These sorts of efforts make Temora High School an inclusive, friendly place of learning, and I commend the students on their efforts. Thank you to the students at Temora High School for your efforts to reduce harm and recognise the damage that bullying can do to your peers. Wearing blue on a day like May 13 shows to everyone that you care and that your peers matter to you.

#### **CRONULLA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)**—I congratulate Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club members for their success at the 2021-2022 Surf Life Saving Sydney Awards of Excellence. Club Captain, Chris Barber, won the prestigious Surf Life Saving Sydney Life Saver of the Year award. This award recognises Chris for his outstanding contribution to the delivery and development of surf lifesaving frontline services. Glen McLachlan was the Patrol Captain of the Year, recognising his efforts to improve patrol service to the community and club members. Carlo Villanti was the Tony Hughes Official of the Year for his contributions as an official to Cronulla SLSC and community. I also thank everyone at Cronulla SLSC for their efforts this patrol season.

#### **ANZAC DAY BOWRAL**

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)**—In a return to what our diggers deserve, this year's ANZAC day service took place amid crowds of locals, allowing us to celebrate our heroes face to face. The commemorations began with a Dawn Service at 5:50am, followed by the main service and march at the Bowral War Memorial Park. It was a pleasure for me to take part in the luncheon with the Bowral RSL Subbranch following the formalities and I had a chance to thank the members for their efforts not only on the day, but also throughout the year. The Bowral Bowling Club hosted the luncheon, and after the meal concluded we enjoyed some social two-up out on the green. Special thanks to John Cummins, President of the Bowral Subbranch, for his efforts in organising the day. These celebrations do not happen without careful planning, and the community members who work to ensure our service men and women are given the appropriate honour year after year, also deserve our gratitude.

#### **YANDERRA RFB AGM**

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)**—I was glad to attend the Yanderra Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade AGM on the 1st of May. There were a few important acknowledgements made on the day for those whose service has been above and beyond. Jeff Morrell, who had served as the brigade's captain for the past 25 years stepped down and will now serve as deputy captain. I thank him for more than two decades of service. I also congratulate the new captain, Drew Cameron on his appointment, and wish him very well in his role. There were several brigade members who received National Emergency Medals for their service during the 2019-20 fire service. The medals are to recognise the sustained and significant service during that devastating fire season. Congratulations goes to the following recipients: Mark Bowden, Jacob Cameron, Drew Cameron, Brendan Hill, Trevor Johnson, Debbie MacDonald, Christopher McClymont, Jordan Mitchell, Jeffrey Morrell, Karen Morrell, Warren Rochefort, Joanne Rochefort, Andrei Sevcivc, Michael Willis, David Winfield, Darren Woods.

#### **PICTON RURAL FIRE BRIGADE AGM**

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)**—I was privileged to attend the Picton Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade AGM on the 3rd of May. I appreciated the chance to chat with members, and to thank them for their service to our community. We have seen our fair share of natural disasters over the last few years, and the Picton RFB members are always prepared to face another challenge head on. There were several brigade members who received National Emergency Medals for their service during the 2019-20 fire season. These medals are to recognise the sustained and/or significant service during that devastating period. Congratulations goes to the following recipients: Phillip Brown, Shaun Doughty, Michael Garside, Gareth Jamieson, Scott Lavender, Tal Pavlich, Connor Scholes, Sophia Seton, Jamie Smith, Jodie Stevens, Gavin Wood, David Wyper, Brian Pullman, Mark Davis, Andrew Hain, Nicholas Logozzo, Lance Watson.

### SKIMMOS SOUTH LISMORE

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—I wish to pay tribute to iconic South Lismore business Skimmos . On the corner of Union St and Elliot Rd South Lismore Skimmos attracted all walks of life. From tradies and truckies in the early morning, to young families going to school to anyone in need of a good bacon and egg roll, Skimmos was a staple of Lismore life. It is heartbreaking to hear that Skimmos will not be reopening after the devastating Lismore floods which demolished the historic corner shop which has been there since the 1940's. I wish to acknowledge Kevin Handcock, Tracey Lee Mackey and the whole team for their tireless work. Skimmos is so popular that when it was under threat from a DA to become a 7/11 service station a petition signed by over 1,800 locals was presented to council in favour of saving Skimmos. It is such an important part of Lismore history. We will all miss Skimmos.

### VALE TREE - A BELOVED LISMORE LOCAL

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—I wish to pay tribute to Tree. An icon of Lismore known to many in our community. Tree passed in the Lismore Rotunda in Spinks Park on the 21st of May. I will miss seeing him around town with his black hat and big sunnies playing music that would often lighten up my day. Tree had an interesting and at times difficult life. He told Humans of Lismore that "I don't know where I was born, I don't even have a birth certificate mate". Regardless of where he was born he will always be a son of Lismore. Tree always used to have his coffee with him and would do work around town. Usually helping people with their gardens, fixing fences and working on the land. His old school radio always lightened up the town and you could always tell when Tree was coming. So many in Lismore knew him as a presence in town, a presence we dearly miss. Vale Tree. You are loved and missed by the Lismore community.

### SCOTTY BRIZZLE

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—I wish to recognise Scotty Brizzle of Lismore. During the floods, Scotty has become a major source of news and updates for the community. Most days Scotty documents life in Lismore interesting, informative and funny videos. Scotty's videos have amassed tens of thousands of views many outside of Lismore broadcasting our experiences to the world. The thing I really love about Scotty's videos is his connection to the many characters of Lismore. As he has become more well-known people often shoutout to him to have a chat. He was mobbed at the Lismore Car boot Markets on the weekend. Scotty has used his videos to document and profile the efforts of many wonderful people in Lismore who have been working on our flood recovery. Because of him many stories of heroism, dedication and compassion are being told. He is particularly good at connecting with young people in Lismore. Who turn to his videos for information, advice but also something positive and fun in Lismore. Something we all need during these difficult times for the Northern Rivers. I once again thank Scotty and I look forward to catching up with him soon.

### AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—I wish to recognise the important work of the Cancer Council of NSW and the substantial local, grassroots fundraising effort that sustains the Council's vital contribution to cancer research, prevention, and support. Australia's Biggest Morning Tea was recently held on May 19 and I was heartened and proud to see the Willoughby community rally together to hold gatherings both big and small to raise funds for cancer research and advocacy. It is such a worthy cause as few Australians will escape being personally touched in some way by this wicked disease, whether it is themselves, loved ones or a friend who falls victim. In particular, I want to acknowledge the tireless and inspirational efforts of Artarmon resident Susan Mitchell, who has organised morning teas for over 13 years, raising over \$88 000 for the cause. This year alone she raised \$16, 500. Herself a survivor of cancer, it is people like Susan that bind our community together and embody the spirit of volunteering in our community.

### NSW SES UNIT OF WILLOUGHBY-LANE COVE

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—I would like to acknowledge the NSW SES Unit of Willoughby-Lane Cove for the incredible work it does across Willoughby. Based in Naremburn, the Unit is part of the state-wide SES which provides around-the-clock emergency assistance to the people of NSW every day of the year. With our city and state afflicted by torrential rain and record floods over the past few months, our local army of SES volunteers have worked tirelessly to help the needs of storm and flood victims. Volunteers have been responsible for filling sandbags, removing fallen trees, clearing gutters and fitting damaged roof-tops with tarpaulins to keep our local residents safe and dry. They do all this not for reward, but simply to help their community in their neighbour's time of need. On 18 May, it was 'Wear Orange Wednesday' or 'WOW Day'. On this WOW Day, I was proud to wear orange and had the opportunity to meet and thank our local SES leaders and volunteers, including Willoughby-Lane Cove Unit Commander Jason Li, for their dedication to keeping our community safe.

### THE SYDNEY JEWISH MUSEUM

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—I recently had the honour of visiting the Sydney Jewish Museum to commemorate the 30th anniversary of it as a living museum, a place that holds the voices of history. 60,000 Australians pass through its doors annually, to remind us of the horrors of the Holocaust and to safeguard against future atrocities. Willoughby has a proud and active local Jewish community a number of whom are survivors or their direct descendants. It is important that the voices and stories of these survivors live on and that their experience remains forever a lesson to future generations. With a compelling mix of personal narratives, an extensive collection of artefacts and the history of the murders of 6 million Jewish people, it made visiting the Sydney Jewish Museum a profound and moving experience for me. I am honoured to commend and support the mission of the Sydney Jewish Museum in educating our future generations so that the stories of Holocaust survivors can continue to be told.

### BALMAIN ROWING CLUB

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)**—Today I bring to the attention of the House the 140th anniversary of the Balmain Rowing Club which was officially opened in 1882 by the Balmain Mayor, Mr William Hutchinson. The club has been an important part of the Balmain community, providing access to rowing for all levels and particularly for junior rowers and young people who may not have the opportunity to row at school or university. I would like to acknowledge the contributions of past and present club members, including Solomon Hyam, Sydney J Porter, Stuart Arness, Harry Heusenstein, Thomas Parker, William 'Bill' Nix, John Bennett Sharp, Cecil Pearce, George Neilson OAM, Terry Maher, Gary Pearce, Lynette Skelton, Don Croot AM, Melissa Marzulli, Jeremy McGrath and Renata Ijmpa. I would also like to recognise the work of Club President Joseph Grech for his work restoring and preserving the historic 140-year-old rowing shed and club house. Community sports venues like the Balmain Rowing Club play an essential role in the life of our area and today we celebrate the commitment of the people who make the Club so special.

### BYO COFFEE CUP LEICHHARDT

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)**—Today I bring to the attention of the House the efforts of BYO Coffee Cup Leichhardt which has continued to support the Leichhardt community to replace single-use plastics with reusable coffee cups. Leichhardt Public School Canteen is the latest community organisation to swap out their disposable cups for reusable ones, saving approximately 100 cups from landfill each week. I want to congratulate the Leichhardt Public School P&C for helping lead the way on reducing single-use plastics in our schools and BYO Coffee Cup Leichhardt for their continued work to reduce plastic pollution and create a healthy environment for our communities.

### GEANINA ADINA

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)**—COVID-19 took its toll on all of us. Whether it be restrictions, the impact on the household budget or the lack of social interaction – everyone was impacted in one way or another. However, two years on, some stories of remarkable individuals during that time are now starting to come to light. Blair Athol resident, Geanina Adina, has one of those stories. Despite home schooling four children during the lockdowns and tutoring others, Mrs Adina still managed to complete her university degree – with a distinction. It's an incredible effort and one that speaks volumes of Mrs Adina's dedication not only to her career, but also to her family. I have spoken to many parents in my electorate who had to home-school their children during the pandemic outbreak. It was certainly no walk in the park for most. That is why Mrs Adina's effort is even more incredible. I have no doubt that she will make the most of her pastoral counselling graduate diploma from Charles Sturt University. Congratulations again Geanina on an incredible effort and good luck with your future endeavours.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 20:20 until  
Wednesday 8 June 2022 at 9:30.**