



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Eighth Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday 1 August 2023

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Announcements	1
Legislative Assembly Photographs.....	1
Members	1
Member for Mount Druitt.....	1
Member for Macquarie Fields	1
Member for Balmain.....	1
Member for Pittwater.....	1
Business of the House.....	1
Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Condolence Motion	1
Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Production of Documents.....	1
Notices	2
Presentation.....	2
Visitors.....	2
Visitors.....	2
Members	2
Representation of Ministers Absent During Questions	2
Bills.....	3
Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023	3
Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2023.....	3
Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023.....	3
Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rental Fairness) Bill 2023	3
Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Housing and Productivity Contributions) Bill 2023.....	3
Crimes Legislation Amendment (Assaults on Retail Workers) Bill 2023.....	3
Criminal Legislation Amendment (Knife Crimes) Bill 2023	3
Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Amendment (Digital Evidence Access Orders) Bill 2023.....	3
Assent	3
Question Time	3
Sydney Metro West	3
State Budget.....	3
Sydney Metro West	4
Sydney Metro City and Southwest	5
Murray-Darling Basin.....	6
Taskforce Magnus and Criminal Asset Confiscation Team	7
Sydney Metro West	8
Treasury Managed Fund	8
Sydney Metro West	9
North-West Sydney School Infrastructure.....	10
Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport	11
Rural and Regional Healthcare Staff	12

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Community Swimming Pools.....	13
Women In Sport.....	13
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to NSW Parliament	14
Documents	14
Law Enforcement Conduct Commission.....	14
Reports.....	14
Information and Privacy Commission	14
Reports.....	14
Parliamentary Ethics Adviser	14
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.....	15
Reports.....	15
Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission.....	15
Reports.....	15
Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales	15
Reports.....	15
Industrial Relations Commission.....	15
Reports.....	15
Committees	15
Legislative Assembly Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health	15
Inquiry.....	15
Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety.....	15
Deputy Chair.....	15
Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development	15
Deputy Chair.....	15
Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services	16
Deputy Chair.....	16
Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment and Planning	16
Deputy Chair.....	16
Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption.....	16
Chair and Deputy Chair	16
Petitions	16
Petitions Received	16
Responses to Petitions	16
Condolences.....	16
Australian Army Helicopter Accident.....	16
Documents	20
Liquor and Gaming Data Collection.....	20
Tabling of Correspondence.....	20
Production of Documents: Order Amended	20
Bills.....	22
Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023	22
First Reading.....	22

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Second Reading Speech.....	22
Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023	28
Second Reading Debate	28
Public Interest Debate.....	39
Matildas Football Team.....	39
Community Recognition Statements	47
Paul and Kyla Rankin	47
Wahroonga Electorate Allied Health Professionals.....	47
Care4Coast.....	48
Bronte Gillan	48
Tribute to Professor Justin Yerbury, AM	48
Kiama Rotary Club	48
Tribute to Alan Overton, AM, OAM.....	49
Ryde Dragon Boat Club.....	49
Eschol Park Football Club Gala	49
Sam Fowler	49
Camden Cottage Preschool.....	49
Riverina Conservatorium of Music	50
Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association	50
Beaches Group.....	50
Tribute to Bryson Dimovski	50
Tribute to Frank Redward.....	50
Greater Western Sydney Training Awards.....	51
Tribute to Louise Kuchel.....	51
Revesby Rovers Football Club	51
Rose Bay Secondary College P&C.....	51
The Ponds Probus Club	51
Tribute to Lance Corporal Frederick Francis Denny, OAM	52
Australian National Bocce Championship.....	52
Milly Dunbar	52
Graham Mullane, OAM.....	52
Tribute to Marie Dunn	53
Private Members' Statements.....	53
Londonderry Electorate Community Survey.....	53
North Shore Electorate	54
Blacktown City Sports Awards	55
Wollondilly Electorate.....	55
Shell Cove Infrastructure.....	56
Kincumber Nautical Village Site Fees.....	57
Glenreagh Timber Festival	58
Charlestown Electorate Bus Services	58
Brig O'Johnston Bridge.....	59

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Dowry Abuse	60
Health Funding	61
Camden Railway Line	62
Northern Beaches Local Business Awards.....	63
The Entrance Electorate Affordable Housing.....	63
Green Point Community Centre	64
Newcastle Electorate Public Transport.....	65
Flood Insurance	66
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.....	66
Cooks River	67
Written Community Recognition Statements	68
Citizenship Congratulations.....	68
Citizenship Congratulations.....	68
Citizenship Congratulations.....	68
CMRC Elevate.....	69
Cumberland Gang Show Opening Night (Red Scarf Night)	69
Granville In the West Journal	69
Macquarie Community College Epping Campus	69
Elizabeth Vardouniotis - Balloons for Nanna.....	70
Rachel Kim - Still with You	70
Wanda Surf Life Saving Club Sutherland 2 Surf	70
Bruce Watt - Curious Eyes	70
Grafton Prostate Cancer Support Group.....	70
Special Olympics World Games In Berlin	71
Sound of Music.....	71
Berry Pharmacist	71
Nicola Barge	71
Warilla High School - Australian Secondary Schools Rugby League Championships	72
Shell Cove Public School - Zoey Borg, Violet Macdonald, Emily Nichols & Rachel Nichols.....	72
Shellharbour Junior Football Club – U18 Girls Team.....	72
Record Release of White's Seahorses In Sydney Harbour	72
Jessie Street Luncheon.....	72
Mosman Model and Podcaster Harrison Kennedy	73
Albury Wodonga Health Chairman Matt Burke Reflects After 10 Years on Board	73
Orlaine Suggate - OneSchool Global NSW – Albury	73
Murray High School - Ella Ball - Production Beauty & the Beast.....	73
Ann Madden	73
Joan Fayle	74
Judy Finlason.....	74
St Marys RSL Veteran's Wellbeing Programme	74
Stephanie Galea and Lucy Keane	74
Richard Jones.....	74

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Newcastle Firefighters	75
Sovereign Hills IGA National Award for Excellence	75
Arthur Dixon – Life Membership PMSCC	75
Ryan Robinson – Apprentice of the Year.....	75
2023 Lockhart Shire Business Excellence Awards	75
Alan Geoffrey Evans	76
Riverina Conservatorium of Music	76
St George Girls High School - Mother Daughter Gala.....	76
Kevin Greene AM.....	76
Warren Saunders Tribute	77
Iconic Leo's Café Stays In Baxter Famly	77
Larnook Public School Centenary	77
Kytherian Radio Announcer Harry Crethar Celebrates 40 Years on Radio	77
Bingara Orange Festival	77
Recognition of Tammy Elbourne	78
Walcha Fire & Rescue Captain Peter Dunn.....	78
Cumberland Gang Show 2023	78
Colin Hawthorn	78
Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club	78
Lifeline Central West.....	79
Councillor Jim Aitken OAM	79
Lam Tang.....	79
Vale John Ward	79
Newtown Jets – Welcome Day and Beer Footy and Food Festival	79
Coast Shelter Wyong	80
Norah Head Marine Rescue.....	80
Jerry Sent me	80
Frank Rinaldi - Deniliquin.....	80
Sam Cooper - Leeton	81
Tegan Allott - Hay	81
Charlestown Azzurri 60th Anniversary	81
Charli Loughton of Warners Bay High School.....	81
Hunter Sports High School Baseball Academy	81
James Doyle – Virtus Global Games.....	82
Benjamin Burgers	82
Tee Off for Breast Cancer Event	82
Davidson Electorate Year 12 School Leaders 2022 / 2023	82
Ku-ring-gai Rotary Changeover 2023	82
Lions Club of Ku-ring-gai Changeover 2023	83
Brothers In Need Soup Kitchen	83
Riverwood Community Centre NAIDOC Week Celebrations.....	83
Sara Mansour – 2023 Zest Award	83

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Ingleburn Knitting Group	84
Vanessa Pringle	84
Victoria Roth	84
Alan Bayliss	84
Duck Creek Races.....	85
Isabelle Russell	85
Most Wuthering Heights Day Ever	85
Delhuntie Youth Care	85
Mrs Donna Rankin.....	85
Sunday Sippers	86
NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence In Policing Award – Detective Senior Constable Daniel Dignan	86
NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence In Policing Award – Detective Senior Constable Ashleigh McCudden.....	86
NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence In Policing Award – Detective Senior Constable Gareth Michael.....	86
Sorry Day/reconciliation Week	87
Liverpool Historical Society.....	87
Macarthur Multicultural Children's Festival.....	87
Goulburn Golf Club	87
Mercury Brands	87
Winners of the Goulburn Business Awards.....	88
Duffys Forest Residents Association	88
Avalon SLSC	88
Alan Moran – Avalon SLSC.....	88
Veteran Wallsend Trainer Henry Norman.....	89
Hunter Children's Research Foundation	89
Lachlan Scorse	89
Farewell Dinner for Ms Fiona Fan	89
Rotary Crows Nest Changeover Night – Northbridge Golf Club.....	89
Commissioning Mass for World Youth Day Pilgrims – Our Lady of Dolours (Chatswood)	90
Festival of Chariots	90
Moorebank Cricket Club Annual Presentation Day	90
Hammondville Dental.....	90
Braithen Vella.....	91
Duane Byrnes.....	91
St Patricks Primary School Lochinvar.....	91
Bailey's Jewellers.....	91
Maitland Polocrosse Club.....	91
Western Sydney Women In Business.....	92
Freskin	92
Breakfast Point Realty	92
Barnier Public School Attendance.....	92

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Casuarina - Active Care Program93

Congratulations to Tania Glover93

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 1 August 2023

The Speaker (The Hon. Gregory Michael Piper) took the chair at 12:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

The SPEAKER: I advise members that media photographers are approved to cover question time today.

Members

MEMBER FOR MOUNT DRUITT

MEMBER FOR MACQUARIE FIELDS

MEMBER FOR BALMAIN

MEMBER FOR PITTWATER

The SPEAKER: I note that the member for Mount Druitt is in the Chamber. I hope he has had a happy birthday. I wish the member for Macquarie Fields, the member for Balmain and the member for Pittwater a happy birthday.

Ms Felicity Wilson: And the member for Ryde.

The SPEAKER: The member for Ryde did not want anyone to know about it.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: CONDOLENCE MOTION

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:03): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit:

- (1) The moving after the routine of business following question time by the Premier of a condolence motion regarding the Talisman Sabre military exercise helicopter accident.
- (2) Debate on the motion to be adjourned without motion immediately following contributions from the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition.
- (3) Debate to resume at 2.30 p.m. to allow contributions from the member for Wyong, the member for Hawkesbury and the member for Holsworthy following which debate is to be adjourned without motion moved.
- (4) Resumption of the debate at this or any subsequent sitting to be called on at any time during the time allocated for Government business.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (12:04): The Opposition will of course agree to the suspension of standing and sessional orders to permit the moving of this very solemn condolence motion.

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

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:05): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the member for Sydney, at the conclusion of the contributions from the member for Wyong, the member for Hawkesbury and the member for Holsworthy to the condolence motion, to:

- (1) Table two items of correspondence from the NSW Crime Commissioner relating to the Legislative Assembly's order for papers, addressed to the member for Sydney, dated 31 July 2023, and addressed to the Director Legal, Information Unit, Department of Enterprise Investment and Trade, dated 28 July 2023.
- (2) Move a motion, of which notice has not been given, to further amend the resolution of the House of 25 May 2023, subsequently amended on 21 June 2023, regarding the order for papers under Standing Order 269 relating to investigations into money laundering in clubs and pubs.

I indicate that I envisage, through this motion and the previous motion, that the following routine of business of the House occur today: Following question time, the Premier will move the condolence motion, which the Leader of the Opposition will also speak to, after which the House will adjourn for lunch. It will resume at 2.30 p.m. with contributions from the three members referred to in the previous suspension of standing and sessional orders motion. Government business will follow until the public interest debate at five o'clock. At the conclusion of the public interest debate, the House will then consider community recognition statements and private members' statements, after which the House will adjourn without motion put. That is the routine of business intended under the suspension of standing and sessional orders motion that I have moved.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (12:07): The Opposition agrees to the motion to further suspend standing and sessional orders to deal with the matter of the member for Sydney after the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition speak to the condolence motion.

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

Motion agreed to.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kiama will come to order.

Later,

The SPEAKER: There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. It is very distracting for members and those in the public gallery, and it certainly impacts on Hansard's ability to record the proceedings.

Later,

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. They will have the opportunity to debate the motions when they are moved in the House.

Later,

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. They will assist the Chair by listening in silence to the member with the call.

Later,

The SPEAKER: Members will assist me by coming to order. I have raised previously the matter of notices of motions being given immediately before question time. That was a very difficult 15 minutes. I hope members understand my concern. We must address this issue.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to Daniya Syed, Haniya Syed and Syed Atif Faheem, guests of the member for Badgerys Creek. I also welcome to the Chamber high school students from a number of schools in the Orange and Cabonne local government areas who are participating in Regional Development Australia's Ten4Ten program, guests of the member for Orange. It was my pleasure to be able to meet some of them just before question time. I welcome too my guests as the member for Lake Macquarie, student leaders from Heritage College Lake Macquarie. I welcome to the public gallery visitors from the Economic Strategy and Productivity Group, NSW Treasury. I also acknowledge mayor Phyllis Miller from Forbes and former mayor of Orange Reg Kidd.

Members

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr RON HOENIG: On behalf of Mr Chris Minns: I inform the House that in the absence of the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads this week, the Minister for Transport will answer questions on her behalf.

*Bills***PARLIAMENTARY REMUNERATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023****STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2023****STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICES REMUNERATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023****RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (RENTAL FAIRNESS) BILL 2023****ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (HOUSING AND
PRODUCTIVITY CONTRIBUTIONS) BILL 2023****CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (ASSAULTS ON RETAIL WORKERS) BILL 2023****CRIMINAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (KNIFE CRIMES) BILL 2023****LAW ENFORCEMENT (POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES) AMENDMENT (DIGITAL
EVIDENCE ACCESS ORDERS) BILL 2023****Assent**

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

*Question Time***SYDNEY METRO WEST**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (12:27): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. On 14 February, when asked to guarantee the future of Sydney Metro West, the Premier responded, "Absolutely." Will the Minister rule out cancelling Sydney Metro West?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:28): I welcome the member's question. We are taking a responsible approach to delivering the public transport network that the people of Sydney and New South Wales need and deserve. Let us be very clear about the absolute mess left by members opposite. There is not one mode of public transport that was not completely stuffed by those opposite. Every single mode has their fingerprints all over them. Let us talk about it. There are ferries that do not fit under bridges and bus contracts that prioritise price over passengers, leaving school kids on the side of the road.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: I was not asking the transport Minister about her blatant failure to implement bus policy; I was asking a specific question about Sydney Metro West.

The SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. I ask the Minister to be mindful of the specific nature of the question. The Minister has the call.

Ms JO HAYLEN: I was just going through the modes; I would obviously get to Sydney Metro. Those projects have blown out by billions and billions of dollars. That is billions of taxpayers' dollars that cannot be spent on fixing the mess left by those opposite or, indeed, delivering the future public transport that our city and State needs. The Sydney Metro project must be delivered in a cost-effective way. As the Premier and I have shown today, the Government has engaged independent experts to review the Sydney Metro projects and the mess in which they were left by those opposite to make sure that they can be delivered—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was very clear: Will the Minister rule out cancelling Sydney Metro West? She has not even gone close to answering it.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Wahroonga. I appreciate the basis of his point of order. I ask the Minister to be mindful of the specifics of the question. The Minister has the call.

Ms JO HAYLEN: For all of the reasons I have outlined, and the complete mess that those opposite have left us, the Minns Labor Government has acted. It has initiated the independent Sydney Metro Review.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: That review will report to the Government in October, and we will make announcements about that then.

STATE BUDGET

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (12:31): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier inform the House of the challenges facing the New South Wales budget?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:32): I absolutely will. This is a challenge facing every member in this Chamber. It is the largest debt ever transferred from one government to another in the history of New South Wales. It is the worst kind of inheritance to pass on to future generations of Australians. To put it in perspective, in 2011 the debt was \$22 billion, or \$3,100 per person. By the time those opposite left office, the debt was \$129 billion, on its way to \$187 billion by 2026. That is the equivalent of \$22,000 for every man, woman and child in New South Wales that has to be paid off by future generations. Those opposite call themselves "the party of fiscal responsibility", but there are literally no worse numbers ever generated by any government in New South Wales' history. The implications of that debt are serious for the State, for government services and for the future. We need to put this in perspective. The previous Government's decision to borrow \$25 billion over the next four years to gamble on stocks and investment—this is the Matt Kean debt retirement fund—would have increased the risk to the New South Wales Government.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We have also seen fiscal cliffs. That is money that is in the budget but only up to a certain point and then there is no further money involved. The Leader of the Opposition has previously said that is why we have annual budgets. It is also why we budget for four years. Those are some of the examples of things that have not been accounted for in the budget but were announced by the former Liberal-Nationals Government. There is a \$700 million shortfall for children in out-of-home care that is not in the New South Wales budget. There is no funding for Cyber Security NSW beyond 30 June 2024. Cybersecurity is no longer an issue in New South Wales beyond 2024, apparently. There is somehow going to be a mystery patch.

Mr Jihad Dib: It is terrible.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We will have to update the patch, Jihad. There was \$100 million cut from Destination NSW and \$196 million cut from TAFE, on top of a decade worth of neglect. Most shamefully, the former Government repeatedly announced an additional 1,100 nurses for the crisis in our healthcare system, but I can reveal to the House that funding runs out on 30 June 2024.

[Opposition members interjected.]

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The member for Port Macquarie will come to order.

Dr Michael Holland: I seek additional information.

The SPEAKER: I grant the Premier an additional two minutes.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I am happy to provide it. I note the interjections from those opposite who said, "That was just for COVID. We were only employing 1,100 nurses for COVID." Presumably, they were about to say, "Once COVID is over, you're all sacked." Does anyone remember them saying that before the last election? Does anyone remember those opposite saying at any time in the New South Wales Parliament that they were going to employ 1,100 nurses and then sack them two years later? It is absolute rubbish from the Leader of the Opposition. In addition to the significant budget pressures faced by the Government and the people of New South Wales, the Leader of the Opposition has demanded that we host the Commonwealth Games. He is going to put on his Australian tracksuit, go for a walk, pretend he is an athlete—pretend he is on the badminton team, presumably—and save the Commonwealth Games.

That is \$7 billion, on top of \$190 billion, on top of 1,100 nurses that we have to find in the health system, on top of the member for Pittwater demanding that the northern beaches tunnel come back on the agenda, which would be another \$10 billion over there. I have noticed a repeated insistence that "metros just cost that much money", as if a \$17 billion overspend is par for the course. This Government is making responsible decisions for the budget management of New South Wales because it is not our money; it is the money of the people of New South Wales. They have finally got a government that cares about how it is spent.

SYDNEY METRO WEST

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (12:37): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. Will the Minister rule out removing planned stations, including Five Dock, Burwood North and North Strathfield, from Sydney Metro West?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:37): I am pleased that members opposite are engaging in questions about delivering an integrated and reliable public transport system. No offence to the new member, but it is unfortunate that those around her ignored many of those challenges when they were in government. In fact, they made a complete and utter mess of every single mode of public transport. Members on this side of the House are paying attention to the passengers who need these services. We are taking a responsible and methodical approach.

The Sydney Metro projects need to be delivered in a cost-effective way. As the Premier and I have shown today, this Government has engaged independent advice through the Sydney Metro Review. That is how we can move through the problems that we have inherited as we confront them one by one. The Sydney Metro Review, which the Government commissioned in April this year, will report to government in two phases. The first is the interim review that deals with the City & Southwest project, which is massively over budget. The former Government did not even know how to deliver the south-west part of it. In fact, the former transport Minister said that he was considering cancelling it. Contrast that with this Government's approach—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order is on relevance under Standing Order 129. The Minister was asked a specific question. Will she rule out removing planned stations, including Five Dock and Burwood North?

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. I do not uphold the point of order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: In relation to the interim report from the Sydney Metro Review, unlike those opposite we have delivered a strategy to ensure that the people of south-west Sydney get the metro service that they were promised. That is how a responsible government behaves. We have taken independent advice and we are delivering the project that those communities were promised. In relation to the second part of the review—

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition rises on a point of order. I assume the Minister has not completed her answer?

Ms JO HAYLEN: No, I have not.

Mr Mark Speakman: The Minister was not asked about today's stunt to re-announce a Liberal-Nationals project to build the south-west metro; she was asked whether she would be dropping stations from Sydney Metro West.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: All these reasons are why the Minns Labor Government has acted. We initiated the Sydney Metro Review. We have brought forward the independent expert advice, and the issues that the member raises will be addressed in the report that the Government will receive in October.

SYDNEY METRO CITY AND SOUTHWEST

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (12:40): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport. Will the Minister provide the House with an update on the Government's plan for the Sydney Metro program?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:40): I thank the member for Coogee for her work as the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport. She is committed to delivering quality public transport services across Sydney and for the taxpayers and passengers of New South Wales. Speaking of delivering on projects that were promised, today the Premier and I were at Sydenham station to announce that the Minns Labor Government will deliver the final section of Sydney Metro City & Southwest by converting the Sydenham to Bankstown line for the communities of south-west Sydney. This is a critical announcement.

Let us be very clear: This is something that the Liberals were never able to do. They had no idea how they were going to deliver this project. In fact, they considered cancelling it again and again. But our decision to rescue the project and deliver the city and southwest metro means that the communities of south-west Sydney will receive the same world-class turn-up-and-go metro service that is available to residents in Sydney's north, and they will receive the service that they were promised. Currently, some stations on the Bankstown line receive only four trains per hour in the peak. When this section of the metro is complete, they will receive a train every four minutes. That is a massive increase in services. This is important.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: This will mean more than just a train every four minutes. It will mean a reduction in pressure across our transport network. It will take pressure off the City Circle. Passengers often sit on trains waiting outside Central station, and that is because of the congestion across our network. By finalising the city and southwest metro, the conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line, we can take Bankstown trains off the City Circle line. That means more space for other train services and more capacity to recover our network when things go wrong, which passengers experienced under the former Government. This is good news for every passenger across our train network.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is on relevance. The Minister was asked about her Government's plan; she was not asked to re-announce our Government's plan.

The SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. There is no point of order. The Minister has the call.

Ms JO HAYLEN: I have to give it to the Leader of the Opposition. That was a bit cute.

The SPEAKER: It was one of the better ones.

Ms JO HAYLEN: This is good news for every passenger across the train network. It means more capacity and more resilience on our network, and it will be welcomed by leaders, members and representatives of communities across the south-west. [*Extension of time*]

We know that other members can also go back to their communities and say that the Minns Labor Government is making tough calls to improve the network overall. This is absolutely critical, because it means we will be able to run more reliable services on the T2 inner west line. For example, the community of the member for Strathfield will see an increase in services and reliability. This means we will have the ability, for example, to increase services on the T8 Airport and South line. That is great news for the member for East Hills and the communities that need the southern line.

Members on this side of the House understand the value of an integrated public transport network. This is not just about a single piece of investment; it is about transforming our public transport network into something that works for passengers, the people who need it and the people who members opposite absolutely forgot about. We will not forget about the people that will be inconvenienced by the conversion. It will take 12 months, and we are not sugar-coating it. Those communities have already been subject to disruption from the construction of the project.

The SPEAKER: The member for North Shore will come to order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: We will ensure that we work with those communities along the south-west line to make sure that they have a reliable public transport service while the conversion takes place. Unlike the plan of those opposite, trains will continue to run from Bankstown through to Lidcombe and connect to the rest of the network. Most importantly, thanks to the independent advice that we took and our planning to make sure we got this right, the line will not be closed for conversion until the city section of the metro is running reliably at a high level to make sure that there is a train every four minutes from Sydenham. This is part of our commitment to bring a public transport network that works for Sydney and for our State.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (12:46): My question is directed to the Premier. Currently, water buybacks in the Murray-Darling Basin cannot occur if they cause negative socio-economic impacts. Will the Premier protect rural communities and support this vital safeguard?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:46): I thank the member for her question. I make it clear that the Government does not want and does not support proposals that will have a negative impact on New South Wales regional communities and economies. We have made that clear to the Commonwealth as well. We do not want buybacks used for water recovery, particularly when you consider that much of the infrastructure work promised by successive Commonwealth and New South Wales governments for the Murray sector of the basin has not been provided, nor has it been provided to the Darling sector. At the end of the day, if you are purchasing water to sit in a dam and not be used for environmental purposes at some point on the river system, what is the point of it? We have made it clear to the Commonwealth that we want to work with it in relation to the Murray-Darling plan. That means progress.

Of course that means infrastructure works across the entire system so that when environmental water is purchased it actually gets to sections of the river that require that water—rather than purchasing it, having it sit in a dam and never using it for environmental recovery. We are cognisant of the fact that, if you are purchasing water from regional communities and you are not taking into consideration the effect on that regional community's economy, it will have massive impacts on its towns, small- and medium-sized businesses, economic growth and employment. We have taken that into consideration. We have made our views abundantly clear to the Commonwealth Government. That does not mean we are walking away from the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement, but the Commonwealth is in no doubt about our position.

A part of this process also requires the New South Wales Government and all governments to make progress when it comes to those infrastructure changes on the river system. For about 12 years not much was done

on either river network, the Darling system or the Murray system. The National Party at the Federal and State level pretended that the Murray-Darling Basin process was continuing and that there had been progress when it comes to environmental water and outcomes, particularly in those far-reaching regional communities. But at the end of the day they gave lip-service to the agreement while stalling any appreciable change. That is what must change from the previous Government to the current Government. We have made our position clear, and we will continue to engage with the Commonwealth Government, but we do not want to see regional communities go backwards.

TASKFORCE MAGNUS AND CRIMINAL ASSET CONFISCATION TEAM

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (12:49): My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Will the Minister tell the House about how the NSW Police Force's Taskforce Magnus and the Crime Commission's new Criminal Asset Confiscation Team will tackle organised crime on our streets?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (12:50): Firstly, I thank the member for Mount Druitt as the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Counter-terrorism for his genuine interest and concern for police officers and the support he shows them right across the State. They thank him very much, as do I. It is very clear: We will not tolerate the kind of brazen criminal behaviour we have seen in the past month and also dating back a couple of years. Like most people in New South Wales, I have had a gutful of these reckless criminals. That is why I and NSW Labor are backing the NSW Police Force and the Crime Commission and resourcing them to tackle these violent shootings. Last week I stood with Commissioner Webb and deputy commissioners Hudson and Lanyon as they launched the new task force, Taskforce Magnus. These significant, targeted resources will specifically tackle the recent spate of public shootings by gang-related criminals in our community and on our streets.

Let me say a little bit about this mammoth effort we have right now. Taskforce Magnus will coordinate the investigation of the recent shootings we have seen. It is headed by Detective Chief Superintendent Jason Weinstein, who has nearly 30 years' experience and is responsible for the formation and the continued success of Raptor Squad. Seventy of the country's best, most highly skilled detectives are on the case, alongside 30 other officers. They are knocking on doors, making arrests and keeping our streets safe. Raptor Squad is executing firearm prohibition orders.

Mr Alister Henskens: People are being killed every day.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I acknowledge the interjection. For the benefit of the member, I can reveal to the House that, just over the weekend and yesterday, NSW Police Force officers raided six homes and executed searches following firearm prohibition orders. They made three arrests and have laid five charges against three men. That is the task force just warming up.

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

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Make no mistake, those responsible will be held to account and will absolutely feel the full force of the law. This is not new, as we well know. We have seen these spikes before, including just a couple of years ago, and we know that standing up a task force like this one works. Large-scale, tough police action eventually put an end to the spate of shootings. People were arrested and are in prison as we stand here today. *[Extension of time]*

We will not just stop there. We cannot tackle this scourge just by putting a few brazen street hoods in police cells. That is why we have announced a new \$2.1 million investment into the New South Wales Crime Commission to confiscate the wealth of high-ranking organised criminals. The Criminal Asset Confiscation Team will work alongside Taskforce Magnus to chase the money that is fuelling these feuds on our streets. These criminals keep themselves separated from the thugs they put out to commit these violent crimes. They pay lawyers and accountants to hide their ownership of vast assets. Many of them never face charges. Let me say that we are coming for their assets. The Crime Commission's new team will identify the fast cars, the mansions and the luxury goods all funded by illegal activities.

A highly skilled team of forensic accountants, intelligence analysts, lawyers and investigators will team up with the Organised Crime Squad to target money assets of those rich crime bosses. They will freeze them and will seize them. Make no mistake, we are coming for the criminals' mansions and their cars. If they cannot explain where they got them from, we will confiscate them. We will be right behind Taskforce Magnus and the Criminal Asset Confiscation Team and will give them everything they need to tackle organised crime in New South Wales to keep our streets safe. I thank the member for Mount Druitt again. I know he feels very strongly about making sure that our streets are safe for the communities we represent. We can only hope that those on the opposite side will support the Government's initiatives and stand with the NSW Police Force, instead of bagging it all the time.

SYDNEY METRO WEST

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (12:55): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. Will the Minister continue having glass barriers on Sydney Metro West stations and not make changes that will require rail union members to drive or staff the Sydney Metro West trains?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:55): I welcome the member's question and his detailed interest in public transport. It really is getting down to the detail now.

The SPEAKER: Government members will come to order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: If the member is so interested, I would love to share with him the variety of issues that this Government and I have been dealing with as a result of the mess those opposite left us. As I said earlier, there is no mode of public transport that does not have their fingerprints on it. They have left a complete and utter mess. When it comes to ferries, they are not fit for purpose, were made overseas and do not fit under bridges. Bus contracts are not fit for purpose, and the multinational overseas operators have no idea about the local streets and the people they need to look after. The trains did not fit the tracks.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: The Minister has not gone near the issue of Sydney Metro West trains, barriers or the use of union—

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

Mr Alister Henskens: It is taken under Standing Order 129. It is a very specific question. She has not gone near answering it.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga makes a reasonable point. I uphold the point of order and ask the Minister to be directly relevant to the question.

Ms JO HAYLEN: I am more than happy to address issues in relation to the metro because it is an area that was left in a complete and utter mess. I will go to the issue of safety. In fact, it is one of the key issues being addressed by the Sydney Metro independent review. It is about safety on the metro and, in particular, Sydney Metro's engagement with Fire and Rescue NSW. Under those opposite, there was no collaboration with our emergency services and no collaboration with our transport workforce. As a result, an unsafe design was on the table. But thanks to our approach, which is a sensible, methodical approach that gets independent advice and works with our partners, particularly those responsible for passengers in an emergency, we now have a formal agreement, which is that a member of Fire and Rescue NSW be embedded with Sydney Metro to make sure that that design is safe and that, in the event of an emergency, the people dedicated to saving lives are able to do so. That is how responsible governments act, and we will continue to act in that way.

TREASURY MANAGED FUND

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (12:58): My question is addressed to the Attorney General, representing the Minister for Finance. Will the Minister update the House about the financial sustainability of the Treasury Managed Fund [TMF]?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (12:59): I thank the good member for her question. Members on this side of the House hold the TMF and particularly workers comp very dear. It was one of the first battles that we fought and lost as a newly elected government. I acknowledge the efforts of the now Minister for Industrial Relations, who spoke in the other place for six or eight hours. We lost the battle at that time to protect the scheme, and now we are faced with a war to protect it. We will protect it and we will repair it.

The State's insurer, icare, is made up of two main entities: the Nominal Insurer and the Treasury Managed Fund, which is the public sector workers compensation scheme. We have spoken about them in this place for decades. Those entities are crucial because they provide protections for 3.2 million people in the private sector as well as every public servant who works directly for the people of New South Wales. They do so by collecting insurance premiums from 329,000 public and private sector employers, so balancing their costs and expenses is important. Proper administration is crucial not only for the schemes themselves but also for the businesses, workers and families that rely on the schemes when their loved ones come home injured from work. Governments also rely on them.

Over a decade ago, one of the first acts of the former Government was to dismantle the schemes and introduce what members opposite called a better scheme. They promised financial sustainability, but \$4 billion of ad hoc taxpayer contributions were made to prop up the schemes from 2018 onwards. Members opposite also promised to be responsible, but they used premiums to pay a US Republican Party operative \$700,000 a year to work in a Liberal Treasurer's office. They introduced a claims management model that both businesses and injured workers agreed at the time was a disaster, and then they did nothing to change it. They allowed \$4 million in

bonuses to go to the top eight executives in 2018, despite losing almost a billion dollars that year. They kept premiums artificially low so they could show off to their mates in the private sector while the scheme was falling apart underneath them. They awarded a \$140 million IT contract even though the tender was only out for seven days. They also awarded an \$18 million printing contract without tender to the Liberal Party's printer and a major donor. *[Extension of time]*

Then the entire Coalition, including the Leader of the Opposition, had the gall to vote against the Government's bill to ensure that icare operated with integrity, and now Government members have to clean up the mess. Before we rose for the winter recess, the Treasurer said:

I can inform the House that on Friday [16 June] I authorised a \$473 million injection into the Treasury Managed Fund [TMF]. That follows the \$1.9 billion that was transferred last year and the \$1.8 billion that was deposited three years ago. That is a little over \$4 billion worth of bailouts in four years. The TMF's responsibilities include making sure our essential workers return to work after they get injured on the job. We all want essential workers to return to work as soon as it is safe to do so, and we have begun work on a public sector-wide return to work policy. But fixing this scheme, like fixing icare, will be painstaking. We expect it to take years because this scheme, like the entire New South Wales workers compensation scheme, is bedevilled with a passel of problems.

We are undergoing a comprehensive expenditure review, going through every activity of government line by line. Every time we turn over a rock, the irresponsible, craven people opposite have left a surprise for us under it. It is always black holes covered in red ink. But do not worry; we will fix it. It will take time, but we are determined to fix it.

SYDNEY METRO WEST

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (13:04): My question is directed to the chair of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure. Will the committee undertake any work to ensure the delivery of Sydney Metro West?

The SPEAKER: Government frontbench members will come to order.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (13:05): Unaccustomed as I am to being asked questions by the Opposition, I am happy to answer as chair of the committee. Members can obviously ask questions regarding our processes, and I am sure the committee is hugely interested in what the previous Government did on Sydney Metro West. There is a raft of questions: Is it the \$25 billion blowout? Is it the lack of commitment to the infrastructure?

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

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ: Is it the inability of members opposite to deliver any single transport project without having a budget blowout? Whether it is the light rail into the electorate of Coogee, the blowout on the Sydney Metro West or stage one and stage two of the light rail—

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

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ: I am sure the fantastic member for Parramatta would be deeply interested in what is happening with stage two of the light rail, which members opposite failed at every level to deliver. It is interesting how they are always able to deliver the infrastructure projects that they want for their electorates.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: As entertaining as the stream of consciousness has been, the question was very specific: Will the committee undertake any work to ensure the delivery of Sydney Metro West?

Mr Chris Minns: She already said she was going to hold an inquiry into you guys.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Wahroonga for his clarification of the question. The member for Auburn has the call.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ: I note the interjection by the Premier that Government members would love to hold an inquiry into every single transport project that members opposite undertook. In fact, I would like to ask the Liberal members of the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure—

Mr Paul Scully: Who are they?

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ: No, you are right; there aren't any. They care so much about transport and infrastructure. Is the member for Kellyville on it? We had not noticed, but we will talk about it later. But I am sure I can keep the House updated on anything the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure is doing.

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

NORTH-WEST SYDNEY SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (13:08): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Government is delivering new schools in Sydney's north-west?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (13:08): I most certainly will, and I thank the member for Riverstone for his question. The fact that there is a Labor member for Riverstone in this Chamber comes down to our Government delivering schools for the growing north-west areas. We came to government promising to end the neglect of Sydney's north-west. We have seen a population explosion in this part of Western Sydney. If members have not been to areas like Schofields, Tallawong and Marsden Park, they just do not know what is happening out there. As thousands of families moved in, what did the Liberal-Nationals Government do? It walked away. It failed to deliver for those communities. It failed to deliver the schools that were needed for those fast-growing suburbs. Now it is up to the Labor Government to fix the previous Government's mess—something that is becoming somewhat of a trend.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members, particularly the member for Upper Hunter and the member for Ryde, will cease having private conversations.

Ms PRUE CAR: Opposition members are simply not interested in north-west Sydney. As a result of our commitment, we are fast-tracking the delivery of three new schools already: two primary schools at Tallawong and Nirimba Fields and a high school—finally—in Marsden Park that the community has named Melonba High School. I remind the House that the Liberals promised that school in desperation days before the 2019 election, yet years later they had delivered nothing.

The SPEAKER: The member for Upper Hunter will come to order.

Mr Warren Kirby: They couldn't care less.

Ms PRUE CAR: As the member for Riverstone said, they simply could not care less. Let me reference a popular movie: They are as vacuous as a Ken doll.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Oatley will resume his seat. The Clerk will stop the clock. Opposition members are being disorderly. I do not need a lesson from the member for Port Macquarie. Members on both sides of the House, but particularly the Opposition, will come to order. I am surprised at the disorderly conduct of a number of members today. The Minister, and Deputy Premier, will be heard in silence.

Ms PRUE CAR: I say to the Opposition that we also tried that talking strategy and it never ever worked.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: I reiterate that the previous Government was as vacuous as a Ken doll, as we have all seen on social media. It is no wonder so many Opposition members were posting those ridiculous selfies at the *Barbie* movie.

The SPEAKER: The member for Terrigal will cease talking to staff.

Ms PRUE CAR: The member for Bathurst has, and the member for Ryde is my favourite, posing as a Ken doll—those opposite are the Ken doll caucus. Unlike the previous Government, our Government is delivering on our commitments. We are delivering the new schools that these communities need. [*Extension of time*]

Mrs Wendy Tuckerman: Why do you have to be a mean girl? Stop being a mean girl.

Ms PRUE CAR: I note the interjection from someone opposite calling me a mean girl, and I just say that what I am actually doing is standing up for the communities of north-western Sydney, which the Opposition failed to do for a whole decade in office.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: As an urgent stop measure, we are erecting temporary schools and then we will build the schools that are needed in north-western Sydney. I acknowledge the brand-new principal we have just appointed at Melonba High School, Leon Weatherstone. On Sunday he said:

There's very strong demand and a very large area of housing growth ...

I know many ... families that I've spoken to have been really grateful that this is [finally] happening ... because they've been concerned about having to send their children [too] far away to be able to get an education in high school ...

The New South Wales Labor Government is fixing that once and for all. This should not have been a surprise. The previous Government released areas like Marsden Park, Tallawong and Nirimba Fields, but never thought that young families would need somewhere to send their children to school. For years, those parents, the grandparents and the children in these areas campaigned for these primary schools and high schools. They pushed the previous Government to deliver the schools they were promised. They were ignored. Do members know what they did? The House knows what they did. They changed the government, so they are getting the schools that they deserve in these fast-growing areas of north-west Sydney.

Mr Paul Toole: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume her seat. The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Paul Toole: In relation to Standing Order 129, the Minister made a point about the *Barbie* movie. I make the point that my attendance at the movie was raising funds for cancer. It was a fundraising event for cancer. I would like the Minister to retract her statement because it was for Daffodil Cottage.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The matter can be dealt with by way of a personal explanation. The Minister has the call.

Ms PRUE CAR: It was a funny joke.

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order—

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

Ms Eleni Petinos: The Deputy Premier has just said her language in this Chamber was used as a "funny joke". I ask her to withdraw the comment, specifically when she referred to the Ken doll caucus. Recently other comments in this Chamber have been withdrawn due to the offence it caused members opposite. I ask the Deputy Premier to withdraw the comment, which is offensive to two Opposition members. I do not think language like that is acceptable in this place. The Deputy Premier should know better than to diminish the members of this place.

The SPEAKER: The member for Miranda will resume her seat. The Deputy Premier has been asked to withdraw the comment. Will she withdraw?

Ms PRUE CAR: No, I will not withdraw my comment. But I say to the member for Bathurst that, more than many people, I well know how important it is to raise money for cancer, so do not throw that at me.

The SPEAKER: Members, including those on the Government front bench, will come to order so that we can hear the next question from the member for Badgerys Creek.

SYDNEY METRO WESTERN SYDNEY AIRPORT

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (13:16): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. Will she rule out cancelling the Western Sydney airport metro project?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (13:16): I thank the member for Badgerys Creek for her question and for her interest in delivering quality public transport services. Again I indicate to the member that the former Government, of which she was a part for many years, unfortunately failed to think about passengers in terms of not only building future transport but also delivering transport services. We have seen total failures across every single mode of public transport. All parts of the Sydney Metro project are part of the Sydney Metro independent review, which we announced back in April, only a couple of weeks into our term of office, because we had inherited a mess. We inherited a portfolio of projects that has already blown out by \$17 billion. Any government would be completely irresponsible not to take a proper look at a series of projects that has already blown out by \$17 billion.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Alister Henskens: Again, it was a very specific question: Will she rule out cancelling the Western Sydney airport metro?

Mr Ron Hoenig: To the point of order: Under Standing Order 131 (9)—the provision that the member for Wahroonga put in the standing orders—these points of order are vexatious and repetitive. If the Opposition's tactics are so poor that they keep asking ridiculous questions about the metro, they get what they ask for.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister has the call.

Ms JO HAYLEN: We are taking a methodical and responsible approach, unlike those opposite, who just kept writing cheques. Members on this side of the House know that every time a project blew out and those opposite kept writing cheques, that was money that could not be spent on schools, hospitals and public transport projects that our communities need and on the communities that they forgot about in their long period in government. I will not apologise for taking a responsible and methodical approach, instead of continuing to write cheques.

Our interim review has been received, and we made an announcement about it. We will receive the final report in October. We will consider that independent advice and report back. That is a responsible approach. The Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport is a critical line for the community of the member for Badgerys Creek and for communities right across Sydney and New South Wales. We know that the success of that airport is dependent upon reliable public transport. We are proud to be delivering that essential project in conjunction with the Federal Government, and we look forward to delivering that essential piece of infrastructure.

RURAL AND REGIONAL HEALTHCARE STAFF

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (13:20): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health and Minister for Regional Health. Will the Minister advise the House on what the Minns Labor Government is doing to address healthcare staff shortages in regional and rural areas?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (13:20): I thank the member for Lismore. She raised the issue of the single-employer model with me very early on. She had an understanding of it and saw the benefits of it, and we are pleased to be rolling it out and expanding it. One of the first conversations I had—and one that I think every State health Minister before me has had—was with my Federal counterpart about what programs are working well locally with their support and where we need to do more. One program was the single-employer model, which the member for Wagga Wagga and others know very well. It was trialled in the Murrumbidgee Local Health District, and it is about trying to provide a pathway for junior doctors to enter our Rural Generalist Training Program. It is an important program that enables doctors to be based both in an emergency department and in private practice.

We used to say, "What's the problem with that?" It is that those things have two different funding sources. There is the Commonwealth Government that largely worries about our GP practices. Then there is the State looking after employees in NSW Health. The single-employer model has been shown to provide a real incentive for rural generalists and junior doctors to stay in our regions. It does this, pretty simply, by ensuring that the benefits follow that employee and that they are employed through a single employer, being NSW Health. We are supported by the Commonwealth through the 80 places and through exemptions. This is an important first step for a program that is working.

Every single member from regional, rural or remote New South Wales—and I think most members in this place—will say that the biggest challenge facing our health system at the moment is staffing our hospitals and facilities. That challenge certainly keeps me up at night and I hope would be keeping up many other members at night. I have said from the beginning that the Premier made it very clear on day one that he wanted to focus on human capital, not just the bricks and mortar of hospitals. Whilst the bricks and mortar of hospitals are important, let us be really clear: It is the teams in NSW Health, whether they are in our hospitals, our health services or our mental health facilities, that deliver the health care that we rely on and that our communities need each and every day. *[Extension of time]*

It is my job as the Minister for Health to focus on those people, because we cannot deliver better health care unless we deliver more health staff. So the single-employer model has been a focus of mine. It is a program I got to know and understand in opposition. Those opposite should do some research; it might help. Within my first week I made contact with Minister Butler about the program and the need to expand it. I am very pleased that recently we have been able to expand it to 80 places. It is an important program. It is certainly not a silver bullet, but it is an important pathway for junior doctors to be attracted to, and remain in, our rural, regional and remote communities. That is very important to me and has been for a long time.

In the past three months we have recruited around 2,339 full-time equivalent positions into NSW Health. Around 1,100 of them are nurses, around 200 are junior doctors and medical staff, around 100 are paramedics and around 180 are allied health staff. This Government is focused, and will be focused every single day, on making sure that we can properly staff our health facilities. We have a big challenge. Many facilities are extremely challenged at the moment. That is why, through programs like the single-employer model and the Rural Generalist Training Program, we are trying our very best to make a dent to make sure our communities get the very best health services, which they need and deserve.

COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOLS

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (13:25): My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism representing the Minister for Regional New South Wales. In the hotter inland climates, public swimming pools are essential for community wellbeing and water safety. Will the Minister advise on the Government's response to the closure of the Walgett pool? Will the Minister consider asking NSW Public Works to inspect all swimming pools, especially in regional New South Wales, to facilitate a capital program to be put in place to avoid closures and ensure that planning is underway for end-of-life replacement?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (13:26): I thank the member for Barwon for his question and his genuine commitment to his community. I acknowledge how hot it can get in his electorate and how important pools are. That is the case not just in the Walgett area but also in regional New South Wales more broadly. The council-owned Walgett Memorial Swimming Pool has been a long-time fixture of that local community. The pool is an essential thread in the social fabric of the very proud town of Walgett. I understand that a rescission motion to overturn decommissioning of the pool at the council meeting on 31 July was postponed and that council has resolved to go to a risk-management process and then refer the issue again to an extraordinary meeting.

Every community deserves an opportunity to enjoy recreational facilities. That is why Minister Moriarty has asked her department to work with the council to undertake a survey of the pool. The Department of Regional NSW is working closely with Walgett Shire Council to assess the works required, costs and time line to maintain the pool's operations. The department will be speaking to the council this week to discuss potential options for opening the pool for the summer months. NSW Public Works is routinely engaged with councils right across regional New South Wales to inspect council-owned and -managed infrastructure like pools. Many pools are post-war legacies in regional communities, and councils have run and managed them for decades. Again, this is a longstanding issue that was left in the too-hard pile by the previous Government—a regular theme. But I assure the member for Barwon that we will take the issue very seriously.

Routine maintenance and depreciation of assets like these memorial pools is a role for local councils. The Government and the Minister for Regional New South Wales would be most happy to discuss these matters with the member's office and with regional councils to establish the pathway forward for these vital pieces of community infrastructure. I thank the member for Barwon for his question. As always, the member is genuinely concerned about his local community.

WOMEN IN SPORT

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (13:29): My question is addressed to the Minister for Women. Will the Minister update the House on the launch and on the season of the National Women's Rugby League [NRLW] competition?

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (13:29): I thank the member for East Hills for her well-known, passionate and enduring support of women in sport. I can think of no greater supporter. The New South Wales Government is an absolute strong supporter of women's games in our State. Today, this week, and after last night's game, the visibility of women's sport is at an all-time high. Go the Matildas! We just need to look at what happened in the FIFA Women's World Cup last night. Indeed, the opening match of the FIFA Women's World Cup broke ticket sales records, with close to 1.4 million tickets sold on the eve of the tournament. No doubt last night's game by the Matildas and their 4-0 win against Canada will inspire more young players and encourage more interest in the tournament.

It is so good to see not just female participation in sport, but also people's interest in women in sport growing rapidly in New South Wales. In fact, for rugby league alone, last year we saw 19,480 women and girls under the age of 15 registered to play—up from just under 16,000 just two years ago in 2021. The professional leagues are getting bigger and better every year to mirror this growth. Codes like the Australian Football League Women's [AFLW] league continue to expand, as has the NRLW competition, which this year has added four new women's teams. The Raiders, the Sharks, the Cowboys and the Tigers are now all in the women's competition, and it has happened in such a short space of time.

It was only in 2007 that the NRL introduced its first Women in League Round, highlighting the invaluable contribution of women to the game. Last week I had the pleasure of being at the launch of the Women in League Round. The theme for this year is "Women in League: There's more to play for". The theme recognises that, for all our progress and our successes, the push for greater equality across the game and, indeed, society is far from done. Certainly, the Minns Labor Government recognises that there is more to do and is committed to increasing the participation of women and girls in sport, both on and off the field. I talk regularly to the Minister for Sport

about these issues. We are doing this in several ways, such as by supporting medical research in sports science and the online course Women Are Not Small Men, by changing how we remunerate female athletes and by ensuring appropriate facilities for female athletes.

Ms Kylie Wilkinson: I seek additional information.

The SPEAKER: A two-minute extension is granted.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I thank the member for East Hills again for her ongoing interest. Before coming to government, we committed to funding State sporting organisations, and we are going to see funding for the Organisation Support Program increase to \$5 million in this financial year, doubling it to \$10 million in 2024-25. We are naming the eastern grandstand at Accor Stadium in honour of a female athlete, which is about increasing the visibility of women in sport. There will be more to say on that shortly. This is just the beginning of a female recognition program at venues managed by Venues NSW.

The Office of Sport also continues to work with the sector to provide the latest insights and help implement innovative projects to raise participation and celebrate the achievement of women and girls in sport. In many ways, sport is a mirror of our society. The Labor Government is working hard to increase women's participation on sporting fields, in boardrooms and in the halls of Parliament House. Unlike members on the other side, whose track record on gender equality leaves much to be desired, we mean business.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: In New South Wales, for the first time in our history, women now make up half of the Cabinet. We have the first woman Leader of the Government in the upper House. We have the first female Ministers of Police, of Energy, of Regional New South Wales, of Finance and of Regional Transport. I am proud to be part of a Labor government that values diversity and inclusion. As more women enter leadership positions, our representative democracy becomes just that: representative. I thank the member for East Hills for her question. In the words of the great H. G. Nelson, "Too much sport is barely enough."

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the students from Heritage College in the gallery, who have survived question time. Now go and have some lunch.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOICE TO NSW PARLIAMENT

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (13:35): By leave: In accordance with Standing Order 131 (7), I table a written response from the Premier to a question asked of him by the member for Kiama during question time on Thursday 29 June 2023.

Documents

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION

Reports

The SPEAKER: I announce receipt of the report of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *Operation Venti: Report pursuant to section 132 Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016*, dated July 2023, received on 13 July 2023. I order that the report be printed.

INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSION

Reports

The SPEAKER: I announce receipt of the erratum to the report of the Information and Privacy Commission entitled *Report on the Operation of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009: 2021-2022: Open Government, Open Access, Open Data*, received on 13 July 2023. I order that the document be printed.

PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS ADVISER

The SPEAKER: I announce receipt of the following advice from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser:

- (1) Copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to Mr Rob Stokes, former Minister, dated 4 July 2023.
- (2) Copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to Mr Rob Stokes, former Minister, dated 5 July 2023.
- (3) Copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to Mr Rob Stokes, former Minister, dated 6 July 2023.

I order that the documents be printed.

INDEPENDENT PRICING AND REGULATORY TRIBUNAL**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 19 of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Act 1992, I announce receipt of the following reports received out of session on 30 June 2023 and authorised to be printed:

- (1) Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *Sydney Desalination Plant Pty Ltd Review of prices to apply from 1 July 2023—Final Report*, dated June 2023.
- (2) Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *Prices for Sydney Desalination Plant's Water Supply Services—Final Determination*, dated June 2023.

INSPECTOR OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 49 of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007, I announce receipt of the report of the Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *Report under Section 49 (1) of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 for the period ending 31 December 2022*, dated March 2023, received out of session on 6 July and authorised to be printed.

LAW AND JUSTICE FOUNDATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 19 of the Law and Justice Foundation Act 2000, I announce receipt of the report of the Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales for the year ended 30 June 2022, received out of session on 11 July 2023 and authorised to be printed.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 161 of the Industrial Relations Act 1996, I announce receipt of the report of the Industrial Relations Commission for 2022, received out of session on 25 July 2023 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON REMOTE, RURAL AND REGIONAL HEALTH****Inquiry**

Dr JOE McGIRR: As Chair: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1), I inform the House that the Legislative Assembly Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health has resolved to conduct an inquiry into the implementation of Portfolio Committee No. 2 recommendations relating to workforce issues, workplace culture and funding for remote, rural and regional health, the full details of which are available on the committee's home page.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LAW AND SAFETY**Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 29 June 2023 Dr Hugh McDermott was elected deputy chair of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 29 June 2023 Mr Steve Whan was elected deputy chair of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES**Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 29 June 2023 Ms Trish Doyle was elected deputy chair of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING**Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 29 June 2023 Mrs Sally Quinnell was elected deputy chair of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment and Planning.

COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**Chair and Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 27 July 2023 Mr Jason Li was elected chair and Mr Mark Hodges was elected deputy chair of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Northern Beaches Bushland Conservation

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly repeal the decision to approve a development delivery plan for inclusion in a State environmental planning policy for six sites and future sites on the northern beaches; work with landowners to maintain, protect and preserve natural bushland; find alternatives to benefit Aboriginal communities; and stop current SEPP processes and DDP rollout, received from **Mr Matt Cross**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

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

The Hon. Paul Scully—Northern Beaches Bushland Conservation—lodged 20 June 2023 (Mr Michael Regan)

The Hon. David Harris—Drink Spiking and Sexual Violence Prevention—lodged 30 May 2023 (Mr Tim Crakanthorp)

The Hon. Jenny Aitchison—South Bowenfels Road Safety—lodged 30 May 2023 (Mr Paul Toole)

*Condolences***AUSTRALIAN ARMY HELICOPTER ACCIDENT**

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (13:39): I move:

That this House extends the deepest sympathy of members of the Legislative Assembly to the families, friends and loved ones of the four Australian Defence Force personnel who were on board the MRH-90 Australian Army helicopter.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Corporal Alexander Naggs and Warrant Officer Joseph Laycock. I speak on behalf of the entire House and, indeed, the entire New South Wales community when I say that, over the past few days, we have all hoped, and many have prayed, for a different outcome. Those men, aircrew of the MRH-90, were part of the 6th Aviation Regiment based at the Holsworthy Barracks in Sydney. We have hoped and prayed that the efforts engaged in the search and rescue of the crew would find them alive. It is hard to fathom how tragic this accident during training exercise has been.

We hold the families and friends of those four aviators in our hearts. We send love and support to them at this time of heartache and real grief. Our thoughts are also with those who served alongside the four young men—their friends and colleagues in uniform. Each of them made a decision to serve their nation and we must never forget the service and sacrifice they gave. It has been a terrible tragedy—in fact, the worst incident in two decades.

It is also a harsh reminder of the risks that the men and women who serve us experience in their roles and the courage that they show while serving their country.

On Saturday morning we first learned that on the previous Friday night at 10.30 p.m. the helicopter was ditched in waters close to Hamilton Island. A search and rescue commenced immediately. The aircraft was participating in a night-time training activity as part of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023. We hoped for a different outcome. Now, with time passing, we know it is almost impossible that they would have survived. It is a tragedy. Very sadly, yesterday we were advised that, given the time factor and the fact that the wreckage from the helicopter was recovered, it is presumed that all four have lost their lives. Military exercises carry real risk, but they are also important. On behalf of the Government, members of Legislative Assembly and the people of our State, I offer my deepest and sincerest sympathies and condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of those servicemen. Their service will not be forgotten. Lest we forget.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (13:42): It has been a difficult weekend for our nation and an extraordinarily difficult one for Australian Defence Force members and families paying tribute to the ultimate sacrifice paid by four brave Australian Army members. I join the Premier in offering the Opposition's deep condolences and extending our heartfelt sympathies to the families of Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Warrant Officer Class 2 Joseph Laycock and Corporal Alexander Naggs. They were partners, sons, brothers and friends and we acknowledge their selfless dedication to the Australian Defence Force values of service and courage. All four men were members of the 6th Aviation Regiment based in Holsworthy. I extend our sympathies more broadly to members and families of that regiment. The 6th Aviation Regiment provides air mobility and battlefield support to land and special forces, and their motto is one simple word: Vigilance.

Last Friday evening those four men were in an Australian Army MRH-90 helicopter that ditched in waters off Lindeman Island, close to Hamilton Island. They were participating in a two-helicopter mission undertaking a night-time training exercise. The accompanying helicopter immediately commenced search and rescue operations—a testament to its crew's professionalism and specialisation. In due course the HMAS *Brisbane*, HMAS *Adelaide* and HMAS *Huon* joined the operation, with further assistance from the Royal Australian Air Force, the Royal Australian Navy, United States Navy maritime patrol aircraft and helicopters and Canadian helicopters, as well as Queensland and Federal agency fixed-wing and helicopter aircrafts.

Over the weekend further international assistance was received. We acknowledge and extend our deep appreciation to the personnel involved in the recovery operations that are ongoing to retrieve the bodies and return them to their families so that they can be laid to rest. It is hard to imagine the fortitude required to continue in the endeavour when all hope has been lost. We acknowledge the vital support that our partner allies in Canada and the United States of America are currently providing to the recovery operations, which are being challenged by deep water, tides and currents.

Exercise Talisman Sabre is a biennial combined Australian and United States training activity, which has been running from 22 July and will be closing this Friday. Over 30,000 military personnel from 13 nations are taking part. By design and intention, Talisman Sabre is an intensive exercise to test the respective forces in planning and conducting multinational and multi-service military operations. It is intended to be a serious replication of contemporary wartime manoeuvres and strategy; it carries with it that same inherent risk. Talisman Sabre is intended to test to the extreme the capabilities of our armed forces to respond to security incidents and crises that threaten Australia's interests and those of our allies in the immediate Indo-Pacific region and across the globe.

In a way, Talisman Sabre is the embodiment of the 6th Aviation Regiment motto: Vigilance. This tragedy reminds us of the inherent dangers that face our brave servicemen and servicewomen even during peacetime, and that military exercises remain at their core a perilous imitation of conflict. I pay tribute to the memory of Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Warrant Officer Class 2 Joseph Laycock and Corporal Alexander Naggs, and thank them for their service to Australia. I again extend our heartfelt sympathies, thoughts and prayers to their families as they grapple with their loss now and in the weeks, months and years ahead. Lest we forget.

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the earlier resolution of the House, I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast) (14:31): As Minister for Veterans, I speak in support of this important motion. I pass on my condolences to the families of the four service personnel who were on board the helicopter that tragically went down off the northern Queensland coast near Hamilton Island last Friday. Our thoughts, prayers and sympathies are with the families and loved ones of Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Corporal Alexander Naggs and Warrant Officer Class 2 Joseph Laycock. The crew were participating in Exercise Talisman Sabre. All four were based at

Holsworthy Barracks, and I acknowledge the member for Holsworthy, who is in the Chamber and will speak shortly. It is a very sad day when search and rescue turns into a recovery operation. We all understand the realities of that decision and the impacts that will have on those closest to these servicemen. Today we pay tribute to those four servicemen, who served our country with honour and distinction and have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Today we remember those that were lost, those that responded and those that continue to endure grief and pain. We cannot imagine what their loved ones are feeling, but as a community we share their tragic loss. Our thoughts are also with the friends and colleagues in uniform who served alongside these four young men. We understand that it is a difficult time for all Australian Defence Force personnel, and for all those who have served and who serve our country every day. I encourage those personnel to take care of each other and reach out if they need any help. There is support available through the All-hours Support Line and through Open Arms Veterans and Families Counselling. We are here for them and we stand with them.

This accident marks Australia's worst peacetime military disaster in over a decade. We all understand the importance of training and the inherent risk that it involves, but that does not make it any easier. The accident was an absolute tragedy, and it reminds us all that service to the nation is not something lightly entered into. Every person who enlists does so knowing that it comes with risk. It is dangerous work. Those who serve know that it often comes with struggle and hardship, but also reward. They understand that sometimes it requires the ultimate sacrifice. It is the acceptance of that risk that makes our defence personnel extraordinary. They take on that risk to serve all of us, and to protect their community and their country. We ask a great deal of our defence personnel and they respond by keeping us safe. The men and women in our Defence Force give a lot personally to serve our country, as do their families. This tragedy reminds us what they risk in doing so.

This year Legacy celebrates 100 years of service to veterans and their families. Currently it serves about 40,000 partners and children who have lost loved ones across Australia. It particularly supports young people through their schooling and does so because of a promise that when a soldier loses their life, their mates will look after them. I acknowledge the work of Legacy and I know that it will be on hand to help those families at this tragic time. We are all still trying to make sense of what happened. These things should not happen, but unfortunately they can happen when dealing with machinery. Those young men served us with distinction and we as a community deeply feel and mourn their loss. In the veterans community in particular it is like losing a member of the family. My condolences go out to all veterans today; I know that they will be feeling this deeply. I honour again the service and sacrifice of Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Corporal Alexander Naggs and Warrant Officer Class 2 Joseph Laycock. None of them will be forgotten. Rest in peace. Lest we forget.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (14:38): It was with great regret that we learned the news that on 28 July at about 10.30 a.m. an MRH-90 Taipan helicopter crashed while undertaking Exercise Talisman Sabre, the Australian Defence Force's biggest training exercise involving more than 31,000 personnel from across 13 countries. The crash occurred in the Whitsundays, where training exercises were being undertaken by Australia and the United States. Sadly, this is the worst peacetime military disaster to occur in Australia for decades. On board the aircraft were four highly skilled serving members of the Australian Army: Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Warrant Officer Class 2 Joseph Laycock and Corporal Alexander Naggs. They were 6th Aviation Richmond Unit members based at Holsworthy Barracks. I was a member of the defence department well before the 6th Aviation Richmond Unit was established in that location, but I knew the area well as I was an army housing officer and would constantly engage with serving members and their families. There was an unwritten rule of camaraderie amongst them all and I saw it on a daily basis.

Captain Daniel Lyon joined the Australian Army in 2010. He was a highly respected troop commander with Australian Army Aviation and a decorated pilot. His family have said that his smile could brighten even the darkest days, with a light so bright they cannot imagine a world without him. I thank Captain Lyon for his service. Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent had community service in his blood. He was the son of senior New South Wales police officer Daniel Nugent and had a long-held dream of becoming an army officer. Born in 1998, he thrived as a member of the Australian Army Cadets. Where he saw challenges, his determination grew and persisted. His family remembers him as a larrikin who was stubborn, reliable, generous and a radiant light in their lives. I thank Lieutenant Nugent for his service.

Warrant Officer Joseph Laycock was born in 1980 and had an early interest in aviation, with his dad volunteering as an instructor for the Australian Air Force Cadets. Warrant Officer Laycock began his tenure with the Australian Defence Force in November 1999 when he enlisted as a combat engineer. His family remembers him as a devoted dad and enthusiastic mountain biker who was known to regularly prepare the family's Christmas dinner with his excellent cooking skills. He probably learnt those skills during his time in the Defence Force. I thank Warrant Officer Laycock for his service.

Corporal Alexander Naggs served in the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment alongside Queensland MP Phillip Thompson, who said, "He is one of the nicest blokes I've ever met." His family remembers him as a

hardworking, generous and kind man who was always there for his mates. It is a testament to his character within the Australian Defence Force. I thank Corporal Naggs for his service. Since Friday, Australia has lived in hope that the four men would be found alive. However, an announcement yesterday by the Federal Minister for Defence, Richard Marles, signalled a recovery mission of what was once a search and rescue. More than 800 military personnel and emergency services volunteers are committed to bringing our servicemen home.

It is a stark reminder of the sheer contribution and commitment that our defence personnel make when they enlist to defend our country. Even during times of peace, Australian Defence Force personnel put themselves on the front line to protect and serve us. Family and friends of these four men are missing their loved ones. Together, we offer support for those who are feeling an enormous weight upon their heart right now. I thank the Minister for Veterans for his comments about that. I offer my deepest sympathy to the families, friends and colleagues of Captain Lyon, Lieutenant Nugent, Warrant Officer Laycock and Corporal Naggs. Lest we forget.

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (14:41): It is with a heavy heart that I join my fellow members in this place and the other place in paying tribute to the four exceptional Australian Defence Force personnel who lost their lives in a tragic helicopter crash on Friday 28 July 2023. During military Exercise Talisman Sabre, a military helicopter crashed off Lindeman Island in the Whitsundays. The four individuals who lost their lives—Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Warrant Officer Class Two Joseph Laycock and Corporal Alexander Naggs—were part of the 6th Aviation Regiment based out of Holsworthy Barracks in my electorate.

Holsworthy, the base from which the 6th Aviation Regiment operated, has been a place of immense pride and honour for our community. The men we remember today were not just skilled servicemen; they were our neighbours, friends and loved ones. Their presence in our lives has left an indelible mark, and their loss is deeply felt by everyone in Holsworthy and beyond. As we come together to mourn their untimely departure, our thoughts and prayers go out to their families, friends and their fellow colleagues at the 6th Aviation Regiment. We cannot begin to fathom the pain and grief they are experiencing, and we offer our unwavering support and solidarity during this difficult time.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all of the search and rescue teams, including the Queensland Police Service, the Australian Maritime Safety Agency and our allies from the United States, who have been tirelessly working to find their missing colleagues and the rest of the wreckage. Their determination and unwavering commitment to this effort serves as a testament to the unbreakable bond that exists among those who serve in uniform. The loss of these four exceptional individuals is a poignant reminder of the inherent risks faced by those who serve in our military, both in times of conflict and in times of peace. Their sacrifice accentuates the profound responsibility we have to ensure their safety while they protect and defend our nation.

In the midst of this tragedy, let us also extend our gratitude to all those at Holsworthy Barracks who have served alongside Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Warrant Officer Class Two Joseph Laycock and Corporal Alexander Naggs. The brave men and women based out of the Holsworthy army base have dedicated their lives to the service of our nation, embodying the values of courage, commitment and selflessness. In moments like these, we are reminded of the support services available for our Defence Force personnel and their families. The defence all-hours support line, Open Arms, Soldier On and the Defence and Veterans Legal Service provide crucial support and counselling during challenging times like these.

Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Warrant Officer Class Two Joseph Laycock and Corporal Alexander Naggs will forever remain in our hearts, etched into the fabric of our nation's history. Their dedication and bravery inspire us all to cherish the freedoms they protect and to honour their memory through our commitment to peace and unity. As we face the challenge of understanding and overcoming this tragedy, let us also unite in gratitude for the immeasurable sacrifice and dedication of our service men and women. Their selflessness ensures our freedom and security, and we owe them an unending debt of gratitude. Let us remember that whilst investigations and recovery are underway, we are united in our grief and determination to find answers and bring solace to those affected. May we find comfort in our shared sense of community and the knowledge that we are stronger together.

As we move forward, let us come together as a nation, bound by the common thread of gratitude and respect for those who wear our uniform and serve to protect our way of life. Today, we stand united in grief, and we pledge to ensure that their legacy lives on in the hearts of generations to come. Despite our profound sorrow and deep solidarity, may we find strength in our collective support for one another and draw comfort from the knowledge that our fallen heroes will never be forgotten. Let us stand strong as a nation, rallying around the families, friends and colleagues of Captain Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent, Warrant Officer Class Two Joseph Laycock and Corporal Alexander Naggs as they endure this unimaginable loss. Lest we forget.

Debate adjourned.

*Documents***LIQUOR AND GAMING DATA COLLECTION****Tabling of Correspondence**

Mr ALEX GREENWICH: I table the following:

- (1) Correspondence from the New South Wales Crime Commissioner relating to the member for Sydney, dated 31 July 2023.
- (2) Correspondence from the New South Wales Crime Commissioner to the Director Legal, Information Unit, Department of Enterprise Investment and Trade, dated 28 July 2023.

Production of Documents: Order Amended

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (14:47): In accordance with the earlier resolution of the House, I move:

That the resolution of the House of 25 May 2023 for the order for papers relating to investigations into money laundering in clubs and pubs, subsequently amended on 21 June 2023, be further amended by:

- (1) Omitting paragraph 1 (h) and inserting instead:
 - (h) any documents relating to gaming machine compliance checks; and
 - (i) any documents relating to the New South Wales Crime Commission inquiry into money laundering via electronic gaming machines.
- (2) Inserting the following new paragraphs after paragraph (1):
 - (2) That documents referred to in sub-paragraphs (1) (a), (1) (b), (1) (c), (1) (e) and (1) (i) are to be provided only if:
 - (a) the documents, or the information contained in the documents, have not prior to 25 May 2023 already been, in the opinion of the New South Wales Crime Commissioner, reviewed or considered by the New South Wales Crime Commissioner; and
 - (b) the documents are comprised exclusively of raw data outputs from the centralised monitoring system, regardless of whether or not they have been reviewed or considered by the New South Wales Crime Commissioner.
 - (3) Documents produced in accordance with paragraph (2) are to be produced in redacted form if, in the opinion of the New South Wales Crime Commissioner or their delegate, production of the document in unredacted form would be prejudicial to the exercise of the Crime Commission's investigative function or to the conduct of any criminal proceedings that may arise out of investigations undertaken by the New South Wales Crime Commission.
- (3) Omitting paragraph (5), which restricts inspection of the returned documents to members only.

I seek to amend the motion passed by the House that calls for certain papers relating to money laundering and associated enforcement and compliance in electronic gaming machines. The amended motions follow discussions with the New South Wales Crime Commission, which late last year released a damning report estimating that billions of dollars of proceeds of crime is being laundered through washing and spending on poker machines in pubs and clubs every year.

The initial motion was moved after I was provided with information that there was greater evidence of money laundering of the washing or cleaning kind in pubs and clubs than was reflected in the Crime Commission's report. That original motion was amended to ensure that the New South Wales Crime Commission could review all of that evidence before documents were produced to Parliament. The commission has now assessed those documents comprising 8,497 that the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade has stated were within the scope of the motion, and it dip-sampled approximately 460,000 that were held by Liquor and Gaming NSW that fell within the time frame but were not considered within the motion's scope.

The New South Wales Crime Commission found 125 documents that were not provided to the commission as part of the Project Islington investigation that should have been. I understand that, since providing these documents, Liquor and Gaming has now claimed that 38 were not within scope. However, the Crime Commissioner has disputed that claim in a letter, which I have tabled, and all parties agree that those documents will now be released. It is deeply concerning that Liquor and Gaming did not provide the Crime Commissioner with key documents during Project Islington and then sought to limit those same documents from this call for papers. The documents that were not considered as part of Project Islington investigations are now the focus of the amended call for papers. These papers, which did not contribute to investigations or findings and were not included in the final report, should now be publicly available.

The documents in question reflect suspicions that money laundering of the cleaning kind is occurring in pubs and clubs to a greater extent than is reflected in the final Crime Commission report. I remind the House that Project Islington found both cleaning and spending of money, but concluded that spending the proceeds of crime in pubs and clubs was more widespread. The concerns raised reflect data from the Central Monitoring System, or

CMS, some of which, I understand, will indicate money going in and then going out of machines without being played. But the Crime Commissioner has stressed that this data is not reliable enough for identifying money laundering alone. Other explanations can be made for the figures and, therefore, conclusions can only be made following further detailed analysis and investigation, such as assessing CCTV footage and questioning users identified as suspicious. The Crime Commissioner has written to me outlining the shortcomings of the CMS data and I have tabled that letter.

What is clear from the items in this call for paper and following my conversations with the New South Wales Crime Commissioner is that there is a transaction data void when it comes to detecting the different types of money laundering that occur in clubs and pubs. There is no mandatory transaction tracking system that can identify money laundering. The Crime Commissioner again makes it clear in his correspondence to me that the best way to address this is through cashless gaming. While the amended call for papers will focus on data and documents that have not been seen by the New South Wales Crime Commission during Project Islington and the raw data that needs further analysis to draw indisputable findings about money laundering, the call for papers will still include matters around complaints, compliance and enforcement of electronic gaming machines in pubs and clubs to ensure the papers capture a wider picture of the situation.

The amendment also includes requirements for redacting documents to protect informants, criminal investigations and proceedings. This means the documents no longer need to be limited to just members of Parliament and therefore the motion will enable them to be made public this Friday. Money laundering is a serious matter, and it should be a priority for the expert panel to make urgent recommendations on how to investigate and combat the proceeds of crime being put into the 90,000 poker machines across the State. I hope that a great deal of information within the call for papers is able to help us achieve that.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (14:53): The Government agrees with the motion moved by the member for Sydney. The member for Sydney can correct me if I am wrong, but in fairness to Liquor and Gaming NSW, from the correspondence that the member for Sydney has tabled it seems the 125 items of correspondence that should have been produced to the Crime Commission were in fact marked to be produced but for some reason they were not. In fairness to Liquor and Gaming, it had identified documents that should have been produced that for some reason have not been produced. They will be, no doubt, the focus of the call for papers and the focus of either further investigation or, alternatively, the inference, either direct or by implication, that can be drawn from those documents when they are produced.

I have not seen any of the material other than the correspondence that has been tabled. As the member for Sydney indicated, the data that has been available to the Crime Commission does not allow the commission, which has a far lesser test than a court, to draw inferences in respect of widespread money laundering. Whilst I accept that further investigation is required, when the matter was initially brought to the House a number of clubs were identified that may well have been impacted by genuine assertions made to the member for Sydney whereby a number of those clubs were named. I think it is clear at this point in time that the data does not indicate what the member for Sydney feared it did indicate. In reply the member for Sydney can correct me if I am wrong. It is now far too early for adverse inferences to be drawn against those specific named clubs. We will await the examination of the documents. I suspect though that those documents may well indicate some future public policy concerns that this House may well be concerned about, but we will wait for those documents to be produced.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (14:56): I indicate that the Opposition will support the motion. I also make a few observations. The first is that from the correspondence the member for Sydney has just tendered, it is particularly concerning that 125 relevant documents were not supplied to the New South Wales Crime Commission for the purposes of its inquiry. I do not say whether it was inadvertent or deliberate. The member for Sydney is to be commended for having undertaken this process, which has at least brought to the attention of Parliament, and ultimately for the benefit of the Crime Commission, the 125 documents in question.

This process is a good example of the importance and potential use of calls for papers in the future. This process has been beneficial in terms of public interest. It indicates where there may well be other opportunities in the future to use this process in the public interest. The Opposition will be supportive of reasonable uses of this process. I must say that the Opposition took to the general election a far more robust policy for cashless gaming than the Government did. We continue to see the importance of cashless gambling not only for harm minimisation but also for money laundering. If we have advanced that policy in some way by supporting the member for Sydney in this process, I think this is a good outcome. I thank the member for Sydney. We support his motion.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (14:59): In reply: I thank the Government and the Opposition for supporting the variation in the call for papers. In varying the papers, I note that I am saving elements of the public service some 750 hours in redacting material. It is important to make a call for papers that is in the public interest but also ensuring it is done in a way that does not waste the time of public servants. We are seeking to do that by

limiting the number of documents being produced. The Leader of the House is correct in his assertion that the CMS data does not indicate widespread money laundering through organised crime in clubs and pubs.

The Crime Commissioner made clear to me that CMS data may indicate suspicious activity, but because it is not linked to an actual transaction, bank account or person there is a void of information that would otherwise identify, investigate or mitigate money laundering that is occurring in clubs or pubs at the moment. I know the Government is concerned about that and I appreciate it establishing the expert panel to look into those matters. I hope it is treated with urgency. I thank the Opposition and all members of the House for their continued support. This will be the last time this call for papers will be amended because the relevant documents will be made public on Friday.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

REVENUE, FINES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Michael Daley, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (15:02): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 amends a number of Acts as part of the Government's ongoing program of maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of the revenue legislation. The State's revenue is integral to funding our State's vital public services, including its schools, hospitals, roads and transport systems. As such, the revenue legislation needs regular amendment to ensure that it is kept up to date and remains effective.

The reforms in the bill fall into seven broad categories: first, amendments to State taxation legislation to enhance revenue integrity, ensure the equity of exemptions and concessions, address anomalies, respond to court decisions, close tax avoidance loopholes, increase penalties and reduce red tape; second, amendments to government sector finance legislation to support the recovery of act-of-grace payments made under government programs; third, amendments to fines legislation to enhance administration and create new offences relating to false nominations and false or misleading information, with the latter offence also being incorporated into State debt legislation; fourth, amendments to police legislation to enable sharing of fines information between the NSW Police Force and Revenue NSW; fifth, amendments to unclaimed money legislation to aid recovery of incorrectly paid money and improve overall administration; sixth, amendments to valuation of land legislation to provide for objection rights and make changes to the handling of sales information data; and seventh, amendments to shared equity scheme legislation to ensure that the payments are validly made into the NSW Shared Equity Scheme Fund.

The bill makes amendments to State taxation legislation, namely the Duties Act 1997, Land Tax Management Act 1956, Payroll Tax Act 2007, Property Tax (First Home Buyer Choice) Act 2022 and Taxation Administration Act 1996. I will deal firstly with the Duties Act amendments, set out at schedule 1 to the bill. The Duties Act amendments are comprised of changes to ensure that duty concessions and exemptions operate equitably and as intended, changes to reduce revenue leakage and minor clarifying amendments. The first set of duty concessions I will speak to are those relating to managed investment schemes and superannuation funds. Currently, concessional duty of \$50 applies to certain internal transfers of property within a managed investment scheme that do not change the ultimate beneficial ownership of the property. However, the provisions for this concession have become outdated, as they do not contemplate modern-day holding structures. In addition, the definition of "a managed investment scheme" is limited to registered schemes, which makes transfers following the deregistration of a scheme ineligible for the concession. The amendments modernise the duty concession to address these issues.

The second duty concession relates to transfers of property that occur as a result of a person changing their superannuation fund, the intention being that such transfers should not attract full duty if the value of the property does not exceed the person's entitlement. However, the provisions are loose and create a risk of revenue leakage in cases where consideration is paid for the transfer of the property. The amendment addresses this by requiring that the value of the property cannot exceed the value of the person's entitlement and that no consideration can be paid for the property. Secondly, the concession is intended to apply only to a person who is genuinely changing funds by requiring the person to cease being a member of the old fund before the transfer and to become a member

of the new fund after the transfer. However, a person may already be a member of the new fund at the time of the transfer because entitlements are being consolidated into the one fund. To address this, the amendment will allow the concession to apply where the person is already a member of the new fund before the transfer.

The third duty concession relates to certain transactions over property vested in an apparent purchaser. A concessional rate of duty of \$50 applies to a declaration of trust made by an apparent purchaser or a transfer from an apparent purchaser to the real purchaser. Currently, if either person dies, the duty concession no longer applies because it does not extend to a legal personal representative, such as an executor or administrator. To address this inequity, the amendments extend the concession to the real or apparent purchaser's legal personal representative. Finally, the bill will introduce a new duty exemption. Increasingly, the Government is transferring properties to registered native title body corporations, which represent native title holders once native title has been determined, as compensation for entering into Indigenous land use agreements. These agreements permit the Government to continue doing certain things, such as managing fire trails and undertaking bushfire protection work. The amendments will make these transfers exempt from duty.

I now speak to the measures that seek to reduce duty revenue leakage. The first concerns the duty aggregation provisions. Dutiable transactions that form part of a single arrangement may be aggregated to ensure that duty is calculated on the total value of the arrangement and not minimised through splitting. Currently, for transactions to be aggregated, they must occur within a 12-month period. However, this 12-month time limit can result in some transactions, which are part of a single arrangement, evading the aggregation provisions simply because they occur over a longer period. For example, an option to purchase a dutiable property may be exercised more than 12 months after the grant of the option but is clearly part of the same arrangement. The essential test is whether the transactions are part of a single arrangement. Accordingly, that amendment removes the requirement that the transactions occur within a 12-month period.

The second measure relates to divisions. A division is a type of corporate dealing available in some overseas jurisdictions. It allows a company to effectively split into two separate companies, with assets held by one and certain assets held by another. However, for liability and contractual purposes, both companies are deemed to continue to be the original company. In some cases, the original company also continues to exist after the division. Currently, the treatment of divisions under land tax and other legislation is uncertain as they are not a dealing that fits neatly within Australian corporations law. Nonetheless, divisions involve a movement of assets that is similar to transactions that are recognised under Australian corporations law and subject to tax, including duty. The amendments ensure that such divisions will be subject to duty, similar to how mergers are presently liable to duty. That strengthens the integrity of the New South Wales duty regime and addresses an area of potential revenue leakage.

The bill also contains a number of minor duty amendments. Every year more duty transactions involving electronic instruments are occurring. Uncertainty has arisen as to when and where an electronic instrument is first executed. When an electronic instrument is first executed determines when duty is due and whether interest and penalty tax apply. Currently, the Act provides that an electronic registry instrument is first executed when it is digitally signed by a subscriber to the Electronic Lodgment Network, such as a legal practitioner. However, there are instances where an instrument is not digitally signed and is uploaded without a digital signature. To address that, the bill deems the time and date when an unsigned electronic instrument is first executed to be when information relating to it is received.

A nominal duty of \$500 is charged on the establishment of a trust over unidentified property or non-dutiable property if that trust is first executed in New South Wales. Uncertainty has arisen as to whether a trust executed electronically outside New South Wales is considered to be "executed in New South Wales" for duty purposes. The amendments will deem the place of a trust's execution to be where the trustee is based. Those amendments are consistent with the existing principles under the Electronic Transactions Act 2000 in relation to electronic communications generally. That will help provide certainty and clarity, and will ensure that revenue legislation stays up to date with practices in an increasingly digital world. The other clarifying amendment concerns the recalculation of duty when the original consideration payable changes before the property is transferred. With duty rates now being indexed annually, uncertainty has arisen as to what rate of duty should apply for the recalculation. The amendments clarify that the applicable rate is that at the time of the original agreement.

I turn now to the amendments to the Land Tax Management Act 1956 in schedule 4. The bill contains two land tax amendments. One amendment removes a redundant land tax concession for rural land that has been rezoned for subdivision for residential or commercial use but is continuing to be used for rural business. As land that is used for primary production is generally exempt from land tax, that concession is effectively redundant. The second amendment removes a requirement that land used solely for a school must also be owned by the entity that operates the school in order to be exempt from land tax. That requirement is unnecessarily restrictive and imposes a potential cost barrier to the development and use of land for educational purposes. The amendment will

enable the exemption for land that is used solely for a school, regardless of whether it is owned by the school's operator.

I now turn to the amendments to the Payroll Tax Act 2007 in schedule 5 to the bill. The payroll tax amendments achieve an important revenue integrity measure and target the well-known problem of phoenix activity. Phoenix activity is when a company is liquidated to avoid paying its debts. Before liquidation the company's assets are transferred to a new entity, controlled by the same directors or shareholders, to carry on the same or similar business but without the debt. That type of mischief is a major concern to Commonwealth and State regulators, not only because of tax avoidance but also because of the harm caused generally to individuals, businesses and other creditors to whom the debts are payable—for example, employees who miss out on wages, suppliers that are left unpaid and businesses that are at a competitive disadvantage.

Currently, entities can be grouped together for payroll tax purposes when they are owned or controlled by the same people, including directors or shareholders of companies and partnerships, as well as beneficiaries of trusts. The grouping rules prevent businesses from avoiding payroll tax by splitting the employment of workers across multiple entities to claim the payroll-tax-free threshold multiple times. When grouped, each entity is liable for any outstanding payroll tax of the other entities. However, entities cannot be grouped with ones that have ceased to operate—that have been phoenixed.

The amendments will extend the grouping rules to allow Revenue NSW to group a company that is in administration, is winding up or is deregistered with any successor entity, whether it is a company, partnership or trust. The entities would be linked if the same person exercised sufficient influence over the former entity and the successor entity. That would make the successor entity jointly and severally liable for the payroll tax debts of the phoenixed company. To ensure that legitimate businesses are not caught by those provisions, the Chief Commissioner of State Revenue will be empowered to exclude an entity from being grouped if satisfied that there is no phoenix behaviour. Those amendments strengthen the integrity of the New South Wales revenue system while furthering the measures available to combat the harmful practice of phoenixing.

The bill also includes an amendment to the Taxation Administration Act 1996 that will enable its promoter penalty provisions to be applied to promoters of phoenix activity. Those provisions include the imposition of civil penalties and injunctions, as well as the making of voluntary undertakings. I now turn to the other amendments to the Taxation Administration Act 1996 in schedule 9 to the bill. Those amendments relate to five key areas: first, penalties for breaches of confidential tax information; secondly, increased penalties for offences that hinder compliance activities; thirdly, time limits for out-of-time objections and reassessments; fourthly, information sharing; and, fifthly, administrative improvements for valuations, refunds and payments.

I start with the first of those. I am sure that I speak for all members of this House in expressing my shock and dismay over the revelations concerning the use of confidential Commonwealth Government taxation plans by persons at PricewaterhouseCoopers [PwC] to assist their clients to avoid the very purpose of such plans—to tackle tax avoidance. PwC was engaged by the Commonwealth to assist in the design of those anti-avoidance strategies, and yet various persons at PwC brazenly monetised that information for their own profit—an utterly disgraceful breach of trust. While Revenue NSW does not consult commercial bodies or involve them in the design of legislation, it does consult certain industry bodies, such as the Law Society of New South Wales and the Taxation Institute of Australia, on draft legislation on a confidential basis. While such consultation is valued and we want it to continue, it is necessary to send a clear message in light of the PwC scandal that breaching the confidentiality of taxation information will not be tolerated.

The Minister for Finance indicated publicly some months back that this Government would introduce legislation to impose multimillion-dollar penalties for the unlawful use or disclosure of confidential tax information. The bill delivers on that commitment. The use or disclosure of confidential tax-related information will attract significant penalties of 10,090 penalty units or \$1,109,900 for an individual and 50,450 penalty units or \$5,549,500 for a corporation, partnership or association. The Chief Commissioner of State Revenue will also be allowed to report any person to any relevant professional body, publish details of the breach and undertake investigations into suspected breaches.

I now turn to the second group of reforms to the Taxation Administration Act 1996. This bill enhances the existing penalties regime in the Act. Offences relating to taxpayer activities that impede a proper assessment of tax liabilities will be increased and a new offence will be introduced for evading or attempting to evade tax. The current penalties for poor taxpayer behaviour are inadequate and are generally significantly lower than those for the same or comparable offences in other Australian jurisdictions—for example, in Victoria the maximum penalty for making knowingly false or misleading records is 240 penalty units or \$39,653, while in New South Wales the maximum penalty is 100 penalty units or \$11,000.

Since the Taxation Administration Act 1996 was introduced, the penalties have not been updated and their effectiveness has been eroded over time. Increasing the penalties provides greater encouragement to taxpayers to comply with their obligations. It strengthens deterrence against taxpayers who engage in blatant efforts to avoid or minimise tax, or do not exercise due care. Penalties will generally be increased by two and a half times, while penalties for more serious offences such as providing false or misleading information will be increased by five times. The bill also introduces a new penalty offence for evading or attempting to evade tax. This offence will have a maximum penalty of 1,000 penalty units or two years' imprisonment, or both.

The third area of reform concerns the time limits in applying for objections and reassessments. First, a taxpayer has 60 days to lodge an objection. However, they can lodge an objection out of time, explaining why they could not object within the 60-day period. Second, Revenue NSW can only reassess a tax liability within five years of the initial tax assessment. There are limited exceptions to this rule. These time limits are designed to give certainty to both the taxpayer and the State. However, recent court cases have revealed some anomalies in how these time limits operate. First, there is no time limit for lodging objections out of time. If an objection is successful, Revenue NSW may need to issue a reassessment many years after the five-year time limit has expired. This effectively negates the purposes of the time limit on reassessments. To address this, the amendments will require objections out of time to be lodged within five years of the initial tax assessment or decision.

The second anomaly relates to an exception to the five-year limit on reassessments. This exception permits reassessments beyond five years where facts were not fully disclosed to Revenue NSW, resulting in a tax liability that is less than what Revenue NSW would have assessed had it known those facts. This imposes a hypothetical test—what Revenue NSW may have done—which has caused uncertainty in applying the exception. To address this, the amendment clarifies that the exception only requires consideration of whether, as a result of facts not being fully disclosed, tax was assessed at a lower amount.

Lastly, another exception to the five-year limit on reassessments is where the reassessment is to give effect to an objection or review decision of an initial assessment. However, there may be cases where an objection or review decision is of a reassessment—for example, where an audit was conducted resulting in a reassessment and the taxpayer then successfully objects to that reassessment. The amendment clarifies that this exception applies to objection or review decisions of any assessment, including a reassessment. These amendments will ensure that the time limits on objections and reassessments operate as intended.

The fourth key area concerns the disclosure of information which Revenue NSW collects in the course of administering tax laws. Currently, Revenue NSW is prohibited from disclosing such information except in prescribed circumstances. The amendments will permit the disclosure of such information to Service NSW and New South Wales Treasury because there are good policy reasons to do so. Firstly, Revenue NSW and Service NSW are increasingly collaborating to deliver a range of services and programs and to provide an integrated customer experience for the people of New South Wales. The information held by Revenue NSW will be valuable to Service NSW to assist in verifying a person's eligibility for a service or program. Allowing this information sharing will help to reduce the risk of fraud and error, enabling customer applications to be processed more smoothly.

Secondly, such tax information is needed by New South Wales Treasury to assist with revenue forecasting and policy development. Although Revenue NSW can currently provide de-identified tax data to New South Wales Treasury, there may be circumstances in which it becomes possible to identify a taxpayer—for example, when the data is combined with other information, such as publicly available information or where a tax applies only to a small group of taxpayers. It is simply not possible or practicable for Revenue NSW to determine what data may be re-identifiable or to withhold all data from New South Wales Treasury simply because of the notional possibility that a taxpayer's identity may be ascertained. The amendment will therefore permit tax information to be disclosed to the Treasury but only for specified purposes.

Finally, the bill includes three administrative improvements relating to valuations, tax refunds and tax payments. First, Revenue NSW currently may request a land valuation from a taxpayer. Revenue NSW may also obtain its own valuation but must bear this cost even if the taxpayer's valuation proves to be manifestly incorrect. The amendments will enable Revenue NSW to require a taxpayer to provide evidence of the value of a property for the purpose of assessing their tax liability. Revenue NSW will also be able to obtain a valuation on its own initiative. Where that valuation differs from the taxpayer's by at least 10 per cent or the taxpayer fails to provide a valuation within 60 days when required, Revenue NSW will be able to recover the cost of obtaining the valuation from the taxpayer. These amendments will encourage taxpayers to provide more timely and accurate valuations to Revenue NSW, when requested.

The second improvement relates to the application of tax refunds to other debts. Currently, Revenue NSW may use a person's tax refund to offset that person's other tax debt, grant debt or State debt. The amendment will extend this to enable a tax refund to be applied to a person's fines debt. This would support the timely resolution

of fines. I note that, as this power is discretionary, Revenue NSW would be able to consider the person's circumstances before undertaking such action. The third improvement will modernise the provisions for methods for paying tax. Currently, the Act expressly permits a person to pay by bank cheque. This is hampering efforts by Revenue NSW to discourage the outdated and inefficient use of cheques by some taxpayers. The amendments instead will provide a broad discretion for Revenue NSW to approve the methods of payment. This will still allow for cheque payments in limited circumstances.

I turn now to some amendments concerning the property tax initiative of the previous Government, which are at schedules 7 and 11 to the bill. Although the property tax initiative is now closed to new participants, the bill introduces two amendments to improve the administration of the scheme for those who entered it. The first of these corrects minor drafting errors in the Property Tax (First Home Buyer Choice) Act 2022 and the second amendment relates to the Valuation of Land Act 1916, which I will speak to later. That concludes the amendments relating to tax.

I move now to the amendments to the Government Sector Finance Act 2018 at schedule 3 to the bill. The Government Sector Finance Act 2018 enables an act of grace payment to be made to a person in special circumstances, even if the payment is not provided for by law or required. A payment may be made subject to terms and conditions that, if breached, may make the payment repayable. In recent times, Revenue NSW has been administering various grant and community support programs through act of grace payments—for example, payments to provide tax relief for individuals and businesses affected by extreme events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters. Although these grants and programs are subject to terms and conditions, Revenue NSW is not able to use its powers under the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to support compliance activities to ensure that recipients are eligible and that payments are being applied as intended. This is because the Government Sector Finance Act 2018 is not a taxation law. The amendments address this by extending the application of the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to the act of grace payments in a number of respects.

First, where a term or condition of an act of grace payment has been contravened, the amendments will enable Revenue NSW to recover the payment using its tax recovery powers under the Taxation Administration Act 1996. For example, Revenue NSW will be able to recover the payment from third parties such as a bank, which may hold money in an account for a recipient that banks with them. Secondly, the amendments will enable Revenue NSW to exercise its investigative powers to determine whether a recipient has contravened a term or condition of an act of grace payment. Those powers include, for example, the power to require a third party to provide information or documents that may assist to verify the recipient's eligibility. Lastly, the amendments apply the offences and penalties under the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to act of grace payments. This includes, for example, offences for giving false or misleading information or deliberately omitting information. The amendments will only apply in respect of act of grace payments nominated by the Chief Commissioner of State Revenue in the *Government Gazette*.

I now turn to the fourth category of amendments in the bill. Those largely relate to the Fines Act 1996 at schedule 2, with one being mirrored in the State Debt Recovery Act 2018 at schedule 8. The first amendment will permit Revenue NSW to share information obtained in fines administration with Service NSW. For similar reasons to those I have previously outlined supporting the disclosure of tax information to Service NSW, fines information should also be able to be shared. The second amendment creates two offences that will further deter the provision of false or misleading information to Revenue NSW. The first is in the context of false nominations. For certain driving and traffic offences, the fine and any demerit points are issued to the registered owner of the vehicle. If the owner was not driving at the time, they may nominate the person who was the driver or the driver may nominate themselves.

The fine and any demerit points are then transferred to the nominated person. Currently, it is an offence for a person to make a false nomination. This may be done not only to avoid a fine payment but also to avoid demerit points that could lead to the driver losing their licence. However, there is no offence for a person who offers or agrees to be falsely nominated. Such persons are effectively selling their demerit points. The creation of this new offence will further combat the practice of false nominations, which compromise the integrity of the demerit point system and the safety of road users. This new offence carries a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units if the offence relates to a vehicle or vessel registered to an individual or 100 penalty units for a non-individual.

The second offence to be introduced is where false or misleading information is provided to Revenue NSW. There have been a number of instances where such information has been provided to Revenue NSW in applications for the review of a fine or State debt. Although there is an offence of providing false or misleading information to Revenue NSW in its administration of tax, there is no such offence in the context of fines or State debt. This new offence will be introduced to both the Fines Act 1996 and the State Debt Recovery Act 2018, bringing them in line with the tax legislation. The offence will carry a maximum penalty of 100 penalty units.

The third amendment makes two enhancements to the Work and Development Order, or WDO, scheme. Since its inception, the WDO scheme has assisted many fines recipients to resolve their fines debt through undertaking certain activities, such as unpaid work, taking a course or receiving treatment. One of the activities that may be undertaken is to participate in a mentoring program. However, the Act currently restricts this to persons under 25 years of age. I cannot see why a mentoring program for a person aged 25 years and over should be considered any less valid or less appropriate for a WDO than a mentoring program for a young person. Almost 40 per cent of current WDO participants are aged 26 to 39 and it seems unfair to preclude their participation in a mentoring program from the WDO scheme. The amendment will remove this age limit on mentoring programs.

The second enhancement will support the use of WDOs for persons outside New South Wales. In some circumstances, a person living outside New South Wales may incur a New South Wales fine. For example, a person living in a cross-border community may be issued a New South Wales fine while travelling in New South Wales. Although the *Work and Development Order Guidelines 2017* already support interstate organisations and health practitioners to be approved sponsors for an interstate person applying for a WDO, the amendment will enshrine that within the Fines Act. This will ensure that the WDO scheme continues to be available to those outside New South Wales, in particular those in regional and border communities.

Finally, the bill includes two miscellaneous fines amendments. First, the Act deems a fine and reminder notice to be properly served on a person even if it is "returned to sender". This ensures a fine cannot be avoided simply by the person sending it back. However, this rule does not apply to overdue fine notices—that is, enforcement orders. If an overdue fine is returned to sender, Revenue NSW cannot proceed with enforcement action. This has compromised the ability of Revenue NSW to take enforcement action in many cases, particularly in relation to corporate entities. Some entities have sought to take advantage of this and accrue a substantial fines debt without consequence. The amendment addresses this by enabling a "returned" overdue fine to be deemed as served where it is served to a company to their registered office. This is appropriate given that companies are legally required to maintain the correct registered office address on the records of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. Companies are also often used as a shield for individuals to avoid being personally liable for a fine.

The second miscellaneous amendment improves the process for Revenue NSW writing off a person's fines debt. Write-offs occur when a person is considered unlikely to be capable of paying and enforcement action is unlikely to be successful. Currently, a person may have multiple fines, some of which may be overdue and others that have not yet become overdue. Although Revenue NSW may have sufficient information to support the writing off of a person's fines debt, the Act only permits overdue fines to be written off. This means that the person remains burdened with the fines that are not yet overdue, including receiving reminders and overdue notices, even though Revenue NSW is aware that those fines will eventually be written off as well. This is counterproductive for Revenue NSW and stressful for the person. The amendment will enable Revenue NSW, in writing off overdue fines, to include a person's fines that are not yet due. This would be on the proviso that Revenue NSW is satisfied that those fines should be written off as well and that they should not be separately considered at a later time.

I now turn to the amendments to the Police Act 1990 at schedule 6. Under the Fines Act 1996, information can be shared between Revenue NSW and the NSW Police Force to support the enforcement of fines. However, there are no provisions in legislation that allow for Revenue NSW to share information with the NSW Police Force for other law enforcement purposes or in the investigation of a serious offence. The bill amends the Police Act 1990 to insert new section 211H, enabling the Commissioner of Police and the Commissioner of Fines Administration to enter into an information-sharing arrangement for the purpose of sharing or exchanging information that is held by the Commissioner of Police or the Commissioner of Fines Administration. This necessary amendment will enable Revenue NSW to share information collected through the administration of the Fines Act 1996 with the NSW Police Force for law enforcement purposes. Under the amendment, the information that can be shared under any agreement is limited to information that assists in the exercise of the law enforcement and investigative functions of the NSW Police Force.

I come now to the amendments to the Unclaimed Money Act 1995 at schedule 10. The first amendment relates to the application of the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to the Unclaimed Money Act 1995. Although the former Act already applies to the latter, the amendment extends this further to enhance the recovery of incorrectly paid unclaimed money. On occasion, unclaimed money can be incorrectly paid to a person who is not the true owner due to error or fraud. Currently, to recover such money, Revenue NSW must go through the courts, which can be a long and costly process for all involved. This amendment will enable Revenue NSW to leverage its tax collection powers, such as the power to garnishee a bank account, to recover the money.

Secondly, a person whose application for unclaimed money is denied currently has no right to seek a review of that decision. The bill will amend this to provide objection and review rights to such persons, in line with the rights available to a taxpayer disputing a tax assessment. This includes a right to internal review and external

review by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal or the Supreme Court. The third amendment relates to the unclaimed money register. Currently, Revenue NSW is required to publish an unclaimed money amount even where the owner's identity is unknown. As you can imagine, this is not a particularly useful exercise. This amendment removes this obligation on Revenue NSW.

The fourth amendment concerns disputed money. For example, a solicitor's trust account may receive a deposit from a prospective buyer of a property. However, the contract falls through, and the vendor and purchaser are in dispute as to whether the deposit is refundable. This money may be "untouched" for quite some time due to the dispute and inadvertently fall within the definition of "unclaimed money". This amendment will prevent enterprises from remitting such money to Revenue NSW, which actually is not "unclaimed" but simply the subject of an ongoing dispute as to who is its rightful owner. The final amendment will allow a person's successful unclaimed money claim to be applied towards their tax, grant, fine or State debt, if they have one. This is consistent with how a person's tax refund may be applied towards their other debts, and helps support a single, integrated view of customer payments and debts across Revenue NSW.

I move now to the amendments to the Valuation of Land Act 1916 in schedules 11 and 12. The first of these consists of changes to the Valuation of Land Act 1916 and consequential amendments to the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to allow objections to valuations of land for the purposes of property tax assessments. These amendments will operate in the same way as the objection provisions for land values used for land tax assessments. The second amendment to the Valuation of Land Act 1916 is required to ensure that the Valuer General may continue to receive and use property sales information collected by the Registrar General to carry out statutory functions and provide property sales information to third parties.

Statutory amendments in 1992 provided for sales data to be centrally collected by the Registrar General, but in doing so did not explicitly authorise the Valuer General to receive and use property sales information collected by the Registrar General despite it being clearly intended that the Valuer General should receive such information. These amendments rectify this issue and clarify the authority of the Valuer General to receive, use and/or provide property sales information to third parties when it is lodged directly with the Registrar General. The amendments will operate retrospectively because the Valuer General's practice of receiving and using property sales information collected by the Registrar General has continued without knowledge of legal constraints since 1992.

The final set of amendments are to the First Home Owner Grant and Shared Equity Act 2000 at schedule 13. The schedule includes amendments to the First Home Owner Grant and Shared Equity Act 2000 to ensure the proper and ongoing operation of the NSW Shared Equity Scheme Fund, known as the fund. In November 2022 the enabling legislation for the NSW Shared Equity Scheme established the fund in the Special Deposits Account, which is separate from the Consolidated Fund. However, this legislation did not ensure that money previously appropriated could be paid into the fund. This amendment retrospectively provides that payments totalling \$42,077,194 were validly paid into the fund by the Department of Customer Service in 2022-23 and consequently that money could then be validly paid out of the fund.

The schedule also includes a provision so that going forward the Treasurer will be able to direct money appropriated by Parliament to the Treasurer into the fund. This authority is consistent with the set-up of other government funds. This will ensure that the fund can be topped up by the Treasurer outside of a budget cycle if required. The need for this direction's power may arise where higher than expected government contributions for Shared Equity Scheme purchases require more money in the fund or where there is a policy decision to increase take-up of the program. An example of such a policy change is the current consideration to broaden the eligibility criteria for the Shared Equity Scheme being explored by the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Shared Equity Taskforce. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AMENDMENT (RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION) BILL 2023

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 28 June 2023.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (15:46): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023. The Opposition will support the bill. Although I am sure that the Attorney General will not rush to the Liberal Party website, I indicate that on the website there is a clear statement of the beliefs of the Liberal Party of Australia. They include a belief in the inalienable rights and freedoms of all people, which include, as part of the most basic freedoms of parliamentary democracy, freedom of thought, worship, speech and association. An amendment that protects the freedom of worship or non-worship from vilification is absolutely core to Liberal Party beliefs, so it will be a very small step

for the Liberal Party to support the bill, which includes protection from religious vilification in the Anti-Discrimination Act.

I also indicate that, although the drafting of new section 49ZE of the Anti-Discrimination Act is in more modern language, the components of the proposed protection of religious vilification within the bill follow very closely the other vilification provisions within the Anti-Discrimination Act. The Act protects matters such as race, homosexuality, HIV status, sex and other characteristics from vilification or discrimination. For example, in section 20C of the existing legislation, subsection (1) states:

It is unlawful for a person, by a public act, to incite hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of, a person or group of persons on the ground of the race of the person or members of the group.

I understand that some people have raised a concern that the proposed religious vilification provision in the bill includes a protection for a person or a group of persons on the grounds of their religious belief or affiliation. But that form of provision is already within the Act in respect of other acts of vilification. It is entirely consistent with the Act as it is currently drafted. I have not heard any suggestion from anyone that it is inappropriate so I do not understand the argument that it would be inappropriate in relation to religious vilification. The provisions in subsection (2) of new section 49ZE of the bill include carve-outs for a fair report of a public act or a communication or the distribution of any matter on an occasion that would be subject to a defence of absolute privilege and the like. Similar provisions occur elsewhere within the Act.

They are contained, for racial vilification, in subsection (2) of section 20C of the existing Anti-Discrimination Act, as they are in many other provisions of that Act. The bill provides a fairly modest protection with regard to religious vilification consistent with the rest of the Act. People ought to have the freedom to either believe or not believe in religion. The Opposition believes that is a fundamental human right. It is protected in the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It is a well-respected right in many other areas of discourse. For that reason, we support the bill.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (15:52): I support the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023. It is important legislation. The New South Wales Labor Party went to the election promising to introduce this bill within the first 100 days of government, and we have delivered on that promise. Now we must deliver this bill for the people of New South Wales. The reason is simple. We are seeing an unfortunate increase in acts of religious vilification. Whilst anecdotal concerns have been raised by members of the Jewish, Hindu, Sikh and Islamic community, we are also seeing a rise in religious vilification being reflected in data.

I turn first to the incidents of vilification directed at Australian Muslims. The fourth *Islamophobia in Australia* report examined 930 verified incidents, 515 offline and 415 online, between 2014 and 2021. It cited examples of Australian Muslims being physically attacked and assaulted, having their property damaged or being subjected to intimidation and threats. It is of great concern that there is rarely an attempt to make such objectionable behaviour secret or to disguise the nature of the act. Indeed, the behaviour often occurs in crowded and very public places. The report also found that eight in 10 victims were women, with the majority wearing the hijab at the time of the incident. The number of Islamophobic incidents increased significantly after the mosque attacks in Christchurch, with reporting of physical incidents quadrupling and reporting of online cases increasing 18 times in the two weeks after the Christchurch attacks.

There is also evidence confirming a rise in antisemitism in New South Wales. Australia wide, the number of antisemitic incidents is at the highest level ever recorded. There were reports of 490 antisemitic incidents during 2021—a 38 per cent increase over 2020 and the highest on record. Abusive behaviour accounted for 424 incidents, followed by 29 incidents of damage and desecration, 20 threats, 10 assaults and seven incidents of antisemitic literature. New South Wales experienced the highest reported number of antisemitic incidents, making up 53 per cent of the incidents. There were 89 incidents in synagogues and 42 incidents in Jewish schools. Three of the 11 physical assaults were targeted at schoolchildren. In New South Wales 84 incidents were recorded by the NSW Police Force Engagement and Hate Crime Unit as having hate crime involvement.

Each of those statistics is a lived experience, an incident of trauma causing long-lasting and significant harm. And each incident is completely unacceptable. Australia and New South Wales must do more. We must do better. We are one of the most successful multicultural states in the world, a fact celebrated by both sides of this Chamber. In addition to celebrating our cohesion, we must also be prepared to defend it against those who seek to divide us. We have more than 139 different religions and faiths and more than 310 different ancestries in the State. Nearly one in three people in New South Wales was born overseas. More than one in four use a language other than English at home. This vibrant diversity is our strength. It is the fragile fabric that binds our communities together. It must be protected.

Too often we hear of cases such as that of Rana Elasmr. A young woman, Rana was sitting in a cafe wearing the symbol of her faith, the hijab. Rana was born and raised in Sydney, an Australian Muslim. Despite being heavily pregnant, Ms Elasmr was repeatedly punched and stomped on in an unprovoked attack. The man who attacked her spoke of his hatred of Muslims prior to hitting her. After her attack she wrote, "We cannot allow behaviour like this to become the norm and sit silent." Ms Elasmr is right. We cannot allow this societal rot to go untreated. New South Wales is proudly multicultural and multi-faith. The New South Wales Government must nurture and defend that tradition against those who advocate hatred and even violence against other citizens. That is why the bill is so important.

The bill's aim is modest, measured and respectful. It utilises the existing structure and jurisprudence already in place to deliver better protection to our religious communities. It aims to deliver protections consistent with those afforded in the existing prohibition of vilification on the grounds of race, homosexuality, HIV/AIDS status and transgender status. It will ensure that our religious communities receive the same protection against vilification as our LGBTQIA+ community and our multicultural communities. It makes it unlawful to, by a public act, incite hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of a person or group of persons because of their religious belief, affiliation or activity.

The bill puts our laws in line with the laws of several other jurisdictions in Australia, including Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. We are not breaking new ground. We are not forging into the unknown. We are implementing a tried and tested solution that provides an appropriate level of protection to people of faith. It should also be noted that all other jurisdictions with religious vilification provisions also provide protection from vilification because of the absence of religious belief or activity. We will ensure that the same protections are afforded in New South Wales.

As I have said, this bill is measured and respectful. Whilst it contains provisions against religious vilification, it does not make religion or religious activities immune from criticism, nor does it allow religion to be used as a platform to vilify others. Rather, the bill allows for reasonable and good-faith public acts such as discussions or debate in the public interest to occur. This means we can continue to have respectful and tolerant debate on religion. We can continue to have open and constructive discussions about faith's role in our modern society. But let me be clear, the bill will ensure that the incitement of hatred or violence based on religious belief, affiliation or activity will not be allowed to continue. It is as simple as that.

I commend the Attorney General, who has put forward a deeply considered bill. I also thank Imam Shadi Alsuleiman, President of the Australia National Imams Council; Reverend Michael Stead, Bishop of South Sydney, Anglican Diocese of Sydney; Ms Monica Doumit, Director of Public Engagement, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney; Mr Surinder Jain, National Vice President of the Hindu Council of Australia; Mr David Ossip, President of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, and Mr Darren Bark, the former CEO of the Jewish Board of Deputies; Mr Albel Singh Kang, Company Secretary of the Australian Sikh Association; and Mr Murray Norman, the CEO of Better Balanced Futures. These individuals and their organisations have worked collaboratively and constructively with us both in opposition and now in government. I thank them and everyone involved in this process. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (16:01): I welcome the opportunity to speak to the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023. The bill follows a series of attempts by State and Federal governments over the course of many years to put into words concepts that will attract sanctions applied by the state, but which are tied in with the shifting sands of community expectations and aspirations. As the Minister said in his second reading speech:

The provisions do not protect religion or religious beliefs themselves, and they are not intended to be used to silence criticism or debate. Instead, they give appropriate remedies to people who are subject to incitements of hatred, serious contempt or severe ridicule on the basis of religion.

It is useful to understand that the ambitions of the bill are limited. This is but an early step in what is rightly expected to be an ongoing series of policy developments and pieces of legislation. The question of appropriate acknowledgment of religious freedoms and how best to protect them while also giving protection against vilification was a subject of debate before the last Parliament was prorogued. Today we continue the debate. The bill sets out to extend existing legislated vilification protections for the benefit of people of faith. The process of creating, limiting or extending what our society calls its basic freedoms is subject to the pendulum swings of the times. Australia is a multicultural, multi-faith nation that remains in the flow of defining itself. Tensions develop, and we must manage those trigger points when fair and honest discussion of conflicting viewpoints becomes toxic. As ever, this is about finding balance. The Minister expressed this sentiment when he said:

It is important that the prohibition as a restriction on public expression strikes the right balance between protection from vilification and ensuring appropriate freedom of expression and religion.

In the 2005 Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal case of *Fletcher v Salvation Army*, VCAT interpreted the word "incites" to include conduct that "inflames" or "sets alight". The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission notes in this case that the key word is "incites". It said:

In its context, this does not mean 'causes'. Rather it carries the connotation of 'inflammation' or 'set alight'. The section is not concerned with conduct that provokes thought; it is directed at conduct that is likely to generate strong and negative passions in the ordinary person. An example of such passions would be where persons are so moved that violence might result.

It is clear the test to be applied is an objective one. The outcome does not depend upon the reaction of the person making the complaint. Nor does it depend upon whether the conduct was intended to incite hatred.

The object of the bill is to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to make it unlawful to vilify a person or group of persons on the ground of the person's or group's religious belief or affiliation or engagement in religious activity. Schedule 1 amends the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 by inserting new sections 49ZD and 49ZE.

New section 49ZE creates the offence of religious vilification, which makes it unlawful for a person, by a public act, to incite hatred towards, serious contempt for or severe ridicule of a person or a group of persons on the ground that they have or do not have a religious belief or affiliation, or that they engage in or do not engage in religious activity. Exemptions are provided for fair reporting of a public act; by subsection 2 (c) for a public act, done reasonably and in good faith, for academic, artistic, scientific, research or religious discussion or instruction purposes or for other purposes in the public interest, including discussion or debate about and expositions of an act or matter; and for a communication where the matter would be subject to a defence of absolute privilege in proceedings for defamation.

New section 49ZD defines what a "public act" is for the purposes of part 4BA. It comprises an extensive list of acts, including gestures, display of certain symbols, clothing, flags, insignia, speaking, writing, printing, broadcasting and more. There is no doubt that the protections are provided to those who profess a religious faith or belief and equally to those who do not. The latter is brought within the spectrum of the bill because, as the Minister said, "Not holding a religious belief is itself a belief about religious matters, which should be protected from vilification."

A faith-based Christian school in my electorate wrote to me about broader issues and concerns when legislating on protections that could potentially cut two ways. The correspondence reflected the level of support in our community for faith-based schooling, and asked whether I would support the right of parents to choose a school that can choose its staff based on their belief in, and adherence to, the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the religion concerned; teach in accordance with those doctrines, tenets and beliefs through a faith perspective applied to the curriculum; and enforce standards of conduct and behaviour within the school community consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the religion.

If we are to bring the community with us on this journey, we must work to find balance in how these laws of behaviour will be used and to what degree they might place limitations on the expression of religious belief, including the status of parental choice in education. This touches on the role of culture and religion in how parents want to see their children raised. There is no such thing as a neutral belief system. What is said, taught, expressed and acted out in our institutions has a powerful impact on the development of our personal moral compass. Victoria has anti-discrimination laws that provide some protections and sanctions where a person is vilified because of their race or religion—namely, the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001. In a similar manner to the New South Wales bill, the legal definition of vilification uses the concept of incitement of others against the victim.

As I mentioned earlier, the New South Wales bill, through new section 49ZE, creates the offence of religious vilification, which makes it unlawful for a person, by a public act, to incite hatred towards, serious contempt for or severe ridicule of a person for having or not having a religious belief or affiliation or engaging or not engaging in religious activity. Victoria's Racial and Religious Tolerance Act defines the offence of vilification in section 8 (1) in the following way:

A person must not, on the ground of the religious belief or activity of another person or class of persons, engage in conduct that incites hatred against, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of, that other person or class of persons.

New South Wales is not using the word "revulsion". New South Wales also applies the protection to a person or a group of persons, while Victoria's law is for the benefit of person or class of persons. "Group of persons" or "class of persons"—such subtleties may play out differently in our State jurisdictions. Victoria has the additional offence of "serious religious vilification". Section 25 (1) (b) of the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act expands on the offence by adding:

... to threaten, or incite others to threaten, physical harm towards that other person or class of persons or the property of that other person or class of persons.

New South Wales once had serious vilification offences in its Anti-Discrimination Act, but they were moved across to the Crimes Act in 2018 following the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice

inquiry into racial vilification law in NSW. There is another layer of oversight here. Section 25 (4) of the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act states:

A prosecution for an offence against subsection (1) or (2) must not be commenced without the written consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The essence of these observations is that, first, the States are not in total alignment on tackling this subject; and, secondly, it is a reminder that there is much more to be done. I support the bill.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (16:09): I proudly speak in support of the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023 introduced in the House by the Attorney General. I was having a chat with the member for Bega and it popped into my mind why this is so important. It goes all the way back to the 1990s with the Gulf War. My mum wore a hijab and was shopping at a certain shopping centre when someone decided to walk up to her and abuse her because of her religion by ripping off her hijab and pushing her to the ground. There were no protections. We are dealing with this stuff 30 years later. It is not about what I want; these are real incidents that occur. It is much more than just language or things that people just think happen.

I thank the Attorney General for introducing this important bill on behalf of the Government. I have spoken about this issue a number of times. A report produced by the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice in 2013 made a number of recommendations on the topic of discrimination and religious vilification. At the time, the then Liberal Government issued a one-line response. It lacked interest—if it had any at all—in addressing the vilification of people on the basis of religion. For the past nine years, I have heard the same sorts of things from those opposite. They have said, "We're going to get to it", but no-one has actually got to it.

In 2016, shortly after I was elected to the New South Wales Parliament, I spoke in this Chamber about that report and the inaction three years on. I also said that most people of faith in this country who have passed through their lives practising their faith unhindered will hopefully never be in a position where they feel vilified or discriminated against and will therefore have no need to look to the State for protection. I know that you know about this, Mr Assistant Speaker. Until you have been on the receiving end of vilification or discrimination because of your beliefs, including religious beliefs, you cannot fully appreciate how that feels and the often permanent impact that behaviour has. When that pattern of behaviour is allowed to continue unfettered, it feels like it is either actively or passively accepted by the State. Today, this Government is taking action.

The Government is taking action to ensure that vilification on the grounds of religious belief, affiliation or activity is illegal in this State. It is taking action to ensure that we do not see what I have seen and heard in the past, like women who wear a hijab being spat on and having their scarves pulled off or kids being mocked at school and called all sorts of things. That stuff damages people, changes people's lives and turns people away from regular contemporary society. The Government is taking action to ensure that people are held accountable for their actions. We have heard stories in this House, including one about a heavily pregnant woman being attacked in Parramatta by a perpetrator with a history of violence against Muslim women. Society will remember the images of that woman, who was eight months pregnant, on the ground as the perpetrator landed blow after blow. That woman chose to wear a hijab, and nobody has the right to take that choice away from her. The Act is aimed at perpetrators like that man. He endangered not only the woman's life but also the life of her unborn son.

The Government is taking action to stop the enabling of everyday racism experienced by people who are simply practising their faith—people like the Sikh man who was asked to remove his turban and refused entry into a service station. This man was under no obligation to remove his turban. A modern, accepting and tolerant society has no right to request the removal of a religious headdress worn by someone adhering to their faith, whatever that faith may be. The essence of the Act is to ensure that all people, regardless of their faith, can practise their beliefs without fear or intimidation from people who set out to discriminate others simply because they are different. Those people use the excuse of free speech. Freedom of speech and expression is fundamental to Australia's democracy. But it is appropriate, and commonly accepted in society, to have some limits when these freedoms compete with other important principles that our society seeks to uphold, such as the freedom to live without fear of abuse, hostility or hatred.

An important concept for the legitimate restriction of freedom of expression is that it is proportionate to the need or potential harm that it is seeking to address. The amendments proposed do not prohibit unpleasant or offensive speech; they apply specifically to public actions that incite hatred, serious contempt or severe ridicule. My electorate of Bankstown is one of the most ethnoculturally and religiously diverse communities in New South Wales. The protections speak to the day-to-day lived experience of many of my constituents who come from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds and practise faiths that form the diverse tapestry of modern Australia. Imagine how casual and not-so-casual racism feels day in and day out. Imagine how corrosive the

long-term and permanent effects of racism or vilification feel. But let us also bring this into perspective: For all the divisive and unhelpful talk of "us and them", and the tension that causes, a modern, inclusive and diverse Australia is actually one of the great stories of the world and of history.

I refuse to accept the alternative picture being promoted in some quarters. With just a few tragic exceptions, we are an affluent, pluralistic, harmonious and peaceful community. The ethnic and religious diversity in my electorate of Bankstown is a living testament to that. In New South Wales, we practise 144 religions, speak 275 languages and have 205 different ancestries. Many people have said and acknowledged that we are the sum total of people from every nation on Earth; however, with that diversity comes the responsibility to build social infrastructure and afford legal protections. When we see the normalisation of hatred, antisemitism, Islamophobia and other forms of religious vilification, it is our responsibility as leaders to act. Hate, racism and discrimination go across the board, and we cannot leave them unattended much longer.

Ten years ago there was a review and a promise made, and there has been a protracted and unclear direction for 12 years, all the while allowing the conditions for people to discriminate against and vilify others simply because they can. When we leave a vacuum, people will step into it. That is the responsibility we accept in this place when we put up our hand to be representatives of the people of New South Wales. Today the Minns Labor Government is delivering on its promise to the people of New South Wales to prohibit vilification on the basis of an individual's religious beliefs. It will make it illegal to publicly incite hatred towards, have serious contempt for or to ridicule a person or group of persons because of their religious belief, affiliation or activity. Everyone is a little bit different, and there is nothing wrong with difference. It is a part of who we are. I have spoken often about how we are all different pieces of the jigsaw puzzle and, when we combine them together, it is our uniqueness and differences that makes us who we are.

When we can combine together, we create the beautiful, incredible tapestry that we call modern Australia. When we do not allow certain jigsaw pieces to fit into the full narrative, we are doing the wrong thing and not fulfilling our potential as a great nation that shows the rest of the world what it is like when everybody has a place and is valued, respected and protected. It is all about how those pieces of the mosaic come together to form the beautiful sculpture of the nation we have created, where there are two stories: the story of the Indigenous people and the story of everybody else, who are all migrants to this nation. We all play a part, and we all need to accept that. Together, we bring something that makes our country stronger and better. We all create a better New South Wales—one that is made up of people of no faith and people of a variety of faiths, including Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Christian and many other faiths that all contribute to a rich diversity and the modern story of Australia.

I thank the various members of the faith council, representing many different people who are making a great contribution and saying, "We want some form of protection, to be used not as a sword but as a shield." When we provide protections to people and listen to everybody's viewpoint, then maybe we can create the best society possible. I also thank the many people who have bravely spoken up at different times. It is hard. I like to think that I am a confident person and have a thick skin. I may have nothing between the ears, because sometimes people say things that are meant to be offensive and I do not understand. I just ignore it. But not everybody is like us here, with thick skin and expecting to cop a little bit of stuff that pierces the armour.

I worry about those who do not have the public profile to be able to call it out. I worry about those who do not have the confidence to speak up. I worry about those who do not have the means or the social status to be able to say, "That's not the Australia that I know." They are the ones I worry about. I worry about the young girl or boy who wears a turban and plays a game of cricket and someone wants to say something they think is funny. There is nothing funny when it comes to racism. There is nothing funny when it comes to vilification. Those people who say "It's just a joke" have never been on the receiving end. Believe you me, if you have experienced it you do not need to worry about nuanced language. You know what it means. [*Extension of time*]

The law can say it and the words can be nuanced, but you know when somebody is having a go at you because of the way you look, speak, dress or decide to live your life. You just know it. Today we are saying there has to be protection. I thank people from the Jewish community who, when we saw increased incidents of Islamophobia, assisted others in the Muslim community to set up an Islamophobia register so at least people could write it down. How do you quantify it? I thank the Australian National Imams Council for the work it has done. I thank the Sikh and Buddhist communities and all faith communities who have worked on this. The bill, which is long overdue, is an important step in the right direction. With it will come also looking at the Anti-Discrimination Act as a whole, because there have been a lot of changes since it came about in the 1970s. This is one step, but let us look at the full picture. The bill is a step that the Government is prepared and willing to take. It is a step to ensure that people and communities around us are safe. It is a step to ensure that our children and their children can live in a safe, harmonious and respectful society that we call New South Wales.

I repeat the point. The bill is about the people who do not have a voice, who do not have the means and who cop it on a daily basis. This is about protecting them and about sending a message to everyone in society to say that we all belong. We are all valued and respected. There is no full Australian story unless every single Australian can be part of that story. I am proud of who I am, as is everybody else. We do not need to shy away from or chose who we are, one or the other. For example, I want to make sure that the Mandaean community knows that if their faith says they have to be baptised in running water then this is a protection for them. It is a protection for everybody. Hopefully these protections never need to be used and a case never needs to be prosecuted, but they are a really important step.

As I have said, I have copped it. I accept it and I enjoy it. Because it is often the people who have no idea who are the first ones to throw stones. Maybe this is the thing that will teach us to respect one another a little more, to accept one another a little more and to understand one another a little more. This is not about a sword. It is about a shield, and it is about all those people who have not had protection. To all those people who reckon it is a joke, I say this is no joke. This is serious, because those things hurt and they push people to the brink. We do not want anybody to feel that they are not part of our society. I am proud to be part of the Government that said it was going to do this and has done it. I thank the Premier and the Attorney General for the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:23): I contribute to debate on the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023. The Greens support the principle that nobody should be discriminated against or vilified, including on the basis of their religion. The freedom to peacefully practise religion without fear of harassment or humiliation is essential to many of our multicultural communities. We know the current protections in the Act against vilification on the grounds of ethno-religion do not necessarily provide broad protection to Muslims, Hindus, atheists and others. That said, The Greens have serious reservations about the bill and the context from which it emerges. I note the contribution of the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, who said that all belong and all are valued. Sadly, the bill does not indicate that. All the groups in our society that are not currently protected in the Anti-Discrimination Act see this move as an indication from this Government that they are not protected, that all people do not belong and that they are not all valued equally. That is the reason we have serious concerns about the bill.

Under the previous Coalition Government, we saw a keen focus on religious discrimination. The push for so-called religious freedom became a Trojan Horse for advancing a conservative, explicitly anti-LGBTIQA+ right-wing agenda. I recognise that discrimination towards individuals on the grounds of religion is real, but framing it as a paramount form of discrimination and vilification is a distraction from the bigger issues we face in our society around hate and transphobic, anti-LGBTIQA+ and anti sex work sentiments—all of which are missing in the Anti-Discrimination Act. Sadly, those pieces of the puzzle are not there.

Under the guise of extending religious freedom, space has opened up for ugly rhetoric from both Labor and Liberal sides of politics that suggests ensuring the rights of our LGBTIQA+ community to simply live as they are and who they are without exposure to hatred on the grounds of someone else's faith is somehow up for debate and discussion. In this very Act that we are amending, there are exemptions that allow for discrimination against people on the basis of their sexuality and their gender identity. We appreciate that this is a messy and divisive legacy, and that the Minns Labor Government has inherited an outdated Act. But is this really the kind of division that we are intending to move forward on right now?

This is not the first time that Labor has sought to establish protections against religious vilification in this Chamber. Indeed, two years ago—in 2021—The Greens supported a version of the bill that was brought by the then shadow Attorney General, Paul Lynch. That support came with a caveat. The Greens encouraged that bill on the basis that it seemed only piecemeal review of the Anti-Discrimination Act was possible. Despite its many shortcomings, some of which I will speak to shortly, that was what was possible at the time. While we supported the bill and the protections from vilification that it conferred on people of faith, we also highlighted that many other gaps needed to be closed to ensure all community groups had the protection they deserved. We called for a wholesale review of the Act by the NSW Law Reform Commission.

Following the Minns Government coming to power, that review is finally underway. The Greens and I commend the Attorney General and others for finally acting on that promise that had not been realised by either major party since we all committed to it in 2014—nearly a decade ago. This review is long overdue. The Greens look forward to the findings and to finally strengthening the Anti-Discrimination Act to bring it in line with other jurisdictions in this country. But let us be clear. The timing of the bill seems to pre-empt the findings of the holistic review. Whether that is the intention, it sends a clear message that the rights and interests of some groups in our community are more deserving of urgent protection than others. Why choose to insert protections for religious vilification while the review is underway when parallel protections for bisexual, non-binary and intersex people and sex workers are not also on the table?

Is the risk of vilification faced by people of faith so much greater than that faced by other groups that protecting them right now is so urgent for this Parliament to do, yet other groups can continue to suffer vilification, unprotected by the Anti-Discrimination Act, while we wait for the review to commence? What about the massive loopholes in the current Anti-Discrimination Act that enshrine the right of religious organisations, small businesses and some others to engage in State-sanctioned discrimination? Surely they are urgent reforms that we should be looking at.

The Greens raised these concerns in 2021, when the then shadow Attorney General's bill was brought before us, and we reiterate them now. To be clear, we absolutely support that people of faith be protected from religious vilification when their activity is lawful and does not negatively impact on other members of the community. But we cannot, in principle, support the strengthening of protections for one community group when protections for others who still face an increased risk of targeted vilification and discrimination on our streets—in the streets of Newtown—across our city, in their workplaces and other institutional settings, are still lacking. There is nothing that indicates that this Government is about everyone belonging and everyone being protected by acting just on this reform now.

I thank and acknowledge community groups including Pride in Protest, Community Action for Rainbow Rights, Sex Workers Outreach Project, Scarlet Alliance, and Intersex Human Rights Australia, and the broad range of human rights, civil liberties and anti-discrimination organisations and experts for their tireless campaigning to ensure that so-called "religious freedoms" laws are not a way in which to further discriminate against people in our community. The Greens appreciate their activism. We will continue to be their voice in this place.

The earlier bill I referred to, supported by the Greens in 2021, provided a specific definition of "religious belief and affiliation" that mirrors that in section 93Z of the Crimes Act and defines it as "holding or not holding a religious belief or view". Sadly, the bill before us no longer has that clear definition. The Public Interest Advocacy Centre, or PIAC, in correspondence with the Attorney General, the shadow Attorney General and the crossbench, said, "The protected attributes—religious belief, affiliation and activity—included in the current bill are much broader than most other Australian States and Territories, meaning a broader range of speech will be prohibited as a result." Let us be clear that the bill in its current form goes beyond what other jurisdictions have done in this space and in other areas fails to limit in the same way other jurisdictions have. This is happening without the consultation that could be done through the Law Reform Commission process.

Furthermore, the drafting of section 49ZE does not make explicit that protections against religious vilification apply only to natural persons. Under the Interpretation Act 1987, a person such as that referred to in section 49ZE includes not only an individual but also a corporation, body corporate or public. The choice to protect persons, not merely natural persons, by this bill creates the worrying possibility that corporations or organisations could have a cause of action against religious vilification. I note that the shadow Attorney General referred to concerns that had been raised about this applying to groups. Assuming that he was referring to the amendments that The Greens have circulated, the issue is not actually with groups. We recognise that this legislation covers both individuals and groups of individuals.

Our concern is with the use of the word "person". We have serious concerns about the idea that organisations could take action against an individual. PIAC shares these concerns and has pointed out, "In practice, this ambiguity would allow larger, well-funded religious organisations to bring vilification complaints against individuals, with a potentially significant chilling effect on public criticism of these bodies." It is important to note that in this case the issue of racial vilification, which is the example that has been referred to, and vilification of religious belief are very different. For example, an organisation that advocates around multiculturalism does not hold a race, but a Catholic church or another religious organisation does hold a religious belief. Therefore, our view is that there need to be changes around that. [*Extension of time*]

Given this, this is not a principle that The Greens are willing to support. We believe that corporations, trusts, churches and other organisations should be prevented absolutely from vilifying individuals or groups of individuals. But that protection from vilification should apply only to natural persons—that is, individuals or groups of individuals. Finally, we have significant concerns over the bill's extension of protections to any form of religious activity. Akin to "religious belief or affiliation" and "persons" covered in the section, "religious activity" is left so broad and open for interpretation in its current drafting that it takes us well beyond the established process that has occurred in Queensland and Victoria, to allow any religious activity to be one of the protected attributes in relation to this legislation. This uncertainty is deeply concerning. The Greens contend that certain religious activity should not attract protections, including activity that is outlawed by another Act or statute. Without defining "religious activity" or at the very least restricting it to activity that is lawful, the bill raises legitimate questions about what protections, if any, unlawful religious activity would attract.

The Minister for Multiculturalism just referred to other States and said that New South Wales was being brought into line, but in this case we are not being brought into line with other States. Those other States provide protection in relation to lawful religious activity. New South Wales, in passing this legislation unamended, would be providing protection beyond that, to all religious activity. Would a person praying in a safe access zone outside an abortion clinic, for example, be in breach of part 6A of the Public Health Act but also have a cause of action against a reproductive justice activist or a member of staff at the clinic for reproaching the person for breaching that safe access zone? We believe that there is a need to tidy that up.

Surely we can all agree that with bigotry, from anti-queer sentiments to transphobia, rising across communities, this ambiguity is something we cannot risk. Is the Minns Labor Government's intention to undermine the hard-won protections around safe access zones with this legislation or to risk undermining future action taken to ban conversion practices? It is, of course, impossible to consider this bill in isolation from the existing and hugely problematic exceptions embedded in the Act that will allow religious organisations, small businesses and certain others to exist above a law specifically designed to protect vulnerable people from discrimination. The NSW Council for Civil Liberties, in a statement released this morning, put it best when it stated:

We want an Anti-Discrimination Act that does not discriminate.

To move on one part, without moving on other glaring deficiencies sends a bad message to the community about whose rights and interests are privileged over others.

The Greens agree wholeheartedly with that sentiment and, I reiterate, are fully supportive of the holistic review of the Anti-Discrimination Act by the Law Reform Commission. But the timing of the bill pre-empts the findings of that review and does not allow the Act to be considered in a holistic way. I indicate that that is why, at the very least, The Greens will be moving amendments to the legislation before us. These amendments, which are straightforward, reasonable and have the support of anti-discrimination experts at PIAC and the NSW Council for Civil Liberties, are a simple way to ensure that this Act is not so broad as to create a whole lot of concerning possibilities that will cause the kinds of tensions we are seeing in our community to flare up at just the time when we want to be working collaboratively on the review of the Anti-Discrimination Act. I will speak to the details of the amendments when I move them. I indicate that they are now available for all members. I am happy to provide any detail required.

If we in this place are serious about ensuring that our communities are safe from vilification and religious discrimination in all its forms, we must do this with the utmost care and caution. We need to be wary of any action that would suggest that the rights and interests of one group are more important or worthy of protection than those of another. The Greens' amendments seek to address some of the immediate concerns about the bill. I make clear that if we are saying this the Anti-Discrimination Act is intended to demonstrate that all people should be treated equally and live free from vilification in our society then we should not be acting separately on this piece of legislation now. We should be taking a holistic approach to the review of the Anti-Discrimination Act. The Greens look forward to working with anti-discrimination experts, lawyers, stakeholders and activists to ensure that is where we get to.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (16:38): I support the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023, which amends the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to implement the Government's election commitment to introduce a civil prohibition on religious vilification. The bill amends the Anti-Discrimination Act so that it is unlawful to, by a public act, incite hatred towards, serious contempt for or severe ridicule of a person or group of persons because of their religious belief, affiliation or activity. A public act includes any form of communication to the public, verbal and non-verbal. The bill's new ground is that a person or group of persons has a religious belief or affiliation or engages in religious activity. The prohibition also applies to not having a religious belief or affiliation or engaging in religious activity, in recognition that those also reflect beliefs about religious matters that should be protected.

The bill includes exceptions intended to balance the prohibition with freedom of expression. Those provisions allow fair reports of a public act; communications on occasions that would be subject to a defence of absolute privilege under defamation law; and communications done reasonably and in good faith for a range of purposes in the public interest, including artistic, scientific or religious discussion or instruction. Those exceptions are consistent with the existing vilification provisions in the Anti-Discrimination Act. The amendments hold great significance as they aim to address the issue of religious vilification in New South Wales. They make religious vilification targeting individuals or groups unlawful.

The Anti-Discrimination Act already includes a list of attributes safeguarded against vilification, and the bill adds religion to that list. Religious vilification is a deplorable form of conduct that fosters hatred, ridicule and contempt based on a person's religion or religious affiliations. It can take various forms, from public statements

encouraging contempt to online communications promoting hate or ridicule towards a person's beliefs, and even graffiti and imagery aimed at inciting hatred against individuals of a particular faith.

The joint select committee inquiry on this issue has shed light on the distressing experiences faced by individuals of various faiths who have been subjected to harassment and vilification due to their religious beliefs. The inquiry has shown that women, especially those who wear religious veils like the hijab, are particularly vulnerable to such hatred and discrimination. While section 93Z of the Crimes Act 1900 addresses public threats or incitement to violence, it falls short in dealing with the complexities of religious vilification. It places the threshold at incitement to violence, leaving victims of vilification without adequate protection and recourse.

We cannot turn a blind eye to this issue, especially as technology has amplified and facilitated such discriminatory behaviours. The rise of digital platforms has seen an alarming increase in instances of religious vilification. It is time for us to act as a civilized society and address the problem head-on. The bill will provide much-needed clarity by defining religious vilification, allowing for proper enforcement and accountability. It sends a powerful message that we stand against such hateful behaviour and will not tolerate it in our communities. The statistics show that the perpetrators of religious vilification are primarily male and the victims are disproportionately female. Many victims hesitate to report such incidents, fearing little action will be taken. The amendment will likely see an increase in reporting, revealing the true extent of the problem.

The impact of vilification on victims and their families cannot be underestimated. It damages their self-esteem, dignity and sense of belonging, hindering their ability to participate fully in our society. By enacting the amendment, we can encourage victims to step forward and hold the perpetrators to account. Knowing that our society stands united against such hatred will instil a sense of security. Moreover, we need to focus on prevention through early education programs that promote inclusion, racial and religious tolerance and anti-discrimination. By incorporating those teachings throughout a child's education, we can foster a more understanding and accepting society. The Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023 is a crucial step towards eradicating that blight on our society. Let us support the bill wholeheartedly and send a resolute message to those who perpetrate such behaviour. Together we can create a tolerant, inclusive and harmonious society that protects the rights and dignity of every individual, regardless of their faith. I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (16:44): I support the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023 presented by the Government. As a person of faith, I believe this overdue reform is necessary to adequately protect individuals and organisations of faith. Vilification is currently unlawful on the grounds of race, homosexuality, transgender status and HIV/AIDS status. Ethno-religious groups are also protected within the ground of race, such as Jewish, Mandaean, Sikh and Maronite communities. By virtue of that, some religious groups are protected by the Act as they are associated with an area or region of origin. That in itself is discriminatory towards religious groups that are not based in a region of origin. Including religious grounds in the Act will provide a greater balance to the exhaustive list of grounds for vilification.

The reform will also align with the overarching rationale of the Act, which aims to protect people from discrimination on the basis of neutrality. New section 49ZE outlaws the incitement of hate, serious contempt or severe ridicule towards a person or group for having or not having a religious belief or affiliation or for engaging or not engaging in religious activities. That is such an important amendment, regardless of whether one is a person of faith. According to the 2021 census the Liverpool local government area, which overlaps with the majority of my electorate of Holsworthy, was the most religious council area in the State. Over one-third of residents in my electorate identify as Christian and 15 per cent identify as Muslim. In my interactions with local community and religious groups, an overwhelming majority of constituents support the premise of outlawing religious vilification, and it is widely supported by all faiths. As a person of faith, I have experienced religious vilification and discrimination in the past, including along the campaign trail during the recent State election.

I appreciate that religious vilification and religious discrimination are two different topics, and the latter is not up for debate today. But having been personally ridiculed for my faith as a political candidate, I know the personal and political impacts can be profound. Adequate civil recourse is required in cases where an individual's public reputation can be ravaged. This recourse is being provided as religious vilification complaints will be heard by the Anti-Discrimination Board or dealt with by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Whilst I support the bill put forward by the Government, I implore Government members to fully investigate a repeal and complete reform of the Anti-Discrimination Act. Further amendments to the Act are required to ensure religious discrimination is also outlawed. Whilst it is a good starting point to improve the balance and basis of neutrality for vilification, that needs to be replicated for cases of religious discrimination. I thank the House.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (16:47): I support the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023. As we have heard, the bill amends the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to make it unlawful to vilify a person or group of persons on the ground of that person's or group's religious belief or affiliation or engagement in religious activity. As a person of faith, that matters to me and my family, as it does to many across

the community I am proud to represent. We recognise it was an election commitment by Labor, and perhaps that is why the bill, with respect, is very narrowly focused to seek to meet that commitment. Vilification is currently unlawful on many grounds, including race, homosexuality, gender status and HIV-AIDS status. This bill would extend that to religious grounds, and rightly so. Most other jurisdictions have prohibitions on religious vilification as well as discrimination. Most notably, this bill does not seek to ban religious discrimination. I will come back to that shortly.

I support that the bill makes it unlawful by a public act to incite hatred for, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of a person or group of persons because of their religious belief, affiliation or activity. A "public act" includes any form of communication to the public, verbal and non-verbal. The prohibition applies also to not having a religious belief or affiliation or engaging in religious activity, and there are exemptions that already exist in the Anti-Discrimination Act [ADA] in respect of other groups. The key point I make today is that, as I have mentioned, this bill is very narrowly focused and omits many of the possible protections on religious grounds that could and should be made by the Anti-Discrimination Act.

While the bill's provisions mirror the protections against vilification provided under the ADA on other grounds such as homosexuality, it does not also extend the same protections on those grounds against discrimination in areas such as the workplace, accommodation, education, and goods and services provision to those people with religious beliefs. I understand the 100-day commitment, but this is an important area of concern and we need real reform in our great State of New South Wales. I am conscious that the Government has made a referral to the Law Reform Commission. My concern is that that may take a long time—potentially years—and indeed in effect would replicate, if not reopen, any prior reviews, committee exercises and the like. The point I make here is that in so many ways the work has been done. I will illustrate that point in a moment.

I am conscious that, while most religious and multicultural stakeholders have welcomed this reform, they see it as only an early, small first step. They expect, as I expect, much greater protections of religious freedom to come. Stakeholders should expect that, and among the reasons they should is that New South Wales is, on the national stage, an outlier here. Every other State and Territory offers real protection from discrimination on the grounds of religious belief or conviction, but New South Wales is quite different. I had one of my staff kindly prepare a list, so I will go through those jurisdictions for a few moments. In New South Wales, as my colleague the member for Holsworthy pointed out, protection is only in respect of ethno-religious belief in the context of race, which does not adequately cover the field. It does not protect many people of faith and it is subjective, unclear and has been ineffective in protecting people of religious belief from discrimination.

In contrast to this, in Victoria the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 clearly protect people from discrimination when they hold religious belief or go about religious activity. In Queensland the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 clearly protects people against discrimination in respect of religious belief or religious activity. In Western Australia the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 clearly protects people from discrimination in respect of religious or political conviction. In South Australia the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 protects people from discrimination in respect of religious appearance or dress. In Tasmania the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 clearly protects people in respect of discrimination for those engaging in religious activity, religious belief or affiliation. In the Australian Capital Territory the Discrimination Act 1991 offers protection for those who may be discriminated against on the grounds of religious conviction. In the Northern Territory the Anti-Discrimination Act 1996 offers protection for those people who might be discriminated against in respect of religious belief or activity.

The landscape across our great nation is clear: New South Wales is the laggard and the outlier, and it ought not be so. I am sure we all want to see New South Wales leading in this space. But I also want to illustrate the point in this context: As I think everyone is aware, the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 offers protection for groups on the basis of age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marital or domestic partnership status, parental status and HIV-AIDS status. In one small section, section 56, there is very limited protection for those who work for a religious body. That does not apply to people of faith. Just to draw out a very understandable and reasonable contrast, we can look at any one of those groups chosen randomly—for example, those who may be discriminated against on the grounds of homosexuality, dealt with in part 4C of the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act.

It is a six-page part and the means by which it offers protection to homosexuals include section 49ZH, discrimination against applicants and employees in the context of work; section 49ZI, discrimination against commission agents; section 49ZJ, discrimination against contract workers; section 49ZK, partnerships; section 49ZKA, discrimination by local government councillors; section 49ZL, industrial organisations; section 49ZM, qualifying bodies; and section 49ZN, employment agencies. Division 3, section 49ZO, relates to discrimination in other areas, such as education, the provision of goods and services, accommodation and registered clubs. Then on the final half page we get to the provisions in respect of homosexual vilification, which

by this bill will be mirrored in respect of people with religious belief or no religious belief. The point I make is that New South Wales has a wide, deep and significant gamut of means by which homosexuals, for example—they being one of the eight groups I mentioned earlier—are protected against discrimination. But people of faith do not have those protections—and they should.

In proportional terms, half a page of the New South Wales legislation deals with vilification and six pages deal with discrimination on all the grounds I mentioned. In effect, to the extent that that is any sort of measure, in addressing vilification we are seeing roughly less than 10 per cent of the overall means of protections that are afforded, for example, to people on the ground of homosexuality. I make that point to demonstrate that people of religious belief do not have the same protections as do the other groups I mentioned—age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marital or domestic partnership status, parental status and HIV-AIDS status. Let us address that shortfall. Let us not have New South Wales be an outlier and a laggard. This State should be leading in this space. I, for one, will certainly have more to say in relation to that later. But, in the meantime, certainly the Opposition supports this early, small and limited effort by the Government as represented by the bill. While the Opposition certainly supports the bill, there is much more work to do in New South Wales.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (16:57): The Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2023 is a healthy step towards a more cohesive society in New South Wales. This is an amendment that our Government said we would prioritise because, no matter who you are, who you love or what faith you hold, you are entitled to be free from discrimination and vilification. The implementation of this amendment will help to bring this closer to reality in New South Wales. Discrimination is difficult to police and combat, but this bill aims to ensure that our Government will approach the issue from a fair and balanced perspective. Perhaps even more importantly, the bill sends a message that bigotry will not be tolerated and that the leadership of our State wholeheartedly condemns prejudice and hatred.

One distinctive feature of the Parramatta electorate is its cultural and religious diversity. Ours is a community that knows firsthand the importance of respect for others and the value of respectful coexistence. We are lucky to count among our community, members of all the major faiths, including but not limited to those of Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Orthodox and Mormon faith. Notably, Parramatta has the second largest Hindu population in New South Wales. Our diversity is the strength of our community and, for many, their faith is their strength. For those who practise a faith, it can be a source of comfort, solace and joy. For many, it is a cornerstone of their identity. It underpins who they are and what they stand for. The right to freedom of faith must always be inalienable.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): It being 5.00 p.m., debate is interrupted for the public interest debate. I set down the resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

Public Interest Debate

MATILDAS FOOTBALL TEAM

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): Before I call the member for Granville to move her motion, I must admit that I thought I was a women's soccer fan but there is a person in this Chamber right now who is the world's biggest Australian soccer fan—particularly of the women's game—and that is Peter Tuziak, one of our wonderful parliamentary officers. He has been to every game so far, which is wonderful. Hopefully he will bring us good luck in the future.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (17:00): I move:

That this House congratulates the Australian women's national football team on their performance during the 2023 World Cup.

This is a motion we can all support after the Matildas' amazing 4-0 demolition of Canada—the Olympic champions—last night. The Matildas made it through to the round of 16 and finished top of their group. What an amazing performance! With two goals from Hayley Raso and goals from Mary Fowler and Steph Catley, they were just incredible. What a win! When faced with elimination, they came out and topped the group. The tournament has been an enormous success so far, with the largest crowds women's football has ever seen in Australia, including 75,000 fans at Stadium Australia for the opening game against Ireland and an average capacity rate of 95 per cent across all games played in Australia. Ticket sales are now at 1.67 million across the entire tournament. But that is not surprising when you consider that only a few months ago over 77,000 football fans crowded into Wembley Stadium to watch Sam Kerr and Chelsea defeat Manchester City—with the Matildas' captain, Sam, scoring the only goal.

All around the world, women's football is enormous and growing exponentially. TV ratings have been incredible—miles in front of the Ashes and National Rugby League games that coincided with Matildas games. Some 4.71 million Australians watched last night's game, as well as many millions more around the world and of course thousands more watching at live fan sites across New South Wales. Again, that is not surprising given that

the Matildas' bronze medal game against the United States of America at the Tokyo Olympics was the highest-rating event of those Olympics in Australia, along with Peter Bol's race. There are more than 20 live fan sites across the State, in Rockdale, Leichhardt, Cowra, Parramatta and my electorate at Granville Park, let alone the fantastic FIFA Fan Festival at Tumbalong Park at Darling Harbour, which has attracted thousands. Almost 8,000 fans visited during last night's game, with attendance peaking at just over 4,000 fans just after kick-off. In just 12 days of competition, over 118,000 people have visited the free fan site at Darling Harbour.

The Matildas deserve our biggest stage, and next Monday night they will be back playing their round of 16 game at Stadium Australia. I also cannot wait to see the Sydney Opera House bathed in green and gold next Monday night, and I really hope we see Sam Kerr back to full fitness. Sam is not just the captain; she is probably the best footballer, male or female, Australia has ever produced. She has been consistently nominated for the Ballon d'Or Féminin every year since its inception in 2018. Sam debuted for the Matildas in 2009 at just 15, and she has done so much more to inspire a generation of girls and boys to play "the beautiful game". In fact, I remember one of my male friends telling me that he explained to his son when Tim Cahill was retiring that Tim was a kind of male equivalent to Sam Kerr.

I also congratulate Steph Catley, who has been an amazing captain in Sam's absence. As an Arsenal supporter, I am a huge fan of Steph Catley and Caitlin Foord. I know that the member for Shellharbour is also a huge fan of Caitlin, who grew up in Shellharbour and debuted for the Matildas when she was only 16. As someone who grew up in the Central West of New South Wales, I would love to see Cowra's Ellie Carpenter and Grenfell's Clare Hunt on the world stage. Sydney will host 11 games in total—six at the Sydney Football Stadium and five at Stadium Australia, including the semifinal and the final. It is not just the Matildas games that are packed. Over 40,000 people attended each of the Colombia versus Germany and England versus Denmark games over the weekend, including my childhood hero, as an Arsenal tragic—probably one of the greatest strikers of all time—Ian Wright, who always gets behind women's football. He has been going to many games apart from England games, which is really good to see.

I first saw the Matildas play Sweden at the 2000 Olympics. Their performance and the women's game has gone from strength to strength over the past 23 years. All up, the Matildas have qualified for seven World Cups and four Olympics. The Australian Women's Soccer Association was founded in 1974 and our representative Australian team competed at the following year's AFC Women's Championship. A national team, made up primarily of players from New South Wales and Western Australia, went to the 1978 inaugural World Women's Invitational Tournament in Taipei, with Australia captained by Julie Dolan from New South Wales. We have gone from strength to strength in that time. I am hoping that this year we will get a medal, having come so close at the Olympics last year.

But it is not just this tournament. We are supporting a legacy program that is really important. The Office of Sport administers a \$10 million NSW Football Legacy Program, which includes \$6.21 million in grant programs to support female pathways for coaches, officials and leaders in the sport. It supports participation initiatives and community infrastructure development. Round one of the grant program opened on 5 September and closed on 14 October last year, with the successful applicants notified in January. The second round opened on 8 June this year and closes in August. In addition, we are doing so much to support women's participation in sport, and the growth of women's participation in multiple sports has been phenomenal in the past few years. Participation in tennis has grown by 5.3 per cent in 2022 alone, up from 4.7 per cent since 2020. Netball has grown by 5 per cent. Football has also grown by almost 5 per cent. Surfing is growing and basketball is growing.

But when it comes to participation by girls, football is one of the biggest. There has been 5 per cent growth since 2020, but in 2022 alone participation grew by 15 per cent. It is huge, and this Government is supporting women's participation across sport. One of our most important election commitments for sport was to increase direct funding to State Sporting Organisations, tied to them being committed to growing female participation in all sports. That is an important commitment. We have also committed to naming one of the stands at Stadium Australia after a female athlete. But, more importantly, I am hoping that this is the year that the Matildas will win the World Cup—and on home soil. That is something we can all get behind.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (17:07): How good are the Matildas? And how good is women's sport? Today I join the Government to congratulate the Matildas on their sweeping success at the FIFA Women's World Cup thus far and their emphatic win over Canada. To say the country's spirits have been lifted this morning by the impressive Matildas' win and their awe-inspiring victory would be an absolute understatement. I thank the member for Granville for bringing this important issue to this place and for giving us all an opportunity to join together and celebrate women in sport.

Let us consider last night's game. The mighty Matildas made history, demolishing Canada in a 4-0 obliteration to kickstart Australia's FIFA Women's World Cup bid in Melbourne. With their backs against the wall and needing a win, the Matildas pulled out a result for the ages, sending Olympic champion Canada crashing out

of the tournament. They did all of this without their inspirational captain, Sam Kerr. I echo the comments of the member for Granville in relation to Sam Kerr and add that Kerr had in fact declared herself fit and ready for the match over the weekend and, despite being named on the bench, did not play a minute of football. To me, that showed that a successful team is far greater than any one person. Last night provided players from the broader team with the opportunity to emerge from Sam Kerr's internationally renowned shadow. We do hope to see Sam back in the next game, but it provided the other ladies with the opportunity to make household names of themselves and highlighted the depth that our Matildas have amongst their ranks.

Every player on the field last night was exceptional, coming together to bring it home from the goal, the attack, the midfield, the defence—each and every one of those women did us proud. I recognise the incredible women who scored the four goals on the night: Captain Steph Catley, Hayley Raso, and the player of the match, Mary Fowler, who returned to the starting side. It was a perfect night for the Matildas, and not only for their own victory. The draw between Nigeria and Ireland allowed Australia to top group B for the first time. In fact, it is the first time the Matildas have topped a World Cup group. Our Matildas do not have an easy path to the grand final, facing either England or Denmark in Sydney for the round of 16—both teams that appear higher in the rankings. In Australia we love an underdog. I have every faith that this team can win this for Australia, having made it further than our cross-Tasman rivals, the Kiwis.

Some of the best football players in the world are and will be women. Football fans who only watch the men's game miss out on a plethora of ultra-talented players who do not just break barriers but transcend them. For so long it was the men in Australian football who took all the glory and became household names, like Harry Kewell. But today, more and more, it is the exceptional women receiving their rightful glory, with players like Sam Kerr, Hayley Raso, Mary Fowler and Steph Catley becoming household names in their own right. This FIFA Women's World Cup is such an incredible opportunity for the next generation of women to be inspired by the current Matildas, and also for the young men around the country to be inspired by the incredible talent of these players.

It is so impressive that we are seeing more and more women in sport. So many young girls across the country will be inspired by watching the Matildas on the pitch. Who knows where our next sporting heroes along the lines of Sam Kerr or Mary Fowler are—surely amongst one of our many electorates. It has been proven that when girls and women have access to team sports, they are able to cultivate critical skills, confidence, leadership and problem-solving that serves them well in both their professional and personal lives. Sport is a way that women can develop their skills, but it is also a way that we unify communities. Sport is a way that our own country became unified and it was one of the main contributors towards Federation.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Matildas on their win—on flying the flag for women in sport and on flying the flag for our country on an international stage. I—along with everyone in this place, I am sure—look forward to the knockout clash here in Sydney on Monday 7 August. I take this opportunity, on behalf of the Opposition, to wish the Matildas the best of luck for their next game and for the rest of the competition. I look forward to seeing the Opera House lit up and I look forward to seeing these girls do our entire country proud as they work towards winning a Women's World Cup for us.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:12): Let us hear it for the Matildas. I watched the Matildas for the first time in my electorate of Gosford as they brought home a win against Czechia earlier this year. What was clear during that game was the passion of the crowd around me. I sat in the wonderful Industree Group Stadium watching the faces of the young girls and boys who lined the front rows cheering on the Matildas as they brought home a victory in front of 7,700 people—which is a crowd for Gosford. The Matildas also beat Thailand 2-0 last year in front of a record crowd of 11,271. Both nights saw the city of Gosford come alive. The Chamber of Commerce and local businesses love the Matildas too.

How fantastic was it to see the Matildas bring this passion to an international crowd during the FIFA Women's World Cup? With an average 95 per cent capacity across all matches, and 4.7 million Australians tuning in to watch the Matildas play Canada, the Women's World Cup has brought Australia and the world together to cheer our teams to victory. The success of the Women's World Cup has made one thing clear: The appetite for women's sport is definitely out there. The showcase of tremendous female talent clearly shows our girls and women that their contribution to sport is welcomed and valued. Our brilliant Matildas provide role models not just for girls and women, but for all of our community as symbols of strength, athleticism and fabulous skill.

The Matildas highlight the ongoing connection of women's sport to our community and empower everyone—whether they are watching in their homes or in the stadium. With international women's teams hosted across the country, every town now has the chance to have their own second favourite team. The Central Coast is lucky enough to host the English Lionesses at the Central Coast Stadium, and the German team at Tuggerah. I had the privilege of going along to an open training match with the English team and was absolutely blown away by their sheer talent and skill. Most importantly, I watched the enthusiasm of local school children, who I chatted to

in the stands. Students from Central Coast Sports College, Gosford Public School and Terrigal Public School told me that they were not interested in any career path except for being a soccer star when they were older, encouraged by the skill in front of them. While I will always be cheering on the Matildas, I now have a second team that I will be cheering on from the sidelines. It was great to watch the Lionesses play last Friday night and beat Denmark—yet I can't wait to see the Matildas take down the Lionesses.

The legacy of the Women's World Cup goes beyond the passion shown during the live matches. I am a beneficiary of the legacy of great sporting events and the inclusion that was delivered by the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games. Instead of kids asking, "What's wrong with that lady?", they asked, "What sport does that person play?" I definitely think that we have put women and women's sport on the front foot in Australia and New Zealand with the Women's World Cup.

The New South Wales Government is very proud to deliver a \$10 million NSW Football Legacy Program, administered by the Office of Sport, to transform opportunities for football across the State. It includes a \$6.21 million grant program supporting pathways for female coaches, officials and leaders in sport. As a Paralympian, I continue to see firsthand the difficulties that women face in accessing sport, with funding often hard to find and infrastructure lacking compared to our male counterparts. I welcome this investment as a very important step in recognising the value of women's sport to our communities. The Central Coast is lucky to have the A-League Women team, which is soon to launch alongside the Central Coast Mariners male team.

Mr David Harris: Sign a new player today.

Ms LIESL TESCH: Sign the new players—I think the new players are waiting to see what international gigs they get after the world cup. But it is amazing that we have got fantastic Ellie Carpenter as a Wamberal local—I think she will get another signing overseas. It is also lovely to hear great stories of the benefits of the world cup to other communities. I know the member for Camden had a busload of people from the Macarthur Football Club arriving home at 1.00 a.m., thrilled to be cheering on the Matildas. Another amazing thing is the legacy of women's sport and the excitement there. It is the people—the shoulders that these women stand on—that is super important.

The Matildas have an incredibly long history. To see the Matildas alumni sitting in the stadiums and cheering on their modern counterparts is absolutely amazing, as it is to see the Opals alumni, and as I am proud to be part of the Gliders alumni cheering on our youthful fronts that are out there. Seriously, these women becoming household names is super exciting. We all know Sam's name—we know she can do a backflip. Oh my God, seriously, she is amazing. Wouldn't we just wish we were Sam Kerr? To see Steph Catley—Yasmin, is she your cousin?

Ms Yasmin Catley: I'm sure she must be.

Ms LIESL TESCH: Nearly the member for Swansea's cousin out there as the acting captain. As I said, Ellie Carpenter, Mary Fowler and Mackenzie Arnold—they are my heroes. Sport has the power to change the world and the Matildas are changing the world right here in Australia.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:18): I add my congratulations to the Matildas football team following their inspiring win in the latest group stage of the FIFA Women's World Cup. Their stunning 4-0 victory against the reigning Olympic Gold medallists, Canada, was a thrill to watch. The whole country united behind this fantastic team, cheering them on to victory last night. While the entire side are to be applauded for their efforts, there are two team members in particular who I make special mention of: Clare Hunt and Ellie Carpenter. Both ladies hail from towns in my electorate of Cootamundra. Clare is from Grenfell, while Ellie grew up in Cowra. The residents in their home towns are exceedingly proud of what Ellie and Clare have achieved, with junior players drawing deep inspiration from the journeys of these superstars—journeys that started at the local football fields in regional New South Wales and culminated in last night's triumphant result on the world stage as they competed against the best players on the planet.

Their inspirational path to the international level is making an indelible mark on the minds of young girls in the regions, with Cowra and District Junior Soccer Club president Derek Sullivan recently remarking on the positive impact Ellie's success has had on female participation at the club, with girls now making up almost one-third of players. I note, too, that Ellie has not forgotten her early years playing in Cowra and has engaged with her home side over the years by helping to secure funds and equipment while also holding clinics for young players to hone their skills. In honour of their hometown hero, Cowra council has well and truly been caught in the fever of the cup, staging a live viewing area, complete with a big screen, for locals to watch the Matildas play their pool matches against Ireland and Nigeria and, of course, last night's big win.

Clare Hunt has also been a true inspiration for players in her home town. Having grown up on a sheep farm just outside Grenfell, her journey to the top has been characterised by sheer drive and determination. She has

spoken in the past about the long drives from her family's property to attend training and matches in Bathurst, Canberra and as far away as Sydney. After practising her skills using a goal area her father constructed out of poly pipe in a paddock on their farm, Clare decided she wanted to be a footballer at the age of 12. While she may have overcome the tyranny of distance in her rise to the top, Clare has also had to overcome multiple injuries—having had seven separate operations between 2018 and 2022. For her to beat those obstacles and compete on the biggest stage of them all is something we can all take inspiration and encouragement from.

Their stories of success serve to remind us of just how important sport is to the fabric of our communities, particularly those in regional New South Wales. Sport not only helps from a physical perspective by keeping us healthy and active; it also helps develop social connections and a sense of belonging. Whether it be through the shared achievements of a sporting team or the social interaction that comes from participating in solo events, sport contributes to our social capital in a way that nothing else does. Sport can support education. It can help alleviate antisocial behaviour. It oftentimes contributes significantly to economic growth through business investment and increased visitor numbers during sporting events. The list of benefits goes on.

We are indeed a truly sporting nation. Whether it be barracking for teams like the Matildas as they compete against the best on the world stage or barracking for the local junior sides—be it in football, rugby league, rugby union, netball, hockey or golf—who take to the field every weekend around the country, participating in sport and cheering on our favourite team is truly a national pastime. I once again offer my enthusiastic congratulations to the entire Matildas team on their outstanding and inspirational effort and, of course, I wish them good luck for the rest of the tournament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Before I call the member for Lismore, I give a shout-out to Emily van Egmond, whom I have been following ever since she was a young player at the Newcastle Jets. I take the opportunity to say good on her for scoring a goal in that unmentionable game. This is the last I will speak of that evening.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (17:23): What a win! I thank and congratulate the magnificent Matildas. They are inspiring so many football supporters across Australia and, in particular, the many girls and women—and boys and men—who are taking up the sport in record numbers. In the Northern Rivers football, or soccer, as they still call it, is the most significant team sport in terms of participation by a country mile, with some 8,251 registered players in 2023 turning out for 24 local clubs fielding teams across all age divisions. Local comps started as far back as the 1930s, and Football Far North Coast will be celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary in the next few years.

There is the saying, "All politics is local." Well, all sport is local, even when we are talking about the Matildas. Total female participation in soccer in the Northern Rivers is 2,580 players. That represents around 31 per cent of all participants, and female participation has grown 15 per cent since 2022. The Matildas might have something to do with that too. Impressively, 14 women aged over 55 are still playing for their clubs week in week out—maybe there is a chance for me yet! I also acknowledge the veritable army of team officials and match volunteers, without whom no local comp would happen.

We in the Northern Rivers also claim a proud connection to the Matildas that stretches back to the very foundation of the national team in the late 1970s. The first connection is superstar Hayley Raso, who scored two of the Matildas' goals last night. She grew up playing soccer on the Tweed coast and her father, John, lives and works in Lismore. Bravo, Hayley. The second is Matildas legend and midfielder Julie Dolan, who became the very first Matildas captain at the age of 18 when she led the Matildas to play against New Zealand in 1979. Julie took up the sport when she was 14 and living in the Northern Rivers, and she still has very fond memories of her time playing in the local league. The Julie Dolan Medal is named in her honour and has been awarded to the best player in the top women's competition since 1996.

Last but not least is another great midfielder Lisa Casagrande, a well-known name in Lismore, who grew up playing for the Goonellabah Hornets in the Lismore area—the same club where Socceroos legend Craig Foster cut his teeth. Lisa became one of the youngest Matildas ever when she turned out against Japan at the age of 14 in 1994 and represented Australia in the 1995 world cup in Japan, where she scored a goal against the mighty United States of America. Lisa went onto play in the 2000 Olympics and was inducted into the Football Australia Hall of Fame in 2015. By the time Lisa retired in 2002 at the ripe old age of 22, she had played 64 games for the Matildas and scored 13 goals. Her parents, like the parents of Craig Foster—or Fos, as we call him—still live locally. I spoke to Craig just before I came into the Chamber and he said, "Janelle, these strong, brilliant, capable, competent women are at the national consciousness for one month and that is so good for us all." I thought that was a great statement.

The 2022 floods in my electorate put a big dent in the local competition but, due to magnificent support from the community and the tireless efforts of local officials and administrators, the league is now almost back to

where it was. I take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to the recovery, in particular Steve Mackney, the inspirational general manager of Football Far North Coast. In the first match on 21 July he texted me a photo of Craig and Lisa. He said Fos's mum took it. He was so excited that night. Steve tells me that, of the 24 clubs in the local comp, more than half were impacted seriously by the floods. Lismore Workers Club lost everything when waters went through, and the South Lismore and Italo clubs were similarly devastated. At one point it was feared that the entire season would be called off, but it is all back up to about 80 per cent of what it would have been normally.

In summary, sport is the lifeblood of regional areas like the Northern Rivers and soccer is playing its part in knitting our communities back together again after a dreadful 18 months. The Matildas have lifted all our spirits. I wish them the very best for the remainder of their FIFA Women's World Cup campaign.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:28): I join my colleagues at Parliament in recognising the outstanding efforts so far of the Matildas in the FIFA Women's World Cup. Like so many people across Australia and the world, last night I was watching with anxiety and hope that our girls would fulfil our collective dreams of reaching the round of 16 at our own home world cup. I watched a re-run of the game this morning so that my kids could join in. They are already avid Matildas supporters, having attended the Ireland match two weeks ago. Their growing love of "the beautiful game" is demonstrative of the wave that is sweeping across Australia, with young girls and boys experiencing the best of women's sport and the best of sport right here in our backyard. When the little girls take the field with the players before each match, I feel tears welling up as we are seeing the future of football across Australia in those young children.

It is hard to pick favourite moments of the tournament so far. I am focused on last night's game because, as Madam Deputy Speaker said, we are trying to forget some of the previous concerns that we had earlier in the world cup. When I think through some of the highlights so far, they are really about the girls that have taken the field for us. They include Catley's cool focus with the penalties, especially given she stepped in as captain at short notice and was trying to fill some of the biggest and best boots in the game, or Raso and her nanna's ribbons that went flying when she scored those two pivotal goals—the first goal hitting the hearts of every Australian who was still nervous after the loss to Nigeria, and the second sealing her status as player of the match. She is a player who, only a few short years ago, had to learn to walk again after a broken back. I think that typifies the Matildas spirit of "Never say die". Another highlight was Katrina Gorry clocking up more than 10 kilometres on the pitch last night as she ran circles around her opponents. She shows girls and women across the world that women and mums can do anything, and they can do it on the world stage. Somehow Gorry makes it look easy.

One of my other highlights has to be watching Harper Gorry as she travels around with the team on the plane, being loved by the whole village of the Matildas, who are supporting Katrina in making sure she has the right atmosphere to raise her little girl in. Another is Kerr cheering on the sidelines and delivering water bottles to her teammates. She is arguably the world's best player, yet even when she is on the bench she demonstrates the grace and style that she shows on the pitch. Another highlight was Fowler last night getting that second goal—first, according to the video referee, but I still think it was the second. She dances around the field with such a lightness to her step and brings such skill and grace to the game. As the member for Cootamundra mentioned, it was amazing seeing Ellie Carpenter, with that blue headband, leaping into the air and knowing she has come back from the trauma of a ruptured ACL to perform the way she is performing on the field. Also, he may not be a player, but Gustavsson, who was yellow carded last night for his over-enthusiasm, is proving the sceptics wrong.

We have an entire squad who are all working together to achieve something remarkable. I could mention every player; I could mention the entire squad. They are the legacy of decades of women footballers in Australia fighting for professional status and fighting for pay, which has culminated in the world's greatest tournament being played on home soil. The Matildas now play in some of the biggest leagues and teams around the globe, including Chelsea, Real Madrid, Liverpool and Sydney FC. We know how crucial that is for that next generation of women footballers. There are still more matches to be played—we are not getting ahead of ourselves—and we are all here to back the Matildas to progress even further and hopefully take out the cup. Next Monday, when the Opera House is lit up for the Matildas, I will be watching the girls. Whether it is against England or Denmark, I do not mind. I think we can win either. I will be watching from one of the many live sites that have popped up in our communities, which for me will be at the stunning North Sydney Oval.

I think back to 2018 when Gladys Berejiklian and Stuart Ayres bid to host the FIFA Women's World Cup. We were awarded it in 2020. I do not think anyone really realised in 2018 how huge this was going to be, not just for Sydney, New South Wales, Australia and New Zealand but also for the beautiful game itself—for football—and for female athletes. We are proud of the girls already. Whatever comes next, they have inspired the next generation of female sports stars, including those of us who are probably not going to be athletes. They have inspired the entire nation. To the Matildas we say, until it's done, we are behind you!

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (17:33): By leave: Although we had three speakers of the female gender, the fantastic motion moved by the member for Granville has full support from both genders in the Government caucus, so I wanted to make a short contribution. The country is in the grip of football fever—not women's football fever, but football fever. The evidence is there right across the board. We have seen record merchandise sales of shirts and scarves, and I have seen a report that jersey sales are outstripping the men's jersey sales from last year's world cup, which is a fantastic achievement. The ratings have been through the roof; we saw it again last night. We have had record crowds, including the 78,000 that were at Homebush a couple of Thursdays ago. I had the immense privilege and pleasure to be amongst those 78,000, together with my entire family. Normally, football is a male affair in the Hagarty household—it is me and my son who usually trudge out to the games. But I was very pleased to see my wife and my daughter at the game, my daughter wearing her Matildas jersey.

I can confirm that football fever has also gripped Leppington. We have had two live sites for all the Matildas games. Southern Districts has put up a big screen at Cirillo Reserve in Middleton Grange. For those who know the area, Cirillo Reserve is the home of women's football in south-west Sydney. It is a dedicated premium facility for women's football, and most days of the week and on the weekend you will see women footballers of all ages training and playing. It is a fantastic facility and I commend both the Federal Government, Southern Districts and council for doing the work on that facility. I can also confirm that Eschol Park Football Club has been hosting a live site down its way. Both of those venues have been getting hundreds of people for each of the Matildas games. I went out last Thursday and I think I jinxed it because we lost to Nigeria. I did not return last night and, lo and behold, we won. So I will not be going to Cirillo; it is my fault.

When I meet with local football clubs in my part of the world, they report that they have seen a large increase in junior numbers, and a lot of that is due to growth in the girls' game. Numbers in girls' football are going through the roof. No doubt we will see it continue to grow after the world cup. We know that Australians love their sport. There are many great chapters in our sporting history, and I think we are on the cusp of another one. I will be cheering home the Matildas in their games between now and the final, and I wish them all the best. Let us hope they bring it home for us so that we can come back into this place with our green and gold on. Go the Matildas!

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (17:37): By leave: I cannot sit in the House and not contribute to this exciting debate. It is a rarity in this place when both sides of politics agree on a subject matter, so it is a joyous occasion today. It is wonderful that we can all come together around the sport of football—as I like to try to reinforce to my children, it is football—and continue that tradition of excellence, not only in calling the sport its traditional name but also in celebrating the achievements of our current superstars in this wonderful city of ours. It was a thrilling game last night and, on behalf of my community in Western Sydney, I give a heartfelt congratulations to every team player, as well as all the coaches, trainers, physiotherapists and administrators behind the Matildas. It was an extraordinary team effort. I stand in concurrence with my colleagues in hoping to see Sam Kerr on the field as soon as possible.

I reiterate my admiration for sport in general, which is a unifying factor in our community. I particularly acknowledge our reasonably new Western Sydney Wanderers A-League club for women. Locally, we are giving consistent examples to our young women and girls of an aspirational goal, vision or dream that they could, when they are a little older, perhaps become professional football players. I thank the Matildas for continuing that amazing legacy on behalf of women in this nation and for the inspiration they provide to our local footballers, who are also professionals. It is also an example that young boys can look to and see that women are extraordinary and can do amazing things when supported and encouraged. I like to think we are unified in this place in extending our encouragement to women and young girls, no matter what they want to do in life. If they have aspirations to do something extraordinary, they are part of a community that will back them in. I thank the House for its indulgence.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:39): By leave: I also thank the House for its indulgence in allowing me to contribute to debate. Like all my colleagues so far, I add to the congratulations and general sense of excitement surrounding the Matildas and the FIFA Women's World Cup in general. Like the member for Badgerys Creek, I also refer to the sport by its original name: football. As we reflect on the general atmosphere of excitement and admiration for the Matildas and what they have contributed to our community so far, I think back to perhaps 20 years ago when I was 14 years old and blown away and inspired by the groundbreaking film *Bend It Like Beckham*. The film highlighted the sometimes complex challenges that talented women who want to play sport can face.

Much has changed in the past 20 years since the release of *Bend It Like Beckham*. One lasting impact of the film is that a few years after its release I took the plunge and signed up to play in an all-ages ladies' football team—the Waratahs. Over the past 12 years, I have personally seen and experienced the huge impact that

grassroots sport has on people, especially women. The wonderful community of supportive women that I joined at the Waratahs demonstrates that sport is a real bridge for so many in our community. Regardless of age, cultural background, religion or even level of talent and skill, sport can be a safe place to build skills, form friendships and give back to your local community. Many people in Liverpool will look back on this time and measure its impact on their lives, differentiating between the pre-world cup and the post-world cup world.

For many in Liverpool, sport—and the world game, in particular—provides a language to help negotiate the broader community and the world around them. It provides a safe place to ensure that we can strive for our goals and achieve a range of different things. As many of my colleagues have highlighted, the Matildas' campaign has brought forth a whole spectrum of emotions and responses, but the most significant is inspiration. I, too, was at the Matildas' first game of the world cup, and I heard from a mother who brought her young daughter along to a football game for the first time. She said, "I was worried about whether or not she would enjoy herself, but she has been talking about wanting to sign up at the local football club next season." That is the kind of impact that events like these can have.

I doubt that anyone within the Matildas ecosystem, or more broadly within government or the sporting community in general, can truly appreciate the flow-on effect that the Matildas have had and will have into the future. I also highlight that it is up to us in this place to ensure that we capitalise on this success and carry it forward so that we do not lose the opportunity to ensure that this inspiring moment achieves its true potential. I, too, add my congratulations to the Matildas, their support team, their coaches, the physiotherapists and the many, many people who have contributed to where we stand today.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:43): By leave: I make a very brief contribution to tonight's debate. I echo everything that has been said so far by all members on both sides of the Chamber. Sporting teams, particularly the Matildas at this point in time, are a huge inspiration for so many people across our community, especially when many are doing it tough. Sport unites us as a nation. Last night's 4-0 drubbing of the Olympic champions was actually 5-0. I do not understand how that goal was considered offside. It was a great win. I certainly hope that it is a sign of things to come later in the FIFA Women's World Cup. Last night's game gave us a lot of hope. To that end, I move a small amendment to tonight's motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by inserting after "World Cup": ", and wishes them the best of luck for the remainder of the tournament."

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (17:45): By leave: I did not intend to speak in this debate; I intended to listen to it. However, I have become so overwhelmed by the sense of unanimity and goodwill in the Chamber and the inspiration of parliamentarians, particularly our female parliamentarians from both sides, who have spoken proudly. It is quite extraordinary. I feel obliged to take the liberty of speaking on behalf of the crossbench and wishing the Matildas the very best. I congratulate them on their campaign so far. I sincerely wish them the very best for the future. They have become an inspiration, and they are shifting the dial on attitudes towards women in our society. What they have done will inspire generations to come. I congratulate them on their success and wish them all the best for the tournament. Above all, I thank them for what they have done for sport and for our nation generally.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (17:46): By leave: How good was last night's game? I must say that I was concerned that the Matildas may not get there but, at the end of the day, it was an incredibly one-sided game last night. The shape that the Matildas were playing with on the paddock was unbelievable. They countered all the strengths of the Canadians. The way in which the Matildas have been improving with every game is particularly encouraging for the rest of the tournament. I do not want to jinx them by saying the Matildas are going to go all the way, but I certainly think the nation wants them to. The crowd support was unbelievable.

Winning the bid for the FIFA Women's World Cup was a joint venture between many different governments, including the former Federal Coalition Government and the former New South Wales Coalition Government. It certainly would not have been possible if not for the stadiums that the former Coalition Government built in this State. Those stadiums were opposed by the Labor Party. We would not have been able to bid successfully for the world cup without them. It is a fantastic tournament that gives the Matildas a beautiful opportunity to perform on the world stage. They are doing a great job and doing us proud.

Ms Liesl Tesch: Put that in your podcast.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I am just speaking the truth. I know those opposite are embarrassed that during the election campaign they opposed building the stadiums, but they should own it. It is what they did. It is great that we have those stadiums. It is great that we have the tournament, and it is great that the Matildas are being given an opportunity to perform on the world stage on New South Wales soil.

Ms Anna Watson: I'd stop there if I were you.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I know you're embarrassed, but don't worry, you should be. Let us ensure that the Matildas do great things. I want the community to keep getting behind them and keep supporting them. Go the Matildas!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I had thought there was a lot of love in the Chamber.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (17:49): In reply: I thank all members who spoke to this incredibly important and exciting motion. I know we are all behind the Matildas. The member for Miranda talked about the depth of the team and how their performance rose in Sam Kerr's absence. The member for Gosford provided us with an incredible insight into her experiences as a Paralympian and how important the success of the women's game is for lifting women's sport. In the same way, the Paralympics has improved recognition of people with disability as athletes. The member for Cootamundra talked about the inspiration that Ellie Carpenter is to Cowra and Clare Hunt is to Grenfell in her electorate and also the enormous obstacles Clare had to overcome.

The member for Lismore talked about Hayley Raso and about Julie Dolan, the first Australian captain, who came from Lismore as well. We had a passionate contribution from the member for North Shore. It was great to have the member for Leppington talk about his support for women's football. There was another passionate speech from the member for Badgerys Creek. The member for Liverpool talked about her years playing for the Waratahs. There was an amendment from the member for Coffs Harbour, which I support. There was a great but brief contribution from the crossbench. The member for Wahrenoonga, while supporting the Matildas, needs to learn how to read the room and not be totally negative. We are all behind the Matildas.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): Members will come to order.

Ms JULIA FINN: Just for the record, Stadium Australia was built by the Labor Government for the 2000 Olympics. We are all behind the Matildas.

Mr Alister Henskens: Parramatta stadium? Allianz?

Ms JULIA FINN: No, Stadium Australia. It's in Homebush. It is the biggest stadium in Australia, and that is why the final is there.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): Members will direct their comments through the Chair. Let's get the love back.

Ms JULIA FINN: We are all so excited to see the Matildas doing incredibly well, and it is wonderful to have so many members speak to this motion in support of the Matildas. We really want to see their success continue. They felt really disappointed to come fourth at the Olympics; they came so close to winning a medal. Let us hope they do not just go one better, but maybe go three better and actually win the world cup on home soil in Sydney at Stadium Australia.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The member for Granville has moved a motion, to which the member for Coffs Harbour has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The question is that the motion as amended be agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

PAUL AND KYLA RANKIN

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (17:53): I congratulate Paul and Kyla Rankin from Flinders on their outstanding fundraising efforts for Port Kembla Meals on Wheels through a recent pie drive. Meals on Wheels serves a vital purpose by providing affordable and convenient nutritious meals to those in need. Through their work, Paul and Kyla managed to raise an impressive sum of over \$600 in the pie drive, contributing significantly to the Meals on Wheels overall fundraising total of \$1,200. The impact of their fundraising efforts will undoubtedly make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who depend on Meals on Wheels. This hard work deserves special recognition as it directly supports individuals who rely on the invaluable services provided by Meals on Wheels. Again, I congratulate Paul and Kyla Rankin on their outstanding efforts.

WAHROONGA ELECTORATE ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahrenoonga) (17:54): Allied health professionals are a critical part of the healthcare workforce, enabling patients to walk, talk and eat, and to get therapy and tests that support them in

achieving good health and discharged from hospital. The Wahrenoonga electorate is home to many allied health professionals, including Joanne from Westleigh. Joanne plays an essential role in delivering positive health outcomes for people in the community. I recognise and commend Joanne for 23 years of service to NSW Health and I commend all allied health professionals in the local and broader community. Joanne contacted my office in the hope that the Government reflects this sentiment through real action. The allied health workforce has been overlooked in the Labor Government's wage offer of a flat \$3,500 to all health workers. Joanne will only gain a 2.5 per cent wage increase, significantly below the 4 per cent offered to all other public sector workers. Joanne only works part time, which makes matters worse. I call on the Labor Government to properly recognise allied health professionals like Joanne.

CARE4COAST

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:55): I acknowledge the wonderful service of the beautiful humans, businesses and like-minded organisations who support the weekly outreach service Care4Coast. Every Monday night in William Street Mall in Gosford—rain, hail or shine—the amazing spirit of the Care4Coast community shines bright as its members come together to create a safe environment for people in need. It began by supporting communities that were affected by fire, drought and flood and has grown to regularly support people impacted by the pandemic and now weathering economic challenges. Generous individuals, businesses and like-minded organisations supply trolleys full of fresh fruit and vegetables to a community filled with love that includes many people in need. From a piping hot water urn to sausages, soft drinks, sauces, groceries, hygiene packs, haircuts, a book exchange, fresh clean clothes for collection, the whirring of the Orange Sky washing machines and a generous DJ in the background, there is so much on offer. Donations come from many corners of our generous community, and we thank everyone who donates. One-off and regular donations are more than welcome.

BRONTE GILLAN

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (17:56): I say thanks to a motivated young leader in the Tamworth community. Leadership comes with a great opportunity to impact the lives and the direction of those around you. For Calrossy's Bronte Gillan, an opportunity arose to give mental health and wellbeing the focus it deserves. As the years 7 to 9 school captain, Bronte has embarked on a mission to raise the profile of R U OK? Day among her schoolmates, holding the first ever event at the school on 13 September. Alongside her committee, Bronte is busy organising a very special event for students and staff alike. A question can save a life, and that drives Bronte and her committee's desire to improve outcomes for the students of Calrossy. We have all seen the effects of poor mental health on our friends, family and communities, particularly through the drought and pandemic. I congratulate Bronte and Calrossy Anglican School on putting their hands up to do something about it. We wish them all the best of luck for Calrossy's first R U OK? Day.

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR JUSTIN YERBURY, AM

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (17:57): Wollongong and Motor Neurone Disease Research lost one of its giants last week with the passing of Professor Justin Yerbury, AM, who passed away after battling motor neurone disease—the disease he spent years trying to cure. Justin was many things: a researcher, author, former Illawarra Hawks basketball player, mentor, husband, father and advocate. His list of achievements is incredibly impressive. He had a professional basketball career followed by a stella research career during which he was awarded a string of research awards including a DECRA Postdoctoral Fellow in 2012 and the prestigious Eureka Prize for Scientific Research in 2022. He was also awarded a member of the Order of Australia, became Wollongong Citizen of the Year in 2019 and was presented the Keys to the City in 2022. Alongside that, he advocated for people with disability to get fairer treatment, which led to improvements in the NDIS, changes to corporate policies and changes to the way research assessment is done for researchers with disability. His legacy will live on through Rachel, Talia and Maddison but also through the family of researchers he gathered around him and in whom he instilled the importance of community engagement alongside scientific endeavour to achieve a better deal on multiple fronts simultaneously.

KIAMA ROTARY CLUB

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:58): Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the annual changeover event of the Rotary Club of Kiama, which was held on Sunday 2 July 2023, at the Sebel Harbourside Hotel in Kiama. I was extremely pleased to attend this event, and I acknowledge the incoming board of directors and office bearers, including president Errol Chopping, immediate past president Carol Jagger, secretary Murray Smith, treasurer Trevor Phillis, fundraising director Pat Smith, club service director John Kenny, international director Barry Wilson and youth director David Russell. I acknowledge the Rotary Club of Kiama's involvement in organising large community events, including the Christmas in July trivia night, and in supporting local students attending the National Youth Science Forum, the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards and the annual Festival of Choirs. The club's annual apple drive was well supported by the local community, along with its Spirit

of Community awards and the installation of a defib unit with 24-hour access at the Sebel Harbourside Hotel in Kiama. I also acknowledge the considerable community work undertaken by the Rotary Club of Kiama, which has a long and distinguished track record of serving our community. I congratulate every one of its community-minded members.

TRIBUTE TO ALAN OVERTON, AM, OAM

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (17:59): I acknowledge the sad passing of Alan Overton, AM, OAM, on 28 July. A Parramatta legend, known fondly as Mr Parramatta, Alan spent much of his life in service to others, starting as an eight-year-old Cub Scout of 1st Granville Scout Group—an affiliation he continued for 71 years. Alan was particularly passionate about supporting sports, health and education, from helping build the Ronald McDonald House at Westmead to his many decades of service to Greater Western Sydney Region Scouts. Alan is synonymous with the Parramatta Eels for his years of devoted service as chairman of both the Parramatta Eels and the Parramatta Leagues Club. His longstanding and passionate work for Parramatta will live long in the memories of those whose lives he touched. My condolences to all those who knew Alan and will feel his passing, especially his wife, Merle; children Karen, Craig and Grant; and nine grandchildren. On behalf of Parramatta I thank Alan. May he rest in peace.

RYDE DRAGON BOAT CLUB

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (18:00): I am delighted to share that our very own Ryde Dragon Boat Club will be sending six outstanding local athletes to represent Australia at the sixteenth World Dragon Boat Racing Championships, in Pattaya, Thailand, from 7 to 13 August 2023. Undoubtedly, the Australian team, known as the Auroras, will make Ryde, our State and all of Australia proud. I congratulate the following Ryde athletes, split across five divisions, on their selection to the team: Isabella Taranto, for the juniors; Joel McCarthy, 24 years and under; Wayne Davison, Premier; Peter Fox, Senior B, 50-plus; and Fiona Wells and George Dimech, senior C, 60-plus. As the local MP, I am always excited by opportunities to promote Ryde on the international stage. I congratulate our six local athletes, who take to Thailand the support of our entire community. On behalf of the people of Ryde and, I hope, all members of the Parliament, I wish the Ryde Dragon Boat Club members all the very best on the water next week. I am confident they will make us proud. Go Auroras!

ESCHOL PARK FOOTBALL CLUB GALA

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (18:01): On Saturday 24 June I attended Eschol Park Football Club's pink and blue gala day. A festival of football, fun and fundraising, the gala sees rides, food stalls and other activities, with games being played throughout the day across all ages at Eschol Park Sports Complex. The event attracts hundreds from the local area to raise money for an important cause: fighting cancer. The event first started 12 years ago, in 2011, when two mothers of the club's players succumbed to breast cancer. The club wanted to show its support by holding a charity day. It has been a success every year, raising thousands of dollars in the process. This year's event raised \$27,600 and is a testament to the many hours of work put in by the organising committee, headed by Peter Anjos, club president Ralf Bzdega and all the club. I say a big congratulations to everyone involved: the organisers, volunteers, players, stallholders and sponsors.

SAM FOWLER

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (18:02): Today with immense pride I congratulate our local sporting hero Sam Fowler on his remarkable achievement in representing Australia at the World Dragon Boat Racing Championships in Thailand. As a dedicated member of the under-18s team, Sam skilfully controls the boat as the sweep, showcasing his talent and expertise in the sport. Sam's passion for dragon boating is truly inspiring, and his role as co-captain of the team, along with three others, is a testament to his exceptional leadership skills and enthusiasm for the sport. It is clear from meeting Sam how hard he has worked to reach this level of excellence, taking the train down to Sydney to attend three to four elite training sessions each week, while balancing his year 11 studies at Kempsey High School. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Sam's parents for the work they put in to enable this great achievement, as well as to the Kempsey Macleay Dragon Boat Club for its unwavering support for and guidance of this extraordinary young athlete. As Sam embarks on his incredible journey to Thailand, he carries with him the hopes and best wishes of the Oxley community. I wish the best of luck to Sam. May he do us proud.

CAMDEN COTTAGE PRESCHOOL

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (18:03): NAIDOC Week is often an opportunity to connect with the Aboriginal community in many positive ways. It is also an opportunity to educate our young people about the land on which they learn and play, and Camden Cottage Preschool really outshone itself this year. On Thursday 6 July I was honoured to add my own handprint to the newest addition to the Camden Cottage playground. The Camden Cottage Preschool mural is a contemporary Aboriginal painting that pays homage to the local Aboriginal

Dharug, Dharawal and Gundungarra people as well as to the journey of the students and teachers at the school. Featuring concentric circles representing the meeting places of the local peoples, as well as the preschool, the mural contains depictions of the children and their families, as well as Aboriginal totems and symbols. The mural was completed by the Wandana Aboriginal education group. The children have been enjoying its educational resources throughout the year. It was a beautiful day, and the children will have a gorgeous place to play and recollect country all year long.

RIVERINA CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (18:04): I congratulate the Riverina Conservatorium of Music on the official opening last weekend of its new facility. Pianist Banruo Zhu, vocalist Taylor Brown, guitarist Trang Nguyen and violinist Rachel Roberts, all students, treated us to wonderful performances. All were outstanding and a testament to their talents and hard work and that of their teachers. The Wagga Wagga community and the region's community are very proud of the new facility. It sets the standard for regional conservatoriums, which are so important to regional New South Wales. I thank the board, the staff, the students, their families, city councillors, the community and public servants who have helped realise the dream of this new building. I particularly thank and acknowledge the work of Hamish Tait, the CEO, and Andrew Wallace, the board's chairperson, who have absolutely tirelessly worked for this conservatorium for the past decade. It has been a difficult fight, but they have never given up. Bravo! It was fitting that Hamish on piano accompanied soprano Larissa Burak in a wonderful, inspiring finale. Wagga Wagga is the city of great sports, and now it should be known also as the city of great musicians.

MULTICULTURAL DISABILITY ADVOCACY ASSOCIATION

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (18:06): In June I had the pleasure of attending a fundraising event for the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association. Since 1995 the association has provided crucial support and advocacy for the disabled members of the Fairfield community, consistently fighting for improved access to services and opportunities, and advocating for the rights of people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. In particular, the association has developed systems of individual and systemic advocacy, supported people with disabilities on an individual level and, more broadly, contributed to the improvement of public policy in the disability space. I thank the association's executive director, Susan Laguna, and its chairperson, Mary Kumar. I also acknowledge NDIS appeals advocate Stefano Cammarano, and team leader and systemic advocate Sera Yilmaz, as well as the wider Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association team.

BEACHES GROUP

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (18:07): Today I congratulate Beaches Group on winning the Outstanding Home Renovations and Improvement award and being named the business of the year at the 2023 Northern Beaches Local Business Awards ceremony. Beaches Group is an impressive business based in Warriewood, specialising in residential construction. Working on projects from Palm Beach to Mosman, it understands the unique coastal vibes of our community. Tim Robinson and the team at Beaches Group know that people's homes are their safe space, so they go above and beyond in their communication, ensuring that every custom project perfectly suits the client. The team at Beaches Group provides an unparalleled service. From interior design and landscaping plans to project management, the team is with its clients every step of the way. I am so proud that such a high-quality business in Pittwater has been recognised as the 2023 Northern Beaches business of the year.

TRIBUTE TO BRYSON DIMOVSKI

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (18:08): I offer my heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Bryson Dimovski, who was tragically killed in Warners Bay last Friday 28 June. Bryson was 14 years old. He was a year 8 student at Warners Bay High School. His family and friends say he was generous and caring. He was an interested and curious mind. He had an exceptional knowledge of meteorology. He rebuilt computers salvaged from hard rubbish pick-ups. He set up a workshop in the family garage and was working towards becoming an architect or engineer. The loss of a child is every parent's worst fear, and I cannot imagine what Bryson's parents, Andrew and Melissa, are going through right now. I know that Bryson's death has sent shockwaves through the local community. On behalf of the Charlestown electorate and, I hope, this Parliament, I tell Andrew, Melissa and all those who knew Bryson that we grieve with them.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK REDWARD

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (18:09): The Coffs Coast community has lost a great newsman, photographer and local identity with the recent death of Frank Redward. Frank was the quintessential newshound: If a story was breaking, he was there to capture it through his lens. From significant events and major milestones to quiet achievements and small celebrations, Frank covered them all. He saw humanity and situations

at their best and, sadly, at their worst. Frank was passionate about his photography. He is fondly remembered for the Fletchers Fotographics franchise he and his wife, Kaylene, operated in the Coffs Harbour CBD, for his long association with the *Coffs Coast Advocate* and other local media outlets and for his freelance work. Frank is survived by his wife, Kaylene; children Luke, Elliot, Melinda and Nathan; daughter-in-law Simone; and grandchildren Jake, Jacinta and Evangeline. He was a gentle man by nature and in deed. Rest in peace, Frank.

GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY TRAINING AWARDS

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (18:10): Vocational education and training play a key role in driving innovation and productivity, as well as developing the skills needed to sustain our industries. Recently I had the pleasure of attending the 2023 Greater Western Sydney Training Awards. Hosted by the Southern and South Western Sydney Regional Development Committee, the ceremony provided well-deserved acknowledgement to students, teachers and employers in the vocational education and training sector. I congratulate all the award winners and finalists on their achievements, and I give a special shout-out to Nicholas from the Australian Careers Business College in Liverpool for taking out the Vocational Student of the Year award. He now represents the region at the upcoming State training awards and I wish him the best. I thank the Department of Education and the committee for their work in organising the event. Events like that provide an opportunity to highlight the important career pathways supported by vocational education.

TRIBUTE TO LOUISE KUCHEL

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (18:11): I pay tribute to an extraordinary individual whose recent passing at the age of 51 has left a profound void in the hearts of those who knew her. We honour the memory of Louise Kuchel, a remarkable advocate and a compassionate soul. Louise touched the lives of countless individuals in her tireless efforts to create a more inclusive and understanding society. Louise's journey was one of strength, resilience and dedication. Throughout her life she held vital roles within the not-for-profit sector, making a significant impact on the lives of individuals with diverse needs. Her tenure at the Cerebral Palsy Alliance, Parents for ADHD Advocacy Australia and the disability royal commission demonstrated her commitment to championing the rights and wellbeing of those with disabilities. As we remember Louise, we recognise the immense impact she has had on the lives of those around her. Our thoughts and condolences are with Louise's children, family, friends and colleagues.

REVESBY ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (18:12): It is my honour to recognise the incredible achievement of the Revesby Rovers Football Club and the fundraiser it held in late June to raise funds for the Mark Hughes Foundation to help find a cure for brain cancer. That fundraising effort was hosted by 11-year-old Jerome; his brother, Levi; and their parents, Steve and Roula. It raised \$17,000. In 2020 Jerome was diagnosed with a brain tumour and had to undergo therapy along with a very intense treatment program. But he is now clear of his cancer and is getting stronger every day. The Revesby Rovers fundraiser featured the selling of beanies and t-shirts as well as a raffle, a silent auction, a cake stall and other fun activities for both children and parents alike. Revesby Rovers Football Club's motto is "We live by lifting others", and that has been clearly demonstrated by the support shown by the Revesby Rovers Football Club to Jerome and his family. We thank the Revesby Rovers Football Club for its efforts in raising funds to find a cure for brain cancer.

ROSE BAY SECONDARY COLLEGE P&C

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (18:13): Tonight I recognise the important work of the parents and citizens association at Rose Bay Secondary College. The P&C plays such a vital role in connecting the school with our community. Its members promote parental involvement in education and advocate for improved resourcing. The former Coalition Government supported significant upgrades to Rose Bay Secondary over the few past years, including more than a million dollars combined towards the new covered outdoor learning area structure, upgraded walkways and outdoor learning spaces, multipurpose sports courts and toilet upgrades. It would not have happened without the P&C. I acknowledge the advocacy and sizeable fundraising support from the P&C, as well as devoted parents and staff, to help bring those projects to fruition. I also acknowledge the outgoing P&C president, Kara Mikler, who must be congratulated on her tireless efforts for the school. She remains on the committee but hands the presidency to Kim Kench, whom I look forward to working with. I congratulate them on the great work that they do.

THE PONDS PROBUS CLUB

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (18:14): Excitement filled the air at The Ponds Community Hub on Wednesday 26 July 2023 with the inauguration of a brand new Probus Club. Gathering at the heart of that vibrant community, over 60 like-minded individuals came together in the hope of creating lifelong friendships and memories that will enrich their retirement years. When Probus Pacific representatives first considered

The Ponds as the newest location for a club, they had no idea the response to the expression of interest would be so amazing. The first meeting attracted an impressive turnout, reflecting the enthusiasm and spirit of The Ponds' residents. Laughter and camaraderie filled the room as they exchanged stories and shared their aspirations for the club's future. With its inception the Probus Club in The Ponds is set to blossom, with a multi-talented management team selected from the meeting. I look forward to hearing about their fantastic adventures and guest speakers. As the community grows, the Probus Club promises to be a source of joy and fulfilment for years to come. I look forward to forging a strong relationship with the club in the future.

TRIBUTE TO LANCE CORPORAL FREDERICK FRANCIS DENNY, OAM

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (18:15): We gathered on Saturday to remember and honour the life of Lance Corporal Frederick Francis Denny, OAM, who peacefully passed away at the age of 100 on 16 July. He was a revered member of our community and left a lasting impact through his dedicated service and unwavering commitment. As a life member of the 55th Mice of Moresby and a founding member of the Picton-Thirlmere-Bargo RSL, Lance Corporal Denny exemplified the values of camaraderie and selflessness. His profound contributions to those organisations will forever be cherished. His legacy extends beyond his military service. He was a beloved husband to Myrtle, deceased, a devoted father to Robbie and a respected figure in our community. We express our heartfelt gratitude to the staff at Bowral hospital, the Thompson and Davis families, the RSL sub-branch, his neighbours and the wider Thirlmere and Wollondilly community for their support during his final months. He will never be forgotten, and for a person turning 100 to have about 100 people turn up to his funeral says something.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOCCE CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (18:16): On 9 June 2023 Club Marconi hosted the Australian National Bocce Championship. I had the privilege of attending the opening ceremony, where I participated in bowling a bocce ball. While my bowl was not good enough to consider a career change, I was extremely impressed by the display of skills by the athletes. It was also inspiring to see Australian Special Olympics bocce athletes being included in the championship for the first time. That is a testament to the celebration of diversity and inclusion in my community. I thank Mr Frank Funari, president of Bocce Australia, for inviting me to participate in the opening of the championship. I congratulate the athletes from all around Australia, the coaches and all those involved in the championship on their success.

MILLY DUNBAR

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:17): I recognise Milly Dunbar, who has just been conferred a Youth Community Service Award by the New South Wales branch of the Order of Australia Association. Every year the New South Wales branch of the Order of Australia Association recognises 25 exceptional students across New South Wales for their extraordinary contributions to the community through its Youth Community Service Award. The award recognises significant services performed by students beyond their school boundaries that would not normally be recognised by their school. Milly is a year 12 student at St Columba Anglican School in Port Macquarie. Milly took it upon herself to try to assist women in vulnerable situations across Port Macquarie by giving them access to food and sanitary items in her bid to tackle local period poverty. Milly's community service has included raising over \$20,000 towards local and national charities, running food and toiletry drives, creating awareness campaigns and making over 200 bags for Port Macquarie Soup Kitchen patrons. She was previously recognised and as the New South Wales regional winner of the Zonta International award for young women achievers in 2022. I congratulate Milly on being an inspirational young leader who has given so much to those in need.

GRAHAM MULLANE, OAM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter) (18:18): I congratulate Graham Mullane, OAM, who was recognised as a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the judiciary, to the law and to the community in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours List. Mr Mullane has had a long and successful career bringing justice to our State. He co-founded the long-established Novocastrian law firm, Mullane and Lindsay Solicitors, before his appointment as a Family Court judge in 1986. Mr Mullane served as a judge until 2008, before becoming a judicial member of the New South Wales Administrative Decisions Tribunal and going on to be a New South Wales District Court judge until 2019. He continued to serve the community beyond working hours, chairing several organisations including the Royal Newcastle Hospital board, Hunter Aged Care Foundation, and with his involvement with Scouts Australia. I congratulate Mr Mullane on this hard-earned recognition.

TRIBUTE TO MARIE DUNN

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (18:19): Before the 2019 and 2023 elections, it was a pleasure to be contacted by Marie Dunn, who asked me to drop off a Labor how-to-vote card to her. Marie had a keen interest in politics, a deep commitment to Labor values and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. She left school at 14 but attended university after the Whitlam Government made adult education more accessible, achieving a Bachelor of Arts and a master's degree with her thesis based on the social history of Newtown during the Great Depression, which she lived through, particularly the lives of women from the suburb. Despite missing out on a scholarship because her then teacher did not apply, thinking she had no chance, Marie said:

Oddly enough, my lack of good education and a strong desire to study art remained. I passed the University of Sydney each day in a tram and never in my wildest imagination ever saw myself as a student there, let alone one with a bachelor's degree and hoping for a master's.

Marie's lifelong love of reading continued for another 40 years after her graduation, along with her inspiring embrace of lifelong learning. Marie is survived by her children, Michele, John and Gabrielle; grandchildren, Melissa, John, Andrew and Clare; and great-grandchildren, James, Oliver, Penelope and Maximillian.

Private Members' Statements

LONDONDERRY ELECTORATE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (18:21): I address the quite large number of people in my electorate of Londonderry who responded to a community survey that I recently sent out. We received an abundance of responses, which was great. I represent a lot of people who are not backward in coming forward about what they need from me as their local member. It is my great pleasure and the honour of my life to have represented that growing community over the past eight years. In this term of Parliament I am committed to working hard to represent their interests and their needs once more, and I am very honoured to do so in government as the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Education and Early Learning.

The pressing issues communicated from my electorate are issues that the Minns Labor Government is working on. Tonight I report to the community what I, as their local member, and the Government are doing to address those issues. The suburbs in my electorate continue to grow—as I speak now, I am sure there is quite a number of people who have moved into brand new homes at Jordan Springs and Marsden Park—and there is an urgent need to cater for young families in those areas by providing vital infrastructure. Really, that is probably the umbrella for the responses that I received in the survey. Something I have spoken about ad nauseam, and will continue to do until I walk through the doors of these new institutions, is the need for high schools at Marsden Park and Jordan Springs. I am happy to report to the people of both communities that we are on track for both commitments. I personally have been a huge advocate for both of those and now I am the Minister responsible for delivering them.

Marsden Park high school now officially has a name, which is very exciting: Melonba High School. Local people would know that the suburb of Melonba is within Marsden Park. Mr Leon Weatherstone has just been appointed as principal. I am really happy to advise the community that enrolment for year 7 and year 8 students from day one, term 1, at the temporary high school is now open. Of course, we are opening a temporary high school as a way of fast-tracking and actually getting kids in the school because the previous Government was so tardy—that is the nicest way of putting it. After years of fighting for this school, I am not exaggerating when I say it brings me a lot of personal joy to be able to notify families that their children will have a new high school. I encourage everyone in the local community to attend the next community information sessions on Thursday 10 August and Friday 11 August. We have had massive rollouts at all those community information sessions. Lots of people are interested in finding out how to enrol their children.

We also have had a lot of responses from the community around the need for a high school in Jordan Springs. Yesterday there was also a question at our community cabinet in Penrith about it. I was happy to report to the community cabinet, and I am happy to report to the community via my speech this evening, that we have begun the initial work on that as well. We are in the process of identifying the land, which is crucial. Obviously, we need to know that we can get a piece of land that will work as a local high school. I am very committed to this project. We need to ensure that there is a high school for Jordan Springs and Ropes Crossing, which is something that I personally cannot wait to see delivered.

When it comes to Jordan Springs, I acknowledge a cause of frustration for local residents, which I, as a local resident, also share. There is a particular road issue in our suburb that is meant to complete the link road between the two suburbs of Ropes Crossing and Jordan Springs. This has been a very frustrating process; it has been made more frustrating by the work that had to be done because of subsidence in Jordan Springs East. I believe

that the Penrith City Council is now working in collaboration with Lendlease, the developer of that part of Jordan Springs, to replace the uncontrolled fill and that will be happening soon. I will keep fighting for that, as well as ensuring that Marsden Park gets the public transport that it deserves. I thank the community for the honour of continuing to represent them.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:26): I take this opportunity to recognise the support of my local community of North Shore this year and recommit to them my endeavours to ensure that I represent them in this place. I feel incredibly privileged to represent the people of North Shore in this place. I always work to ensure that their voices are heard on the issues that matter to us. While earlier this year we had a change of government, what has not changed is our community's expectation to represent them to the very best of our abilities. I am truly blessed to live in such a wonderful community. It supports me as their local MP—a working mum MP, even—and I am honoured that they have put their trust in me to continue serving North Shore in the oldest Parliament in Australia. Over the past six years, I have worked and listened to the local community and I deeply appreciate the community responding to that with their support.

I take this opportunity to thank the many incredible volunteers who spent countless hours ensuring that we kept North Shore blue—whether it was handing out flyers at transport stops and weekend markets, or manning booths at prepoll or on election day. I cannot express my thanks to the many hundreds of people who came in to support me in our community. I thank those who were on my campaign committee and who were with me every step of the way on the campaign: Ted Wziontek, Georgia Lovell, Greg and Mary Blainey, Jess Kean, Jo Howe, Lachlan Clark, Trent Zimmerman, Chris Puplick and Chris McDermott. I thank them for their hard work and support over many months—it is truly appreciated. Over the past six years my community can be proud of the record investment that we have delivered together.

Three of our local schools received funding for major upgrades—Mosman High School, North Sydney Demonstration School and Neutral Bay Public School. Excitingly, students will be in the new building at Mosman High School from the beginning of term 3. I got to go in there and check it out. It is truly astounding. That is exactly the type of investment we should make in public education. It should be the pinnacle of our education system. The Neutral Bay Public School's demolition has kicked off with the new build and the North Sydney Demonstration School is very close to opening the doors to its new build as well. These are all investments that the entire community can be very proud of.

We have seen major public transport investment with the game-changing Sydney Metro, with two stations nearly completing their builds at Victoria Cross station in North Sydney and Crows Nest station. What was just a couple of years ago the single largest underground cavern in Australia, Victoria Cross has now been completely transformed into an underground railway station. This is also transforming the ground plane in North Sydney.

We committed to and are delivering a second harbour crossing with the Western Harbour Tunnel, as well as upgrading the Warringah Freeway to ensure smoother travel into the city and the west. As part of the Western Harbour Tunnel project, we have been able to plan a complete transformation of Berrys Bay. This is an incredible waterfront precinct which has been locked away from community hands because of a failed development deal well over a decade ago. Now the dilapidated harbour foreshore will be back in the community's hands. Work will commence on the park shortly, to be opened next year.

During the election I outlined several priorities that my community have shown me that they care about, including a major upgrade of North Sydney Oval and delivering a world-class high line in Lavender Bay. I was proud to stand alongside the then Premier, Dom Perrottet, as we committed, as the then Government, to transform the disused rail corridor at Lavender Bay into a high line that would rival those of New York and Paris. Our commitment was in response to a long-running resident campaign, spearheaded by the Sydney Harbour HighLine Association and Councillor Ian Mutton. Our vision for this high line will see more than three kilometres of walking track stretching from Waverton to Luna Park with sweeping views over Sydney Harbour. I look forward to working with our local community and the Labor candidate for North Shore to secure this commitment with this Labor Government.

We also committed to making North Sydney Oval the home of women's sport in New South Wales, with a commitment to provide \$11 million to transform the oval into a premier sports venue. The iconic oval is special to everyone in my local community and visitors alike. We want to make sure that we continue to grow female sports participation, and this project will ensure that women and girls have a modern and fit-for-purpose venue to watch their sporting heroes in action, as well as allowing access to local grassroots clubs. I have been seeking a commitment from the new Government to provide funding for this iconic space and working alongside all sporting codes that call North Sydney Oval home to achieve this. I note the role that North Sydney Oval is playing in the current FIFA Women's World Cup as a viewing site, bringing our community together as a live site.

Once again, I thank my community of North Shore for putting their trust in me again. I love this community. It is where I am raising my children and where I have chosen to make my home and future. I will endeavour to continue delivering for our local area and ensuring that we hold this Labor Government to account so we do not get left behind.

BLACKTOWN CITY SPORTS AWARDS

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (18:31): Recently I had the pleasure of attending the 2023 Blacktown City Sports Awards Gala Presentation. The annual event has been taking place since 1983. The Blacktown City Sports Awards recognise sports men, women, girls and boys of all ages and abilities, and aim to promote sports and sporting clubs within the Blacktown local government community. This year I am pleased to advise Parliament that eight people from the Mount Druitt electorate were nominated for the awards. The nominee categories for Mount Druitt include Coach of the Year, Junior Sportsperson of the Year, two Volunteers of the Year, and four nominees for Sportsperson of the Year. It is pleasing to see so many people from the Mount Druitt electorate being nominated for the awards.

Sports serve as a catalyst for community engagement. Sporting events, tournaments and leagues attract participants and spectators, creating opportunities for community members to come together and celebrate. Those events not only generate a sense of pride and unity but also stimulate local economies. Moreover, sports organisations often engage in community outreach programs, promoting inclusivity, diversity and equal access to sports for all members of the community. The benefits of sports in our local community are undeniable. From improving physical health to fostering social cohesion, personal development and community engagement, sports have a transformative impact on individuals and society. By supporting and investing in sports programs, we can create a healthier, more connected and more vibrant community for everyone.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Blacktown City Council on supporting our local sporting community by hosting the awards and raising awareness of the benefits of participating in sports. I congratulate coach Lemuelu Fappoi of the Western Vikings on his nomination for Coach of the Year. His expertise, guidance and mentorship have played a significant role in shaping the athletes under his care. His unwavering support, dedication and belief in their abilities propel them to new heights. His coaching philosophies, strategic brilliance and ability to nurture talent have not only led to remarkable performances but also contributed to the personal development of his athletes.

Four athletes were nominated for the title of Sportsperson of the Year: Ayden Hamilton, Chloe Ross, Koralee Catlett and Zarah Calder, and Lilly Calder was nominated for Junior Sportsperson of the Year. Their unwavering commitment to excellence has led them to this well-deserved recognition. Whether it was through exceptional performances on the field or remarkable displays of skill, they have captivated us with their passion and drive. Their dedication to their sport has brought pride not only to themselves but also to their community. The nominees for Volunteer of the Year were Melissa Kingston and Shane Gallard. Their nomination is a testament to the positive impact they have had on our local sports community. Their dedication, passion and generosity of spirit make them true champions in our community. Volunteering is an integral part of our community and I thank them for their support. Once again, I congratulate the nominees of the Mount Druitt electorate and the award recipients on their great achievements.

WOLLONDILLY ELECTORATE

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (18:35): I speak of the developments and growth that are going to affect the Wollondilly electorate. The developments stretch from Wilton to Appin and were approved by a former Liberal Minister for planning. I have met with the current Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to outline my concerns that a long list of infrastructure was not provided by the developer or referenced in the Department of Planning and Environment documents. It includes energy, water, wastewater, public transport, major roads, schools, community facilities, jobs and adequate exits in the case of emergencies. I have since written to the Premier and his Cabinet colleagues, including Ministers for roads, health, education, emergency services, environment, transport, water and local government. I look forward to meeting with each of them to discuss this as a matter of urgency.

The inadequate planning of the former Government should not be an excuse for this Government to let things continue in the same way. The residents of south-west Sydney deserve better than wall-to-wall houses and to be a political football passed between Liberal and Labor. While this Government has approved the special infrastructure contribution [SIC] scheme, thanks to the former Government all the previous unstarted funds will be considered but remain unfunded. So much of Wilton went ahead with no SIC. Alarming, to date there is no infrastructure planned, including no high schools, no health facilities and a subpar sewer treatment service. There was going to be a possible healthcare centre attached to the commercial centre, but that too is now at risk.

The commercial centre has no confirmed start date and is becoming unviable due to landowners all now planning for neighbourhood shops to be built in each of their areas. The centre was to be partially funded by a top-up contribution from all other major developers to provide employment for the residents. Guess what? There is no SIC and no top-up was made. Also risking the viability of jobs, is the fact that mining licences cover this area. They need to be purchased back from South32 or there are significant restrictions on building sizes, including limitation of floors. That affects the prospects of job growth and the community centres in the growth areas. So much for our promised one job for one house that was fought for by me and the councillors of 2012 to 2016.

There are concerns with exit times for the villages of Wollondilly at present. Significant infrastructure will be needed to adequately address this. Council to date has not stated it is satisfied regarding this and has not had information presented to the governing body to make comment. A report titled *Wollondilly Hazards Analysis and Emergency Management Study* has been commissioned and sent to the Department of Planning and Environment for comment in December 2022. While this is a council document, I have not had the chance to even sight it because the CEO has determined to make it confidential based on advice. My community deserves the truth and deserves the report to be released by council today, with or without agency sign-off.

Ms Anna Watson: Hear, hear!

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Through the approval process, there has been a lack of input from the elected council, and the majority of councillors have stated they have concerns with the proposed developments. However, with the nomination of the single staff member to oversee the process, the advice by the CEO that the process is to remain confidential removed the opportunity for councillors to raise concerns. That decision stopped councillors from even knowing what arguments to raise. While there have been environmental studies for the area, the only thing the Cumberland Plain study area has achieved was moving pinpoints of koala audio sightings from the developer-owned land to privately owned land, stopping anyone putting even a granny flat on their block, and it may be 40 acres. That is not funny in a housing shortage crisis. Not one koala life has been saved as a direct result of those studies. Instead, it has enabled developers to get away with just more housing.

The infrastructure costs for the Wilton and Appin areas are over \$2.5 billion, excluding drinking water and wastewater. With the possibility to gain a maximum yield of \$528 million gathered from the new SIC if the full 40,000 homes were to be paid, this would leave a deficit that the New South Wales Government needs to pay of over \$3 billion, or close to five years of the entire New South Wales SIC funding for all regions added together. As far as I know, there is no government ownership of secret geese to lay golden eggs, so where is the money going to come from? I look forward to hearing an answer from the Government, which now has to fix this mess.

SHELL COVE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:39): I outline some concerns my community has about the new marina development at Shell Cove, in the south-eastern part of the Shellharbour electorate. For decades the people of Shellharbour have been looking forward to the opening of the Shellharbour Marina and boat harbour, a joint venture between the council and Frasers Property. I was one of the biggest supporters of the original council-led project. Way back on 12 September 2011, I was full of praise when I stood in this place and stated that the new project presented "a fresh start and hope for the future for the people of the Illawarra".

However, now that the project is nearing completion it is time to reflect on whether the local community has received the benefits it expected. In the past few months, a number of issues have come to light that have cast doubt on the joint venture, and I fear that the local residents and ratepayers will suffer for years to come. Many brand new houses have major defects, prompting the developer, Frasers Property, to apologise and promise to fix the defects in numerous homes. I have been advised by the office of the Minister for Building, and Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading that the NSW Building Commissioner is on the case. I will keep the community updated as investigations continue.

The issues do not stop with poor construction and building faults. Recently I met with various sporting clubs that have been promised a new sporting ground as part of the development. For over a decade, local cricket and Australian Football League clubs from Shellharbour have been led to believe that the Shell Cove Marina project would deliver a brand new oval. The glossy brochures and plans have shown a lovely cricket and AFL oval to the south of the marina, enticing potential buyers of land and units as well as the local community. Unfortunately, the site for the new oval is currently covered in hundreds of tonnes of material that was excavated from the new harbour—what a shambles. There is no date for when this material is to be moved and Transport for NSW has informed me that it has no plans to use the material on any of its projects.

What is the hold-up? The material just sits there while our existing sporting fields are bursting at the seams due to the increased population growth from the project. That is not good enough and the community is rightly angry about it. The boat harbour is open, with boats able to cruise into Shell Cove and boaties able to enjoy brand

new luxury facilities. Meanwhile, residents, both new and old, do not have their promised new sporting ground and no time frame for its delivery. Community sporting infrastructure should have been built before the harbour opened, not long afterwards.

The other main issue raised by my community is access by locals to the marina precinct—in particular, parking. This is where it gets interesting. The Mayor of Shellharbour, Chris Homer, recently admitted to the community that the lack of parking for locals would be a problem. In fairness to the current mayor, this issue predates his election, but it is now an issue he needs to show leadership on, and I am concerned that he is not up for the challenge. In fact, I am convinced of it. Just last week, Mayor Homer suggested that locals can "get on their electric bike and ride down there a kilometre and not necessarily take up car parking spaces where people from Wollongong might need it". That direct quote from the mayor surely shows that he is not up to the job of mayor of our community.

Many residents I spoke to last week are bitterly disappointed about the mayor's comments. There is very little active transport infrastructure in place or planned for locals to easily access the new marina via bike or as pedestrians. I am aware that I am running out of time, and I have so much to say about this. I am determined to ensure that locals and tourists alike can easily access the new marina and enjoy it for decades to come. The parking and sporting facilities have been raised by locals for years, and it is high time that the mayor starts doing what the ratepayers pay him to do. If he cannot do that, it makes sense that he should resign and let the deputy mayor, Kellie Marsh, take over. I call for that to happen as soon as possible.

KINCUMBER NAUTICAL VILLAGE SITE FEES

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:44): I bring attention to and commend the actions of Bob Morris, Terry Davidson and the Kincumber Nautical Village Residents Committee, who continue to advocate for the interests and rights of all residents, particularly regarding site fees. I spoke about this issue in 2020. According to residents, the owner, Theo Whitmont, despite numerous visits to the tribunal and very negative media on numerous occasions, continues with unfair price hikes and neglect of maintenance responsibilities, with no transparency towards residents. Kincumber Nautical Village is home to some of the Central Coast's most vulnerable community members: seniors, people with disabilities and single-parent families whose only income is their fortnightly pension payment. The June 2023 site fee increases appear to be an appalling abuse of power on the part of the operator.

I would like to table in the New South Wales Parliament a document with statements from a number of residents outlining the circumstances that they exist under. I note that the Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading is in the Chamber beside me, which is a delight. Alan is on a fortnightly pension of \$1,213. Before the increase he paid \$273 in weekly site fees. Since 8 June 2023, this has risen by \$26.24 to just under \$300 a week. Almost half of Alan's pension is used to pay site fees. Now he is facing impossible choices: Does he pay for groceries, go to an urgent doctor's appointment or pay for his health insurance? James, a resident since 1996, was forced into a choice. He has had to forgo home insurance as he could no longer afford it as a result of the most recent site fee increase. Graham, like Alan, has almost half of his pension going towards paying the site fees.

Leni received the same weekly increase. Leni is a single mother with two children, who receives a carer pension. Her seven-year-old daughter has Down syndrome. She is an amazing woman and a qualified social worker. Her daughter has ongoing heart issues and medical needs. With six days to go until receiving her next payment, Leni only had \$40 to feed a family of three. If the site fees had not increased, she would have had more than double that amount—in her words, "plenty" to feed them all. What have the residents received in return? According to the notice of site fee increase, costs include maintenance as well as plumbing, electrical, road and pool repairs. Instead, residents are left with rusty "electricity mushrooms" and above-ground extension cords that often overheat, and trip during wet weather. Electricity is tripping when residents use only two appliances in their homes. They have to go outside and down the road to reset the fuse to get their electricity. That is a disgrace in 2023, when people are paying good money to live on this site.

Residents have roads either riddled with potholes or covered in gravel and stones. The former has resulted in several injuries to residents and the latter prevents residents who use walkers from leaving their homes. When residents call for transparency and request to view the outgoings and expenses, they are met with silence or outright refusal. The Residential (Land Lease) Communities Act is supposed to protect residents from unfair conduct. However, despite resident complaints to Fair Trading, proceedings before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal and attempts at mediation, the owner of Kincumber Nautical Village appears to have shown complete contempt for the residents. The flaws in the existing Residential (Land Lease) Communities Act have allowed the owner of the Kincumber Nautical Village—who hosted a fundraiser for Liberal MP Chris Hartcher, who was named by ICAC—to exploit vulnerable people who in good faith chose to make Kincumber Nautical Village their home. It is disappointing. This should be a beautiful place for the residents to live.

Residential land lease living on the Central Coast plays an essential role in the provision of affordable housing. It is important that our residents, particularly our older community members and people with disability, have access to fair and safe low-cost housing. For residents of the Kincumber Nautical Village, the hope for a safe and affordable home has been shattered as they face harsh and oppressive site fees. I sincerely thank Bob Morris and the Kincumber Nautical Village residents committee for their ongoing work advocating for the interests and rights of all residents, and I thank the Tenants' Union of NSW, which continues to support the residents groups and associations during litigated disputes. I note that the Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, who is very aware of the situation, is in the Chamber and that the new Labor Government is committed to improving the current legislation to provide tenants with certainty and security and to stop the excessive price hikes and exploitation of vulnerable people living in land lease residential communities across New South Wales.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): I thank the member for Gosford. I note that during her private member's statement she indicated that she wished to table a document. The most appropriate course is for the member to read the contents of the document so that it forms part of her private member's statement.

GLENREAGH TIMBER FESTIVAL

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (18:50): I speak in support of one of the industries that is fundamental to my electorate: the timber industry. At the same time, I also acknowledge the tremendous work done by volunteers in my community. The timber industry is one of the foundation industries of my electorate and employs literally thousands of people, both directly and indirectly. Last Saturday the industry was on display at the Glenreagh Timber Festival held on the Glenreagh reserve. I offer a big congratulations to everyone involved, not only the ground managers on the reserve trust but also the hardworking volunteers at the festival. In fact, the turnout was something to behold—a real credit to the hardworking volunteers, who I am sure have spent many hours not only planning the event but also improving the reserve for the people of New South Wales.

It was an honour to be invited to open a new fence on the ground, funded by the previous Government to the value of \$182,000 under the Stronger Country Communities Fund. I know that Wayne, Leanne, Steven, Kath, Greg, Pete, Mary and Tamra are most proud of the reserve that they have been working on endlessly for the past four years. Paul Taylor was the bloke responsible for the timber fence, which is a massive improvement to the reserve, and it is now a major driver in the Glenreagh economy. With camping on site, there is now a steady stream of income, which will see this very valuable public space improved.

This year's Glenreagh Timber Festival was the biggest and the best yet, and a true celebration of an industry that is important to my electorate. I can only imagine the hours of work that have been spent. Glenreagh is not the biggest area in my electorate by far. It has a population of a little over 1,000, but over 8,500 people from across my electorate and Glenreagh turned up to this most important event. As I have said, the timber industry in my electorate is absolutely sustainable and employs thousands of people. In fact, it is a way of life for many. The day was perfect last Saturday. It was the perfect location. No wonder more than 8,500 people turned up. Some highlights of the day included the woodchops, the vintage train displays, the vintage steam engines, the markets, the food trucks, the motorbike show and shine and, of course, the main stage, where there was entertainment all day.

The Glenreagh Timber Festival is a community event, which this year has supported the Glenreagh Rural Fire Service, Heartstart, the Glenreagh Mountain Railway, Sherwood Cliffs, Glenreagh Preschool, the Glenreagh school, the new school of arts, the men's shed, the Orara Valley Lions Club, the Glenreagh Pony Club and the Glenreagh Progress Association. It was run like a well-oiled machine. I also congratulate all the sponsors, including Coffs Harbour Hardwoods, which helped transport the steam engines for the festival and supplied the timber that ran them; the Glenreagh Bus Service; the Glenreagh Bakery; and the Orara Valley Country Women's Association, which fed the volunteers both beforehand and on the day. I also congratulate the Glenreagh Timber Festival committee, which was made up of Leanne, Colin, Amber and Mike. It was a job well done. In my electorate timber matters. We see the timber industry in New South Wales as a sustainable and renewable industry that is worth investing in. I congratulate it on being on full display on Saturday at the Glenreagh Timber Festival.

CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE BUS SERVICES

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (18:54): In the earliest days of this Parliament I spoke about the state of our bus services in the Charlestown electorate. Two cases that I reported at the time particularly stood out: a high school student who was left stranded when two of the buses she relied on to get to and from school were cancelled on the same day; and a woman living with a disability who relied on buses to get to her employment and who found herself left waiting and late for work as services were cancelled or delayed. I have heard many more similar examples from people across my electorate.

However, I am pleased to report to the House that, for the first time since our buses were privatised, the people of the Charlestown electorate have a good reason to hope that things will finally improve. It has been a long time coming. In fact, for the first time in more than a decade a government has sat down to hear directly from public transport users about what they want out of their network. It is such a change from the experiences of my constituents under the previous Government. When privatisation first occurred in 2017, my office was inundated for months by concerned people. Parents were worried about how their kids were going to get to school. Workers were worried about how they were going to get to work on time. Elderly people and people living with a disability who relied on public transport to get to medical appointments or social engagements worried about whether they would be able to stay healthy or participate in the community.

When the new routes started operating in early 2018, their worries were unfortunately proven correct and people reached out to me again. School buses were cancelled. Services were delayed. Poorly considered routes and badly timed connections meant that some journeys that had previously been short hops suddenly took hours. There were some improvements. No-one could say that the bus system in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie area did not need updating. But those improvements were vastly overshadowed by the enormous problems that were shared with me by public transport users. I passed their complaints on to the then transport Minister and the private operator, Keolis Downer, and all too often they fell on deaf ears. My constituents were told that their issues would be taken under advisement and considered as part of future improvements.

I reached out last year to many of those who contacted me initially in 2017 and 2018 to find out whether their experiences of using the privatised Newcastle buses had changed or improved. I was saddened but not surprised to learn that the promised improvements had never materialised. My colleagues and I are reaching out to the local community. We actively encouraged members of the public, representatives from community groups, local businesses and non-government organisations to participate in a forum held recently by the Minister for Transport. Rather than fobbing off locals, we let them know that we wanted to hear from them—and they let their voices be heard. Imagine that—a New South Wales government that actually listens to the people of New South Wales.

The people have been hungry for it. More than 70 people attended the forum, which was held last Friday. They were involved in small group discussions to find out the issues that faced them when using public transport, what worked for them and what improvements they could suggest—because, as the transport Minister said when she opened the forum, if a bus does not work for the people who use it, it does not work. Forum participants were able to access direct individual support from Transport for NSW staff on issues ranging from scheduling to disability access to safety concerns. The immediate feedback received by the Minister and her staff from those participating on the day underlines just how refreshing the approach taken by this Minns Labor Government really is.

Attendees said that they valued the opportunity to be listened to, they appreciated having their issues considered, and they welcomed the chance to engage directly with staff who could offer advice and support, and indeed with decision-makers. The information shared by the attendees will inform the Bus Industry Taskforce as it develops its recommendations to improve the reliability of bus services in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie. But this is just the beginning. The Bus Industry Taskforce will play a central role in dealing with the consequences of bus privatisation, driving much-needed changes and improvements to bus services. I thank my constituents, and I say to them that their concerns have been heard. Now we are getting on with the job of fixing Newcastle buses.

BRIG O'JOHNSTON BRIDGE

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (19:00): I update the House on the recent damage to Brig O'Johnston Bridge in Clarence Town in my electorate of Upper Hunter, which, as it so happens, is my home town. I am disappointed to report that the oldest surviving timber truss bridge in New South Wales was damaged by a heavy vehicle on Wednesday 12 July. The State Government asset, built in 1880, is named after William "Brig" O'Johnston, former member for Williams, who served in this place between 1877 and 1880. My disappointment is not limited to the fact that this historic crossing of the Williams River has been damaged; the bridge closure is also currently having an impact on the community of Clarence Town. Transport for NSW bridge engineers initially assessed the damage the following day, but further inspections were needed to identify necessary repairs to ensure the bridge can be reopened safely to traffic.

The current closure has split Clarence Town into two, with detours in place for light traffic and heavy vehicles. There is a detour of about half an hour for residents on the eastern bank of the Williams River just to get to the township of Clarence Town on the other side, whether for shopping, to use the post office, for school pick-up and drop-off or to use recreational facilities. More than just a nuisance or inconvenience, the added expense of fuel is causing another hit to family budgets in a rural community where cost of living is front and centre. Heavy vehicles need almost an hour to divert around the area, which is having its own impact on road transport operations and will impact the price of goods and services at a time when inflation is firmly in the economic spotlight. Some

motorists have expressed concern to me about the condition of East Seaham Road, which is part of the detour. I am afraid to say that this road is in a state of disrepair.

A timeline for a resolution to the Clarence Town bridge situation and the inconvenience that the damage has created only became clear late last week. When that occurred, I went to the bridge to look at the damage to the Bailey bridge structure that supports the old timber trusses—a temporary structure that has now been in place for nearly 20 years. My subsequent representation to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads was that the investigation and engineering assessment needed to be completed by Transport for NSW asap. Also, the damaged Bailey bridge structure needed to be replaced, and consideration given to a shuttle bus so the local kids can travel between the bridge and school. I am pleased to see that final arrangements are now being put in place for that shuttle bus. Last week we received an update from Transport for NSW that work to install new bridge supports will be happening next week. Once reopened, the bridge will have additional restrictions including the prohibition of articulated heavy vehicles.

However, I have to ask myself was the situation preventable? To be frank, the answer is yes. Local government is too often an easy punching bag for the two higher tiers of public governance, the New South Wales and Federal governments. On this occasion, Dungog Shire Council has been on the job and on task; it has done the planning for a new bridge to supersede the existing historic structure. It has not been an easy project. To briefly recap that work, in May 2017 the Coalition Government announced \$5.5 million under the Fixing Country Roads program. A further \$8.8 million was announced in Federal funding. Dungog Shire Council advised that by 2021 funding streams were approved. Since then, the design has been finalised and approved by Heritage NSW, and finally the project is at a point where it is ready to go; however, challenges and delays in getting a start means inflation has now impacted the price.

We are now aware of an additional \$4.86 million of funding required to finish the project. A major sticking point at this time is the Australian Government honouring its commitment. It has held up the project with its 90-day review. Everything has ground to a halt. Dungog Shire Council now understands that no decision will be made until September. The challenge now is to reunite the Clarence Town community by building a safe and efficient crossing over Williams River, which is thankfully getting underway. I repeat my request for the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads to work with her Federal counterpart and prioritise the funding of the new bridge straightaway and commence construction on it. Clarence Town's patience is wearing thin.

DOWRY ABUSE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (19:05): Domestic and family violence can take many forms, but all of them are insidious and cowardly. One form of domestic and family violence prevalent in my electorate of Parramatta is dowry abuse, an under-reported and unrestricted form of economic abuse that causes devastating impacts on some members of our culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Dowry abuse is defined by the United Nations as any act of violence or harassment associated with the giving or receiving of dowry at any time before, during or after the marriage. Those supporting victims of dowry abuse say that understanding the full extent of dowry abuse is hindered due to a high level of under-reporting along with a culture of familial shaming existing in many of the communities in which it is taking place.

With the largest population of temporary visa holders in the State and one of the largest South Asian populations in Australia, the issue of dowry abuse is of significant concern in the Parramatta area. Support workers and volunteers from our South Asian communities in Parramatta and across west and south-west Sydney have been front and centre of advocacy on the issue of dowry abuse. In 2019 the City of Parramatta supported a motion that the peak body Local Government NSW advocate for the New South Wales Government to amend the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 to recognise economic abuse, and within that include dowry abuse as a form of economic abuse, and work with community groups to develop education campaigns about economic and dowry abuse.

In an effort to develop a community response, it became apparent that there was an absence of information about dowry abuse beyond anecdotal stories and case studies. There was a recognised need to develop data to increase a wider understanding of the issue. The City of Parramatta led a research project in conjunction with Western Sydney University, Settlement Service International and the Indian (Sub-Cont) Crisis and Support Agency. *Dowry Abuse and South Asian Populations in Australia: Identifying Core Features, Exploring Community Narratives and Developing Resources for Prevention and Intervention* was researched by Dr Tinashe Dune, Juliana Nkrumah, Sharmila Falzon, Kittu Randhawa, Hina Khan, Tamima Rahman and Ritesh Chimoriya.

Research found that more than 15 per cent of South Asian women reporting domestic and family violence born in Australia and overseas were affected by dowry abuse. Given the level of under-reporting, the real figure is significantly greater. It should also be noted that while this issue overwhelmingly affects women, there are also recorded male victims of this abuse. The recommendations of the project seek a nationally consistent definition

of dowry abuse; resources and training to assist in the identification and response to dowry abuse for State and Federal police officers, the domestic and family violence sector, and legal professionals; and a one-stop-shop, integrated service that responds to dowry abuse, intimate partner violence and family violence for Australian residents without citizenship status.

It is unacceptable that domestic violence and dowry abuse continues in Parramatta, in the heart of a modern Australia that is committed to gender equality and ending violence against women. From the day that I attended Chat and Chai at the Harris Park Community Centre and heard about the harrowing experiences of women who had been subjected to dowry abuse in Parramatta and beyond, I realised I had a role to play in providing local women with a voice and as an advocate. I encourage my parliamentary colleagues to review the recommendations of the Commonwealth Senate inquiry in 2018 and the City of Parramatta-led research to support reform to stop dowry abuse in New South Wales and Australia.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (19:09): As the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, I am pleased to hear the thoughts of the member for Parramatta and the passion that she brings to the Parliament on this issue. I am particularly happy to work with her in considering dowry abuse as a form of domestic abuse and look forward to further conversations.

HEALTH FUNDING

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (19:10): I speak about the Government's proposed special commission of inquiry into health funding. Like everyone, I support the need to make sure that public funds are spent wisely. We should not miss the chance to save money, so long as we do not cut services. As health is the largest part of the State budget, it should be subject to scrutiny. But this inquiry will be an expensive exercise. It will put the health system under enormous pressure. This system is still recovering from the onslaught of COVID, so we need to get this right. It is in that spirit that I make some comments. I thank the Minister for the briefing that I have received from his office.

I make several key points. The first is the issue of locum and agency costs, which I understand have gone through the roof in the past decade. Those costs relate to temporary staff who traditionally fill gaps in rosters to cover leave. However, that staff increasingly appear to be replacing permanent positions at an inflated cost to the system. Peter Garling, SC, in his inquiry 15 years ago, noted:

NSW Health spends, on the evidence which I heard, very large sums of money hiring casual doctors who are called locums. Sometimes area health services bid against each other to hire locums for a weekend and everyone ends up paying more than they should.

It was described at the time as "low-hanging fruit" in terms of making savings, yet it is now worse than ever. Locum use undermines the permanent health workforce and discourages health professionals from relocating to rural and regional areas. After all, why would a person move when they can fly in and fly out of Sydney with their transport and accommodation paid for? It is true that some locum use is inevitable and important in providing relief for hardworking professionals, but we should not have services that rely entirely on locums. I am also concerned that some commentary seems to regard visiting medical officers [VMOs] as part of the locum problem. Even the Treasurer seems to conflate the spending on one group with the other.

VMOs have been part of the New South Wales health system for 40 years. It was set up by the ALP in the mid-1980s and refined in the 1990s and early 2000s. I must declare an interest. I am a member of the Australian Medical Association [AMA] and the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation. Throughout my life I have worked with VMOs in a variety of roles in the public system and I married a VMO who has served more than 30 years in the public health system. VMOs provide most of the surgery in our public hospitals. They are employed under statewide conditions negotiated and agreed with the AMA. They are senior specialist doctors and rural GPs who provide critical services to their communities. They are often the backbone of the health services in rural and regional areas. The last thing we need is to target them out of a misguided confusion that they are like locum services.

Another area of concern to me is the outsourcing of elective public surgery to private hospitals. This was perhaps necessary in the wake of COVID as it represented a good way to tackle waiting lists that had blown out because of the shutdown of the health system. But we have reached the point where, on some figures, 10 per cent of elective public surgery is being done in private hospitals. My concern is that we are paying a premium to private hospitals and doctors when we could be doing the work in the public sector. We must not undermine our public services. Whatever efficiencies are found, it should not mean a cut to services. In my experience, there is always a great temptation to save money by cutting services. I do not want to see services transferred from regional and rural areas to the city in some sort of mistaken belief that it will be more efficient and a better outcome for rural and regional communities. We need to grow our rural and regional services.

Finally, I believe that the special commission should be genuinely looking at productivity. The Government is committed to public sector pay rises and I have supported that, but there should be a link to genuine increases in productivity and a system where management and unions can genuinely cooperate. When I last worked in health, under the previous Labor Government, productivity gains just meant budget cuts. We need a system where management and unions genuinely work together. It has been said that our country has wasted a decade in lost productivity. We have a chance now to improve it. The special commission of inquiry is an opportunity to target this area and, in particular, to deliver real gains to the health system. If we get the productivity gains right we will have a safer system. We will have better outcomes for patients and communities, benefitting the health system and saving money.

CAMDEN RAILWAY LINE

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (19:15): I speak on an important historical feature of Camden that contains relevant lessons for modern planning in our growing communities. Affectionately known to locals as Pansy, the Camden railway line was constructed in 1881 and opened in March 1882. It ran between Campbelltown and Camden through eight different stations to serve suburbs and communities in the Camden area. The line was closed in 1963 and that lack of foresight reveals that planning throughout south-west Sydney, and in my electorate, has lacked long-term vision for some time. The Camden railway line was originally built to connect Campbelltown and what was, back then, the rural township of Camden.

Starting the journey at Campbelltown Station, it ran through a total of nine stations, including Maryfields Platform, Kenny Hill Platform, Currans Hill Platform, Narellan Station, Grahams Hill Station, Kirkham Station, Elderslie Station and terminating at Camden Station. The line was usually mixed, carrying both passengers and freight often along a single track and using a single train. At its peak the Camden line carried six daily services and achieved an approximate travel time of 40 minutes across the entire route to Campbelltown. During the final years of its service the first train departed Camden at 5.47 a.m. to connect passengers with the Sydney-bound train from Campbelltown, which would depart later in the morning. At night the last train would leave Campbelltown at 9.44 p.m. and arrive approximately 40 minutes later at Camden Station.

The Camden line was continuously neglected throughout its history due to the exceedingly small rural population of the area that it served. Camden railway's ultimate demise was its inability to become profitable. With a small population to serve, its main customers became a coal loader located in Narellan and a dairy farmer's depot in Camden that transported milk from the farms that ran throughout the area to the more populous areas that lie to the east. The railway was often besieged with other problems. One was the steepness of the line between Campbelltown Station and Kenny Hill. Often passengers would be forced to disembark the train they were commuting on and walk alongside it so it could successfully ascend the hill. This became a common inconvenience for passengers, who experienced significant delays and disruptions in their daily commute. The steep gradient of the line meant that the train could not carry large loads of freight or passengers, further contributing to the line's lack of profitability and ultimate demise.

The rise of motor vehicles in the post-World War II boom meant that it became more attractive for passengers to drive themselves to their destination, and for goods formerly transported by freight to be moved by truck. Pansy was closed on 1 January 1963 as a cost-cutting exercise by the Heffron Government. It was a time when cars were the new kings of the road and diesel was slowly becoming the king of rail. The severe lack of foresight in closing the Camden railway line foreshadowed further planning issues that have only worsened as the surrounding population in Camden has ballooned.

I think back to when the Sydney tram network, once the largest in Australia, was torn up in favour of road traffic. The same can be said in Camden. While the population was still relatively small when Pansy was closed, it should have been clear that public transport was a way forward in transporting people across the vast Cumberland Plain. Today Camden is faced with a lack of infrastructure and transport services, while the area's population has grown at one of the fastest rates anywhere across New South Wales. The rail line operated right through suburbs that now have large populations calling them home.

I know that residents of Camden and its surrounding suburbs today would kill for greater access to public transportation to service the region's growing population and effectively connect our community to other areas across Sydney without having to rely exclusively on road transport. Under the previous Coalition Government, infrastructure in my electorate failed to keep up with development in the area. My electorate and surrounding areas serve as a case study of development without adequate infrastructure, and I hope that the same mistakes will not be repeated in the future.

NORTHERN BEACHES LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (19:20): I congratulate Kiddiwinks Play Laugh and Learn in Warriewood on winning the Outstanding Early Childhood Centre award at the recent 2023 Northern Beaches Local Business Awards. Toni, Nicole and the educators at Kiddiwinks create a safe and nurturing environment for children to learn and grow. Their stimulating educational programs for kids of all ages and abilities provide a strong foundation for achievement and wellbeing in later life. Kiddiwinks is an inclusive space where the dedicated and passionate team work to help kids develop their confidence and transition into primary school. Quality early child care is so important. I thank the team at Kiddiwinks. The families of Pittwater are fortunate to have access to such a wonderful centre.

I congratulate Youth Up Front on winning the Outstanding Education Service award at the 2023 Northern Beaches Local Business Awards. Youth Up Front does truly remarkable work in our community, supporting young people in the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Whether it be connecting young people with employment and study opportunities or helping them engage with support services, Youth Up Front delivers a range of programs to help them. Navigating adulthood can be hard, but the team at Youth Up Front are on a mission to help young people realise their full potential. I thank Samantha King, who has been with the organisation for almost 20 years, and the rest of the team as well.

I congratulate Two Hungry Bears on winning the Outstanding Fast Food or Takeaway award at the 2023 Northern Beaches Local Business Awards. I have often pointed out that Pittwater is the most beautiful place in the world, and Narrabeen is the perfect example of why. People visit Narrabeen for its beautiful lake and pristine beach—and to eat at Two Hungry Bears. Its menu is inventive and delicious, from mac and cheese patties to butter chicken loaded fries, and it is understandable why it has over 16,000 followers on Instagram. Every community needs a great burger joint and for Pittwater it is Two Hungry Bears. I thank owner Clinton and the team for their efforts and congratulate them on the well-deserved award.

I congratulate the Sit on winning the Outstanding Health Improvement Services award at the 2023 Northern Beaches Local Business Awards. The Sit movement was launched in 2018 at Pittwater's own Avalon Beach by local Jason Partington. Since then, the Sit has helped thousands of people integrate meditation into their daily routines to help manage a range of mental health challenges. Weekly morning sits provide an opportunity for people to experience the benefits of meditation, mindfulness, connection and community. The Sit has now expanded to several locations and offers a six-week mental fitness program known as The Shift. I thank Caroline Walsh and the team for helping make meditation accessible.

I congratulate Nash and Banks on winning the Outstanding Specialised Retail Business award at the 2023 Northern Beaches Local Business Awards. Located in Avalon Beach, Nash and Banks is a local gem that offers the best quality ethical and sustainable products, from independent artisans to conscious brands. Carrying a range of luxury products from homewares, fashion, beauty and more, Nash and Banks is the perfect place to find a special gift. Founder Niccii Kugler is passionate about helping people make conscious decisions about the products that they curate in their life. The people of Pittwater are passionate about preserving our environment, and we are lucky to have such a great business locally.

I congratulate 8 Knots Cafe on winning the Outstanding Cafe award at the 2023 Northern Beaches Local Business Awards. In Pittwater cafes are a way of life. From the on-the-go coffee for your morning walk to weekend brunch by the water, cafes are vibrant hubs within our community. The cafe does a wonderful job serving quality coffee and delicious food for breakfast, lunch and dinner, always providing customers with an exceptional experience. I congratulate owner Sunny Singh and the whole team. It is wonderful to see such a deserving business in Pittwater being recognised as the most outstanding cafe on the northern beaches.

THE ENTRANCE ELECTORATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (19:25): I talk about affordable housing in The Entrance electorate, which has traditionally been regarded as a place where housing was affordable. That has declined significantly over the past 10 years. At its foundation, the reason for that decline must be the decimation of public housing in New South Wales under the previous Government. The numbers for The Entrance are reflected across the State. In 2011 publicly available records showed that there were 1,147 public housing units in The Entrance electorate. By 2016, that had reduced to 1,023. The most recent figure for 2022, provided to me following questions on notice, is 1,014. That decline over the past 10 years has undercut the provision of affordable and secure housing in my electorate. The Labor Government's response has been to put a stop to the privatisation of public housing. That will put a floor under what has been occurring over the past 10 years, but we need to do more. The Government has tasked public authorities to identify surplus land that can be developed for public housing.

I also talk about what the private sector is doing. I was interested to read an article by Richard Noone in *The Daily Telegraph*, published locally recently. It identified six sites just in The Entrance township where development applications [DAs] were in place. Those sites are currently vacant blocks of land. Some have derelict housing on them but they certainly have no development, even though all had DAs in place. The DAs approved for those six sites for 350 units of housing in all stretch back to 2009. The latest DA was granted in 2014. These zombie DAs are now sitting there. Richard Noone tried to contact the owners to determine the status of those developments, where they were up to and whether there would be any development occurring on those sites but he got no response whatsoever. The existence of those zombie DAs—the existence of that vacant land in a suburb—drags down the amenity of the area, impacts on what people think of the area and deters people from investing further in the township.

Whilst the public sector in this State is making forward strides to improve the availability of public housing, stop the sell-off of public housing and invest more money in public housing in cooperation with the Commonwealth, we need to engage the private sector, particularly on the Central Coast. In that regard, I am really pleased the local regional development authority—which all the local members, including the member for Terrigal, have access to—has agreed that the lack of provision of more affordable housing on the Central Coast is holding back the community and the development of our local economy. We are all working together to try to move things along. I want us to have a conversation as part of that about the zombie DAs, these large parcels of land now held by the private sector. There is no prospect of those being developed for housing whatsoever.

A social question we need to squarely face is whether it is good enough to allow a private owner, simply through the agency of private ownership, to withhold, from the public, land that has already been approved for housing, which we can build on, which is in suburbs already served by sewerage, electricity and water. The social question must be asked. How long do we allow that to continue? I will be asking my colleagues on this side of the House that question. It is a question the whole community needs to be asking the private sector as we look for ways to move forward with housing supply and to provide more affordable housing in the State.

GREEN POINT COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:29): It gives me great pleasure to speak tonight about the truly outstanding community organisation Green Point Community Centre. First established in 1994, the centre has a strong history of advocacy for our community and providing much-needed programs and assistance to members of the community. The centre routinely provides services such as free tax assistance for those earning under \$60,000 a year and justice of the peace services, as well as a community food pantry every Tuesday. Over my years as the member for Terrigal, I have had countless interactions with this wonderful community-minded and driven organisation.

Recently I had the pleasure of visiting the centre to see the progress of two projects occurring there: the upgrade of the kitchen and the upgrade of the outdoor play space. A formerly dilapidated play space has now been transformed into a vibrant and engaging area for children and young people, with new synthetic grass, a miniature basketball court, a handball area, an undercover walkway, raised garden beds and a covered barbecue area. Further, the current sliding doors opening out onto the recreational area will soon be replaced with wider doors, as well as a brand new accessible bathroom and change area. This major upgrade to the play space and bathroom was funded after a successful grant application through the former Liberal-Nationals Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund. The renovation of the kitchen is now complete, with brand new cabinets and drawers, cooktops and an oven, all funded through a Community Building Partnership grant. The upgrades to the kitchen allow the centre to comply with current workplace health and safety standards, eliminating any risk to the continuity of programs.

During my visit the volunteers emphasised the great importance of that grant funding. After all, the Green Point Community Centre receives no constant government funding and is wholly reliant on successful grant applications to cover costs for upgrades and programs like the ones I have discussed. The Green Point Community Centre is at the core of our community. To put it simply, those upgrades could not have happened if it were not for the outstanding Stronger Country Communities Fund and the Community Building Partnership programs. Even with the tireless efforts of the volunteers from the Green Point Community Centre, they still need that extra boost to help their centre and programs continue, which can be said for many of our community organisations along the coast. I will continue to advocate for the future of these funding programs because places like the incredible Green Point Community Centre need it most.

I look forward to attending the upcoming official opening of the new play space and bathroom later in October, which will, of course, like everything at the centre, be a wonderful day of interaction with the community, showcasing kids' activities, a sausage sizzle and local entertainment. It would be remiss of me not to also acknowledge the incredible work done by so many volunteers at the Green Point Community Centre. This spirit of volunteering provides the basis and the backbone of wonderful centres just like this. Not a day goes by without

volunteers giving their time to support other members of our community through services at the centre. It is truly a delight to attend the centre's events to see how it is going from strength to strength because of the drive, passion and enthusiasm of incredible volunteers, who put so much time in to support others in our community. I express my thanks to all of them. Without them, it is only bricks and mortar. They are the true heart of the Green Point Community Centre.

Another important aspect of funds like the Stronger Country Communities Fund and the Community Building Partnership fund is that they create a circular community. The money that is given to community centres like Green Point is then provided to contractors at a local level to do work on the local centre. The money goes to the coast, stays on the coast and is spent by tradies on the coast, who deliver incredible services that benefit the whole community. That is why those programs are important and must continue. They support and underpin incredible volunteer organisations, like the Green Point Community Centre.

In saying that, I thank and acknowledge all of the local tradies who have put their heart and soul and hard work into delivering the upgrades on schedule and on budget for the volunteers at the Green Point Community Centre. That is why the Green Point Community Centre continues to go from strength to strength. It has the full support of our community, from the tradies to the young families who use its services every single day. I look forward to the official opening in October. I congratulate the Green Point Community Centre on all the wonderful work it does for our community.

NEWCASTLE ELECTORATE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter) (19:35): Newcastle is known for having everything its residents need within 15 minutes of their home—a hospital, a university, a shopping centre and a beach. However, for almost a decade that label has been a little misleading. The rule only applies to those with a car. To travel by bus, what was a 15-minute trip 10 years ago will now take an hour and 15 minutes. The former Liberal-Nationals Government had a vendetta against Newcastle's transport system, especially its buses, and would stop at nothing until it was dead.

In 2015 the previous Government built an interchange with no space for cars or buses. It had to cut a deal with a developer to build a car park and a bus stop next door. In 2017 it privatised our bus network out of the blue, with no warning. It chopped our services in half and in thirds but told us we were getting more services. Instead of taking one direct bus to a destination, it took three. In 2018 it changed a perfectly effective bus timetable. Why? Who knows. Was it just to kick a transport system when it is down? My phone lines were flooded with stressed constituents whose buses never showed up. My office received email after email with complaints from people who could not get to work or to the hospital or do their shopping because there was no longer a bus to take them there. Bus stops were closed and passengers were forced to make multiple changes to get to their destinations. Even kids were being left on the side of the road because their school buses did not show up.

I raised those concerns with the Minister at the time, but he ignored every one of them. Hundreds of complaints were sent by me and the other Hunter MPs, but he came to the Chamber and said there had been no complaints. Novocastrians are not the type to give up a fight and on we fought for the right to public transport. More than 20,000 people signed a petition to fix the bus services, to change the timetable back and for the Government to reclaim the network. I brought it to Parliament and, still, the Minister refused to listen. He left the debate with, "Hopefully, we will get it right fairly soon." For any members who have not caught on yet, they did not.

The former Minister for Transport stood in the Chamber and claimed to have rescued our transport problems. He needs a dictionary because he appears to have mixed up "rescued" with "ruined". The Newcastle bus network has been beaten, battered and dragged through the mud. But our experience was not enough to stop the former Government's privatisation disaster rolling out through Sydney. Thousands of people protested on the streets and at the 16 Footers by the lake. With the privatisation having rolled through Sydney, the Minns Labor Government is going to nurture the bus system to good health. Last week's Bus Industry Taskforce drop-in session in Newcastle was one of our first steps. The session was very well attended, demonstrating how strongly the people of Newcastle feel about the issue and how keen they are to see it improved.

We will review the feedback given to the task force and listen to the bus drivers, the passengers and the people who actually use the network. Immediate actions have been identified by the task force and we are already working to get more services on the road. With so many service cancellations fuelled by driver shortages, it is clear that we need more bus drivers, so we have made it easier, quicker and cheaper to become a bus driver. We are allowing any driver over 25 with a full licence to apply. We are streamlining the application process by scrapping duplicated paperwork and enabling the electronic issuing of documents, and we are waiving the application fee for a year. There is so much more to come. We will answer the cry for help made in that petition five years ago. We will fix Newcastle's bus services.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (19:39): I stand before the Chamber as a voice for the people of flood-impacted communities across the Cabonne, Forbes and Parkes local government areas who have suffered immensely in the wake of the devastating floods that struck their communities across the Central West in 2022. As their elected representative, it is my duty to shed light on the massive injustice perpetrated by some insurance companies that have denied and stifled flood damage claims for residential homes and businesses in our flood-impacted communities. That injustice cannot go unaddressed, and it is now time we hold those insurance companies accountable.

Our communities faced unprecedented destruction when the floods struck. Lives were upended, properties were damaged and destroyed, and livelihoods were lost. People turned to their insurance providers for support in the face of such a disaster, only to be met with resistance and spin. A litany of claims have been denied or subject to unreasonable delays. That is an affront to the very purpose of insurance, which is to provide a safety net in times of crisis. I stand in this place today not only as an advocate for our communities but also as a personal witness to the devastation and destruction, having heard firsthand the stories of personal survival, heroism and significant personal loss.

I acknowledge the advocacy of the local Federal member for Calare, Andrew Gee, who has pursued and been successful in initiating a Commonwealth parliamentary inquiry that will investigate the conduct of insurance companies during and after the 2022 flood events. I welcome the inquiry that was announced by the Albanese Government on 19 July 2023. Certain insurance companies are quick to collect premiums but slow to deliver on their promises when it matters most. They have exploited loopholes, fine print and technicalities to avoid their responsibilities, leaving many of our fellow citizens in financial ruin. I trust that will be exposed in the inquiry.

The behaviour of many insurers undermines the very trust that is essential for the functioning of the insurance sector. It is unacceptable that those companies turned their backs on our flood-impacted communities in their time of need, leaving them to grapple with the aftermath of the floods without the support they are rightfully owed. We cannot allow those insurance companies to continue profiteering at the expense of our communities. Their actions have demonstrated a clear lack of compassion and moral responsibility. We must hold them accountable for their actions. It is unconscionable that they will shop around for hydrologists for hire, seeking expert reports that negate or minimise financial liability and hiding behind legal jargon. We demand transparency and fairness.

This is not a matter of politics; it is a matter of justice and humanity. It is about standing up for what is right, just and fair. As their representative, I pledge to work tirelessly to ensure that their voices are heard here, where change can be made. I will fight for the rights of our communities, and I will not rest until those insurance companies are held accountable. I will advocate for legislative changes that protect the rights of flood-affected individuals and businesses, ensuring that they receive the support and compensation they deserve.

I call upon my fellow members of Parliament to join me in that fight. Let us set aside our political differences and come together to address this issue that affects us all. Let us work together to pass meaningful legislation that safeguards the rights of our constituents, and prevents insurance companies from exploiting loopholes and fine print. Let us remember that we are in this place to serve the people, to protect their rights and to advocate for their wellbeing. We cannot falter in the face of adversity or bow to the pressures of powerful corporations. Together we can make a difference and bring about the change that our communities so desperately need. Let us stand united in the pursuit of justice and fairness for all.

I acknowledge the genuine concern of many members of this House for the flood victims in the Orange electorate and the visits to those communities by Ministers of the current and former governments. I wish to impress upon them all that in the absence of follow-up support and meaningful changes, governments risk being viewed as using disasters as backdrops for political photo opportunities. We must never forget that these floods claimed the lives of two people. There are those who survived left with psychological scars from the trauma of the event and those who have been financially ruined because they have been left high and dry by their insurers. Insurance is what allows us to sleep soundly at night, knowing our financial investment in our family homes and assets is protected in the event of disaster striking. We can and must do more to hold insurers accountable, otherwise there will be no confidence in the industry or the so-called protections they sell for profit.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOICE

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (19:44): I commend the work of community activists across the eastern suburbs who have been out in droves supporting the Voice to Parliament, educating our community as to what the Voice is, why it is important and why we must all vote yes. The concept of the Voice is not just about representation; it is about acknowledging the inherent rights and dignity of First Nations people. The Voice reflects

something unique about First Nations people. Their direct ancestors were here first. This was and will always be their land, land from which they have been dispossessed unjustly. First Nations Australians remain the most disadvantaged people on earth. That is not something that we should be proud about, and we should be working every single day to address that inequality caused by colonisation.

For far too long First Nations Australians have been marginalised and their voices unheard in matters that directly affect them. The establishment of a Voice in our democratic process is a step towards rectifying historical injustices and building a more inclusive society. By granting a constitutionally enshrined Voice to our Parliament for First Nations people, we are ensuring that their perspectives, their knowledge and their cultural wisdom are taken into account when shaping policies and legislation that impact their communities. It is a chance for us to address the systemic issues that have plagued Indigenous Australians for generations and work towards true reconciliation and closing the gap.

In supporting the Voice, we are not only honouring our commitment to justice but also recognising the immense contribution that First Nations culture has made and continues to make to our society in art, music, language and environmental practices. We have a duty to preserve and celebrate these rich traditions and culture, and the Voice is a critical vehicle for doing so. This is a pivotal moment for Australia. We must seize this opportunity to right the wrongs of the past and shape a more equitable future for all Australians. Most of us have been lucky enough to never experience the pain and anguish that First Nations Australians have: never ripped from our mother's arms, experienced dispossession, had to struggle for respect and dignity or experienced devastating health and educational outcomes.

The Voice means facing our nation's past, coming to terms with the pain that we have caused and working together with First Nations Australians to address those injustices and to celebrate First Nations survival, culture, history and contribution to this great land. There is so much that we can learn. A vote in favour of the Voice sends a very powerful message that we are committed to true reconciliation and that we value First Nations Australians. For those who still have questions and are unsure, please educate yourself and be wary of misinformation that is spreading through social media. Countless forums and town halls are being conducted across the eastern suburbs, where people can hear directly from local Aboriginal and First Nations leaders about their experiences and why they want us to vote yes.

COOKS RIVER

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (19:48): Tonight I speak with great enthusiasm and pride to join esteemed colleagues, community leaders, the Mudcrabs, the Wollie Creek Preservation Society, Cooks River Valley Association and our local community in celebrating a momentous announcement for our cherished Cooks River. It is my honour to share with this esteemed House that the Albanese Labor Government is making a historic investment of \$10 million to protect and restore the iconic Cooks River. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon. Tanya Plibersek, the Hon. Tony Burke and all those who have tirelessly advocated for this significant project. Their dedication to preserving our natural heritage is a testament to their commitment to our environment and the wellbeing of our community.

The Cooks River, a beloved waterway that has gracefully wound its way through the heart of our region for generations, holds profound cultural and ecological significance. With this generous investment, we are taking a bold stride towards safeguarding this precious natural gem for generations to come. This visionary project will not only enhance the habitat of aquatic species, including the endangered green and golden bell frogs, but also offer our community improved access to nature. A new paddle trail will provide a delightful opportunity for residents and visitors alike to immerse themselves in the natural beauty and tranquillity of the Cooks River. Furthermore, this restoration project stands as a testament to our commitment to Indigenous partnerships and reconciliation. The collaboration with Indigenous rangers to deliver this endeavour showcases our dedication to learning from and working alongside the traditional custodians of this land.

The Cooks River Alliance, working hand in hand with Indigenous rangers, will serve as stewards of this restoration, ensuring the success and longevity of this transformative project. Together we will work to restore the Cooks River, ensuring it remains a vibrant ecosystem and a cherished community asset. I thank the local councillors and the Mayor of Canterbury-Bankstown, Bilal El-Hayek, and the Mayor of the Inner West, Darcy Byrne, as well as all the members of our community and organisations for their unwavering support for this project. Their dedication to our community's wellbeing is commendable. I am confident that this collaboration will yield results, as we have seen with Cup and Saucer Creek and the phenomenal work of the member for Barton. She worked on the project with the Prime Minister, who at the time was the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, and the member for Watson, Minister Tony Burke, when they invested in Cup and Saucer Creek. We have seen some incredible results.

We have a long way to go. This is one of the issues I raised with the previous Government time and again, writing letters to the then lands Minister, water Minister and local government Minister with respect to a part of the Cooks River that no agency wants to claim or take any responsibility for. If you come down to the Cooks River in Earlwood—and across from Earlwood is the member for Summer Hill's electorate—there is still metal on its banks. It was put there in the fifties and sixties in some engineering feat. It is a massive problem. We have been trying to untangle the pathways of responsibility to ensure that it is fixed.

The money that has been provided goes some way towards improving parts of this but not towards fixing it entirely. I know that our Government is looking at ways in which to deal with it. I acknowledge all the people who have raised with me the issue of metal on the riverbanks. Removal of the metal along the banks is something I am very passionate about because I want to naturalise the banks. I have seen previous examples of that. Sydney Water has been doing a good job of the part it has responsibility for, but as a community we will be working and advocating towards removing the metal and naturalising the banks of the river.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:53 until
Wednesday 2 August 2023 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

According to Standing Order 108A, the following written community recognition statements were submitted.

CITIZENSHIP CONGRATULATIONS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Mr. Speaker, the great tapestry of Ryde is now brighter, bolder and stronger for the contributions of the following new citizens who officially became Australians on 06/07/2023: Shaimaa Abdelrahman Hassan Azzam, Tariq Hasan Abedalqader Abedalqader, Lerilynne Marnelli Plasabas Adigue, Seyedeh Mona Aghdaee, Monireh Amerion, Tejaswi Amin, Floriana Aranzi, Michael Mike Llamanzares Aspiras, Madlin Badakilian, Hai Huan Bao, Salwa Benmaarouf, Samuel Finnegan Pavier Brawn, Igor Igorevich Bufal, Chung Kit Patrick Chan, Saifon Chaorai, Davide D'Anna, Ramesh Ekambaram, Iside Galleja, Veerakumar Ganapathy, Anuradha Gautam Adhikari, Maria Divina Ethel Gener, Arlene Ungos George, Jishant George, Elnaz Ghazalibalkhkanlou, Abirama Sundari Gnanakumar, Nahal Haddadi, Amr Hazem Essam Helmy Ibrahim Helmy, Devendra Bandara Herath Herath Mudiyansele, Atif Iqbal, Patricia Beatriz Del Castillo Josol, Sang Yoon Kim, Sollip Kim, Wing Sze Lau, Celine Mauricette Bernadette Lefebvre, Wai Yan Li, Neil James Liddle, Anam Lodhi, Aashna Deepak Luthria, Honey Maharjan, Sherin Elsa Mathew, Michael Milan Miranda, Mojtaba Mohammadiroozbahani, Anna Jean Moreno, Mark Francis Riata Moreno, Fouad Mostapha, Salam Moussa Oghli, Sabrina Mushtari, Mahesh Mohan Nair, Cam Nhung Nguyen, Han Kil Oh, Jonathan Fabien O Pirard, Varaprasad Polamreddy, Camilo Porto Nunes, Maria Elita Quintans Porto, Natchapon Rangkhawong, and Desire Robertson. Congratulations and best wishes!

CITIZENSHIP CONGRATULATIONS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Mr. Speaker, the great tapestry of Ryde is now brighter, bolder and stronger for the contributions of the following new citizens who officially became Australians on 06/07/2023: Jason Gray Robertson, Sean Mark Robertson, Steven Luke Robertson, Emanuel Sammartano, Nithyananda Arun Sampath, Jerald Vincent Badillo San Juan, Grishma Shah, Saumil Radheshyam Shah, Arya Sharifian, Sharvan Bhagwan Singh, Elsy Sutanawi, Mohamed Abdelbagi Mahmoud Taha, Karanveer Singh Thakur, Evgenia Maria Theofanopoulou, Abraham Tijo Thomas, Ka Shing to, Margaret Isabel Toms, Gladys Hiquial Torres, Victor Carlo Torres Torres, Lucila Midori Tsuzuki, Wanting Wang, Jiayu Wang, Ying Wei, Rukshani Gayathri Wickrama, Cheong Man Raymond Wong, Yun Mui Wong, Han Xiao, Jian Xiao, Sana Zahid, Doaa Reda Mohammed Zaki, He Zhao, Peiying Zhou, Sajad Abolpour Moshizi, Sara Ahmadi, Ajit Ajit Singh, Matthew James Aldridge, Babak Asrardel, Tabata Barbosa De Albuquerque Neves, Nitheesha Basheer, Sahar Brookhian, Saba Brookhian, Saghar Brookhian, Felipe Carmo Silva, Suk Chong Chan, Ting King Chan, Min Chen, Nikolay Chesnakov, Yelena Chesnakova, Akhilesh Das, Vitoria Dragaud Mantovanni, Laura Ferre Perez, Halahapperumage Marie Nilushi Fonseka, Kavyaaba Rushirajsinh Gohil, Darya Gurinovich, Jason Vicente Halago, Marra Jennena Mena Halago, David Felipe Horta Vanegas, Xueni Hu, and George Jarl Hu. Congratulations and best wishes!

CITIZENSHIP CONGRATULATIONS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Mr. Speaker, the great tapestry of Ryde is now brighter, bolder and stronger for the contributions of the following new citizens who officially became Australians on 06/07/2023: Bruce Jahandideh, Ana Karadjitch, Jaspreet Kaur, Azadeh Khosravi Farsani, Nareen Kumar, Natalie Leung, Gang Liu, Thi Ngoc Anh Lu, Alexey Lychagin, Yulia Lychagina, Jianwei Ma, Praveena Nair Shyamala, Aye Thet Zaw Nang, Ai Fern Ngeow, Manuel Esguerra Orge, Shruthi Pandiyadka, Abiel Jordan Aguila Pascual,

Neetu Aniket Rohra, Aniket Ajay Rohra, Miaad Salehinezamabadi, Kavitha Saravanan, Balaji Shanmugam, Swaraj Pal Singh, Zeinab Sohrabi, Mehrnaz Taimoory, Victoria Michelle Lucia Castellano Tamayo, Russell Shuan Xi Tan, Yunsheng Tan, Yanxiang Tan, Xuan Cu Trinh, Kuei-en Tseng, Rupinder Vaid, Pradeepan Venkatasubramanian, Joppe Mutiisya Veul, Harkaran Partap Singh Virk, Di Wu, Xiuwei Xu, Yumu Yang, Zhihong Yang, Shimeng Yin, Xiaoying Yu, Syed Akhtar Zahoor, Lanping Zhang, Fang Zhang and Xingjian Zhang. Congratulations and best wishes!

CMRC ELEVATE

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I was delighted to attend the ELEVATE Multicultural Women in Business Event in Parramatta on 29 June 2023. I extend my gratitude to the Community Migrant Resource Centre [CMRC] for their commitment to social justice and inclusion. The past years have been challenging, with the pandemic and rising living costs impacting small businesses severely. I commend the resilience and determination shown by entrepreneurs in our region. The NSW Government recognises the importance of small businesses and offers various support programs. The Service NSW Business Concierge provides personalized advice, and there are resources, events, and networking opportunities to navigate economic challenges. Despite the obstacles, I encourage all small businesspeople to persevere and seek support from your networks and government initiatives. Together, we can rebuild and strengthen our local business community. Let us draw inspiration from stories of resilience and unite to overcome uncertainties. The ELEVATE Multicultural Women in Business Forum exemplifies the power of unity and collaboration. I commend all for their dedication. Thank you to CMRC for providing this platform, and let us move forward with renewed determination, knowing that we have the strength to overcome any challenge.

CUMBERLAND GANG SHOW OPENING NIGHT (RED SCARF NIGHT)

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I was delighted to attend the opening night of the Cumberland Gang Show at the Riverside Theatres in Parramatta on 5 July 2023 involving many local Scouts and Venturers from Merrylands. The Gang Show is not just an event; it is an experience that unites individuals from all walks of life, transcending barriers of age, background, and skillset. It is a showcase of theatrical excellence, where young performers take centre stage to enthral audiences with their incredible acts, musical numbers, and skits. The production is more than just entertainment; it is a celebration of teamwork, determination, and the power of the performing arts to bring communities together. I urge my parliamentary colleagues to attend Gangshows in their own local areas. Attend a show, spread the word, or support this marvellous tradition. Let us come together, appreciating the magic of the Gang Show, admiring the development of its young participants and fostering an environment that cherishes the arts and its transformative power. Thank you for to Mr David Shaw from Scouts NSW for the kind invitation to attend and I look forward to future years of performances.

GRANVILLE IN THE WEST JOURNAL

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—Today I congratulate the restaurateurs and small business operators of Merrylands Road. The West Journal recently recognised the cultural diversity, food and individuality found in Western Sydney and especially Granville in my electorate. They said "An easy trip on the Parramatta line, Granville station is located right in the heart of the historic suburb. Make sure to pause atop the pedestrian bridge over the train station, from here you enjoy a terrific view of the area. They recognised many local businesses including El Sweetie, the original El Jannah Lebanese restaurant and La Rouche Lebanese restaurant. In terms of Granville's heritage the journal noted "the heritage-listed Crest Theatre building. Considered culturally significant as one of the very few 1940s-built cinemas in Australia" and is now Blouza community centre. They also referred to Granville TAFE, the 1882 sandstone St Marks Anglican Church and the 1888 Granville Town Hall. We are spoiled for choice with numerous cuisines in Granville and across the Granville electorate. Small business in Granville, like elsewhere in Western Sydney had a difficult few years during the pandemic but I am delighted Granville has been recognised as a special place to live and visit.

MACQUARIE COMMUNITY COLLEGE EPPING CAMPUS

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—On 26 July 2023 I attended the opening of the new Macquarie Community College Campus situated at 3 Carlingford Road Epping. Attending the event to mark the occasion included the Member for Parramatta Donna Davies, Theresa Collingnon CEO, Pradeep Khushalani CFO, local service providers, community members, staff, and students. Macquarie Community College is a not-for-profit community education centre which commenced in 1950. Since commencing more than 70 years ago the College has expanded its courses and locations and now delivered hundreds of classes from campuses in various locations within Sydney. The opening of the new Epping campus is important as the campus will to serve the educational needs of residents within North-Western Sydney. Thank you to the team at Macquarie Community College for all that you do for our community to provide quality education. The quality education motivates and empowers students through education. I recognise the dedication of the staff of Macquarie Community College in the

important field of community education. I am certain the new Epping Campus will be a favourite place of learning within our society. I wish all students who attend the new campus every success in their educational journey.

ELIZABETH VARDOUNIOTIS - BALLOONS FOR NANNA

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I am delighted to recognise and congratulate Elizabeth Vardouniotis for her prize-winning artwork 'Balloons for Nanna'. Elizabeth is a student at Hills Grammar School in Kenthurst and entered her artwork in the Transurban Canal to Creek Prize 2022 competition. The competition is a prestigious competition where students in years 7 -10 were invited to create their own artwork, inspired by the 21 signature art pieces that form 'Canal to Creek'. The theme Canal to Creek Prize for the competition was 'Connections'. Students were asked to consider connections to earth, culture, history, movement, and environment. The art piece submitted by Elizabeth was titled, 'Balloons for Nanna'. The piece is whimsical image of 'Nanna' holding balloons and is an incredibly detailed work of art. Her artwork was awarded first place in the Year 10 category, and it was also declared overall winner of the competition. Elizabeth's dedication to art shows through her own piece. I have no doubt that Elizabeth will inspire our community through her art. Elizabeth's inspirational artwork is currently displayed in my Castle Hill Electoral Office. Congratulations, Elizabeth, for your well-deserved awards for 'Balloons for Nanna', good luck with your future works.

RACHEL KIM - STILL WITH YOU

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I am delighted to recognise Rachel Kim for her prize-winning artwork 'Still with you'. Rachel is a student who is Year 9 at Castle Hill High School. Rachel entered 'Still with you' in the prestigious Transurban Canal to Creek Prize 2022 competition. Transurban invited students from year 7 to 10 across Australia to submit artwork. The theme for the Canal to Creek competition was 'Connections'. Students were asked to consider connections to earth, culture, history, movement, and environment. I am very pleased to record that Rachel was awarded second place in the competition. Rachel has stated 'Still with you' was inspired by feeling we have when an individual, especially a family member is lost and the memories which we hold. The artwork explores the idea of being able to move on from grief whilst keeping the memory inside you. I have no doubt that Rachel's talent through her art will inspire our community. Rachel's artwork is on display in my Castle Hill Electoral Office. I am very pleased to be able to recognise a very talented artist who resides within my electorate. On behalf of the community, I extend congratulations to Rachel.

WANDA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB SUTHERLAND 2 SURF

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I acknowledge the tremendous work of the Wanda Surf Life Saving Club in successfully convening the 51st Sutherland 2 Surf. The 11km run / walk from Sutherland to Cronulla on Sunday 16 July attracted nearly 6,000 participants (including me), a big increase on last year's 3,400 and on 50 in the original race in 1972. The Sutherland 2 Surf is thought to be the second longest running fun-run in Australia. As well as being the Shire's premier active participation event, it raises much needed funds for Wanda's facilities and equipment. I congratulate the organising committee members Mick Brannock OAM, Sue Brannock, Anne Caterson OAM and Richard Smith. I congratulate the male and female winners, James Nipperess and Eloise Wellings, with times of 33:13 and 36:13 respectively. I also thank the numerous sponsors, especially Tradies, for their financial support for the event.

BRUCE WATT - CURIOUS EYES

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Cronulla historian Bruce Watt on his latest book 'Curious Eyes'. It examines three foreign visits to early British convict colony at Sydney, with some rare and previously unseen accounts. Bruce's précis records: "Two Spanish and French expeditions were ... eager to ... report on the progress and readiness of the convict colony and the potential threat it posed. Through long recognised treaties Spain held claim to all of the Pacific. Britain had audaciously claimed half of the Australian continent in 1788. The Spanish expedition in 1793 was a reconnaissance and spying visit to ascertain the true intentions of the colony... Likewise, in 1800 Napoleon sent an expedition to gather information and to establish a foothold on the continent. For various reasons both expeditions failed... Britain was free to write and mould its own creation story without scrutiny from these European powers. ... American whalers and traders quickly found their way to the colony. They sold vast quantities of rum to the Marine Corps which made its way to the convict population..." Bruce is the author of two previous local history books, 'The Shire: A Journey Through Time' and 'Dharawal: The First Contact People'.

GRAFTON PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of Bob Carnaby, spokesperson for the Grafton Prostate Cancer Survivor and Support Group. Bob and his wife, Jan play a big part in the local organisation. The Grafton Prostate Cancer Support Group aims to provide a supportive environment for men to connect with others going through a similar journey and share their experiences to improve

health and wellbeing. Most members of the network have had a direct experience of prostate cancer, either as a patient or a partner and family member. 1 in 5 men across Australia will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime. Mr Carnaby encourages men, and their partners who are impacted, to reach out for support. When the burden is heavy and the conversations are tough, support groups are there to lighten the load and shine the light of hope. The group, supported by the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, meets monthly at South Grafton Ex Services Club. I thank Bob and Jan and all the volunteers for their continuing efforts.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD GAMES IN BERLIN

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges local Kiama Downs resident Kellie Hanson's amazing feat the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin. Every four years 7,000 athletes with an intellectual disability from 190 countries compete. Kellie was selected as an Assistant to the Australian Women's Basketball Team which won the Bronze Medal. Being Kiama born and raised, Kellie is also Chairperson for Special Olympics in the Illawarra. Kellie was part of the team for Women's basketball and has spent the last six months preparing. The Opening Ceremony including walking through the tunnel under the stadium as our athletes thunderously chanted "Aussie, Aussie, Aussie" as they entered the Berlin Stadium. Our Women's Basketball team saw them win 3 of 5 games. In their third-round game against Azerbaijan, they needed to win by 5 points to take them to the gold medal match. The Australian Team were relegated to the bronze medal match versus Kazakhstan. In extra time one of our girls was fouled, resulting in 2 free throws to steal the win! Well done to Kellie and the women's side on winning the bronze medal.

SOUND OF MUSIC

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the The Sound of Music production at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre. I make a 'habit' of supporting the outstanding Albatross Musical Theatre Company. The music of Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, and a book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse gives us The Sound of Music. I acknowledge the following contributors from production, cast and crew. I acknowledge the producers Merrin Ross and the Albatross Musical Theatre Company Committee, Director Olivia Corish, Musical Directors David Foley, Sandy Basham and Jacqui Hitchcock. I acknowledge Tenneil Withers – Choreographer, Jamie Parker – Stage Manager, Nicki Simmons – Costume Design Naomi Dootson – Set Design, Oli Gait – Manager of Set Construction, Alicia Parker – Junior Cast Support, Matt Mackenzie – Lighting Design and Special Effects, Brendon Vitiello Audio Engineer, Simon Pavitt – Sound Effects, Wendy Bilbey, Ben Martin, Luke Bizeray – Promotion and Sponsorship, Amy Barrett and Georgia Barrett – Props Management, and of course the Stage Crew with Greg Lloyd, Brayden Collison, Emma Allen, Ella Barrett, Ethan Rebel, Mia Harris and Wendy Coleman. Program, Posters and Photography – Dennis Ross and my mother Margaret Bowcher selling programs and my brother Scott Bowcher in the orchestra (violin).

BERRY PHARMACIST

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges local Berry Pharmacist Ross Hobson and his wife Sue who are retiring after caring for the local Berry community for 37 years. The long-time local pharmacist is retiring this July, after 37 years at the helm. Mr Hobson has cared for the community and is immensely passionate about Berry. Having arrived from New Zealand in 1980, Mr Hobson spent several years working in Wollongong and Nowra pharmacies. There have been countless changes and challenges over the years: from keeping up with endless changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, to introducing computers and even dispensing robots. Turning a heritage building – once drapery and also a café – into a pharmacy was no mean feat. Through the good times and the bad, there has always been plenty of love and care in the Berry Pharmacy. I acknowledge the outstanding contribution of Sue Hobson. Sue is looking forward to her husband's retirement with plans to travel and volunteer. As for Berry Pharmacy, it's in the capable hands of Clare Watts. Mr Hobson and Mrs Watts have worked together for several years and I acknowledge and thank them both.

NICOLA BARGE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate 17 year old Nicola Barge of Cronulla on her selection in the Australian FAST5 team for netball for the 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games to be held in Trinidad and Tobago this month. This is the first year Netball has been included in those Games. FAST5 matches are only 24 minutes long, split into six-minute quarters. There are three different scoring zones; goals shot from outside the goal circle are worth three and inside the goal circle is split into two and one goal zones. Nicola attended Cronulla High School in years 7 to 10 and then transferred to GOAL Sports College Homebush. In 2022 she played in the winning Combined High Schools Team and was later named in the NSW All Schools Opens Merit team. She was selected for the 17/U NSW Netball Team to compete at the National Netball Titles in Hobart, winning gold; she was then named in the 2022 Australian Squad. This year Nicola was again selected to the 17/U

NSW team competing at the National Netball Titles on Darwin, being awarded the most valuable player of the tournament. Nicola was recently announced in Netball Australia's 2023 17/U netball squad.

WARILLA HIGH SCHOOL - AUSTRALIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS RUGBY LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Warilla High School for their success at the Under 18's Australian Schools Rugby League Championships from 30 June to 7 July 2023. Indie Bostock was an integral player in the NSW CHS team and has been selected in the Under 18's Australian Schoolgirls team. Warilla High School teacher, Melissa Spero, has been given the honour of coaching the Australian Schoolgirls team, who will travel to Papua New Guinea later this year for a Test match. Warilla High School teachers played many important roles during the tournament, with Peter Dalley the CHS team on field trainer, and Karra Lee Nolan the CHS girl's assistant coach. Ballunn Simon also did a great job refereeing the games during the tournament. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to Warilla High School for representing our community in the Championships and for nurturing the next generation of rugby league stars.

SHELL COVE PUBLIC SCHOOL - ZOEY BORG, VIOLET MACDONALD, EMILY NICHOLS & RACHEL NICHOLS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Shell Cove Public School Club students Zoey Borg, Violet MacDonald, Emily Nichols and Rachel Nichols who competed in the Gymnastics NSW Country Championships during the July 2023 school holidays. Over 40 clubs and 1000 gymnasts showcased their skills and hard work in the competition which was held in Armidale. The girls competed in every apparatus and did a fantastic job in representing their School. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to the Zoe, Violet, Emily and Rachel and wish them all the success in their future sporting endeavours.

SHELLHARBOUR JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB – U18 GIRLS TEAM

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate the Shellharbour Junior Football Club under 18's girls' team, comprising of mostly 15 and 16-year-olds, who won the 2023 Football NSW State Cup after defeating Manly Vale 3-0 on Saturday 15 July 2023. The achievement of taking out the Cup is something never done before by this team that has played together for nearly a decade. There have been plenty of trophies in that nearly 10-year period, this team were champions of champions winners last year, but they had never got past the quarter final stage of the state-wide competition before 2023 and now they are the best in the state. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to the under 18's Shellharbour girls football team and wish them all the success in their future sporting endeavours.

RECORD RELEASE OF WHITE'S SEAHORSES IN SYDNEY HARBOUR

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—More than three-hundred and eighty baby seahorses have been released at Chowder Bay in my local community of North Shore as part of efforts to boost the population of the endangered White's seahorse in Sydney Harbour. This was the world's biggest release of seahorses after being successfully bred in captivity by the Sydney Institute of Marine Science over the past five months. The species was listed as endangered in 2020 and suffered mass die-offs in the last few years due to habitat destruction, and repeated rain events have hastened the species' demise in Sydney Harbour. However, marine scientists at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science hope to do another release next year and have high expectations that the population will continue to thrive over the next twelve months. I congratulate the terrific work of the entire team, particularly scientist Mitch Brennan who helped rear the baby seahorses and, of course, the SIMS general manager Brett Fenton. I am looking forward to visiting SIMS again soon to see more of the fantastic work they are doing in marine conservation.

JESSIE STREET LUNCHEON

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I recognise the Year 10 students of Mosman High in early June who attended the Annual Jessie Street Trust Luncheon here at the Parliament of New South Wales. The Jessie Street Trust Annual Luncheon originated from a committee that came together to celebrate the centenary of one of the foremost but relatively unknown 20th-century Australian activists, Jessie Street. The trust continues with the tradition of awarding grants to assist activities Jessie championed, including the rights of women and indigenous people. This year, the fundraising focused on the First Nation's Voice to Parliament and featured distinguished guest speakers Professor Tom Calma AO, Rachel Perkins and Teela Reid. I thank Jessie Street Trust and the Mosman Reconciliation Group for sponsoring Catherine Simpson, Phoebe Cunningham, Katie McPherson and Amelia Ottaviano, Year 10 Mosman High representatives, a place at the luncheon. It was an amazing

opportunity for these young girls to attend and hear about the amazing work that the Jessie Street Trust does and how they can put some of that work into practice in our own local community.

MOSMAN MODEL AND PODCASTER HARRISON KENNEDY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I want to recognise Mosman local Harrison Kennedy for all his achievements. At just 21, Harrison is an international model working with the world's most luxury brands. Over the past few years in fashion, Harrison has developed his own unisex fashion label called "Garçon D'eau", which means "water boy" in French, aiming to build a community of young people and creatives who can contribute and collaborate with the brand. Harrison has expanded from fashion this past year with a new project dear to his heart, the podcast "Really Mental". This podcast focuses on the mental health and identity of Gen Z and young Millennials. Harrison's passion for mental health stems from his personal experience in the creative industry with his struggles with anxiety and loneliness. He hopes this project will make young people more aware of mental health, reassuring them they are not alone and there is help tailored for each individual situation. I congratulate Harrison for raising awareness for mental health, and wish him all the best for his future endeavours.

ALBURY WODONGA HEALTH CHAIRMAN MATT BURKE REFLECTS AFTER 10 YEARS ON BOARD

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to extend my appreciation to Matt Burke who has stepped down from the significant role of Chairperson of the Albury Wodonga Health Board. Mr Burke's 10-year tenure has been marked by leadership and dedication to our cross-border health care service. Over the journey Matt and the Board have had to face challenging times and shifts in healthcare services and workforce. He has been a strong advocate for equitable access to quality healthcare from those who live on both sides of the border. Mr Burke has worked tirelessly to ensure that healthcare services provided by Albury Wodonga Health evolve to meet the needs of our regional community. Mr Burke is also an active Rotarian and a recipient of the Paul Harris Fellowship and a former chair of Kirinari Community Services. I thank Matt for his commitment and outstanding contribution to Albury Wodonga Health and our community. I wish him continued success and fulfilment in the years ahead.

ORLAINE SUGGATE - ONESCHOOL GLOBAL NSW – ALBURY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate a remarkable Year 5 student, Orlaine Suggate from OneSchool Global NSW –Albury, for her achievement in the 'Moving Forward' Harmony Day poster competition for 2023. Orlaine's creativity was evident through her captivating poster; shining a light on the celebration of diversity, inclusivity, and cultural understanding. Her artwork serves as a reminder of the importance of embracing our differences and working together to create a harmonious society. A special thankyou also to Mrs Jessica Dawson for her instrumental role and valuable guidance, organising this competition and nurturing the artistic talents of our students. Well done, Orlaine, let us continue to work hand in hand creating a brighter future for tomorrow.

MURRAY HIGH SCHOOL - ELLA BALL - PRODUCTION BEAUTY & THE BEAST

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge Murray High School as it comes together with its community for the joy of music and theatre and the fostering of a creative spirit in its students and staff through their production of 'Beauty and the Beast'. This production also honours student Ella Ball who passed away in a motor vehicle accident in May. Ella was an important part of the production, both as a performer and through contributing to design elements for the show. It was a privilege to be able to drop in on the cast and crew during final rehearsals and witness their efforts. Well done to Murray High School students, director & producer Alicen Waugh, stage manager Chris Pidd and the entire production team for their celebration of talent and taking their music to the Border community in this special way.

ANN MADDEN

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I wish to recognise and acknowledge the wonderful work of lifelong volunteer, Ms Ann Madden. As a mother of four beautiful children Ann is constantly busy, yet still gives of her time freely to support the wellbeing and inclusion of our multicultural community. Ms Madden has been running free English classes for over 20 years, through the South Carlton Anglican Church. In addition, Ann has organised numerous student excursions, educating students on important everyday activities and regularly provides food to those in need. As a leader in her community, Ann has developed a team of volunteers around her that strive to foster an environment of support and inclusivity at the Church. In 2023, Ann was named the Georges River 2023 Citizen of the Year for distinguished service to the St George community. I would like to thank Ms Madden and express my deepest appreciation for the wonderful work she does in ensuring everyone in our community feels supported.

JOAN FAYLE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I wish to recognise and acknowledge the hard work of volunteer, Ms Joan Fayle. Ms Fayle is the leader of a community-based language organisation operating from the Beverly Hills Anglican Church. The organisation provides English as a Second Language services to residents and churchgoers. The service is available to anyone in the community and serves people from diverse backgrounds at no charge. Joan has been an integral part of the organisation for many years helping members of the community improve their English literacy skills and increase their employment opportunities. A focus of Joan's is to not only help them learn new language but also to preserve their native language and develop a strong sense of historic identity. Her voluntary contributions have successfully increased community cohesion and communication especially amongst our senior's community. I want to thank Ms Fayle for the wonderful and selfless work she does in ensuring everyone in our community has equal opportunities.

JUDY FINLASON

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to pay tribute to lifelong volunteer Ms Judy Finlason who recently passed away. Judy Finlason was born in 1931 in Melbourne and lived in Brighton, Victoria with her parents and older sister. Ms Finlason devoted her life helping others and serving her local community. Judy was a founding member of the Wolli Creek Preservation Society, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to maintaining and improving the Wolli Creek Regional Park. In 1975, she led the decades-long environmental campaign to protect the precious bushland of the Wolli Creek Valley. Without Judy's tireless activism in conjunction with the Wolli Creek Preservation society the Valley would never have survived to become the rare environmental gem it is today. Beyond this, Judy worked for numerous community groups and organisations in which she always strived to foster a sense of belonging and inclusivity. In 1986, she was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for her distinguished service to the community, particularly with the Community Activities Centre Network. I wish to thank Ms Finlason for all the wonderful work she has done over her lifetime and pass on my deepest condolences to her family of nieces and nephews.

ST MARYS RSL VETERAN'S WELLBEING PROGRAMME

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)—I commend the St Marys RSL sub-Branch for conducting an ongoing veteran's wellbeing programme to support former and serving veterans in the local area. Everyday, the RSL runs wellbeing activities for veterans to socialise and access support while enjoying a morning coffee in the sunshine or playing barefoot bowls. The sub-Branch also offers day trips and overnight stays for veterans to attend, where they can visit new places and enjoy social activities. The RSL sub-Branch continue to do amazing work in supporting our local veterans and enhancing their wellbeing. I would like to thank the St Mary's RSL sub-Branch for their efforts and continued support of local veterans.

STEPHANIE GALEA AND LUCY KEANE

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)—Year 11 students Stephanie Galea, and Lucy Keane from Xavier College, will be travelling overseas to attend World Youth Day. During World Youth Day, students embark on a pilgrimage across France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy to celebrate the unification of millions of adolescents. Stephanie and Lucy will be joined by 170 other students, teachers, and Catholic leaders from across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains on this trip overseas. I commend both students on conquering World Youth Day celebrations, as well as the Xavier school community, who have supported these students through fundraising initiatives. I hope the pilgrimage provides Stephanie and Lucy with valuable insight, knowledge, and experience, that they can bring back and share with the community.

RICHARD JONES

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter)—Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service is a noble and heroic local service, saving lives across the Hunter and Northern NSW. And for the last 27 years, it has been directed by CEO Mr Richard Jones OAM, who has announced he will be taking a step back and passing the baton onto a new hero. Mr Jones succeeded his sport commentating colleague and mentor Allan McMahon in 1995. Under the leadership of Mr Jones, Westpac Rescue Helicopter has seen major growth, expanding from its sole base in Newcastle to two more bases in Tamworth and Lismore. Today, they provide emergency medical treatment and rescue services to 1.5 million people from the Queensland border to the Hawkesbury River. Mr Jones will continue with the organisation as Head of Community Engagement, and we can't wait to see where he and the new CEO will take Westpac Rescue Helicopter next. Thank you, Mr Jones.

NEWCASTLE FIREFIGHTERS

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter)—The Black Summer bushfires of 2019-2020 caused devastation across NSW but the troubling times brought out the best in a handful of heroes, our firefighters. While there were no bushfires in my electorate, many of our local firefighters stepped up and worked on putting out fires across our state. Firefighters from the Carrington, Mayfield West, Merewether, Newcastle, and Stockton Fire Stations and the rest of the Metropolitan North 1 region have been awarded National Emergency Medals for their bravery, sacrifice, and commitment to fighting the Black Summer. These heroes fought for at least five days over the terrible bushfire season, leaving their families at home and sacrificing their lives for our state. Well done to all those who received medals, your courage is an inspiration to us all.

SOVEREIGN HILLS IGA NATIONAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I rise to recognise the Hastings Cooperative's IGA Sovereign Hills store in Port Macquarie and congratulate them on their win at the 2023 National IGA Awards night as the National Large Meat Department of the Year. The IGA Awards of Excellence aims to recognise and reward stores for outstanding performance and commitment to the independent sector. The Awards are designed to recognise success and demonstrate what good performance looks like, promote the success to local customers as well as give a sense of achievement for the winners. The accolade for the Meat Department follows the team's NSW Meat Department of the Year Award earlier this year and was judged on a range of criteria including customer service, community pride, department excellence, brand values, merchandising and overall performance. The Hastings Cooperative owns and operates four IGA supermarkets in our local area. They have a commitment to sourcing from local producers wherever possible keeping profits in the local area. Congratulations to the Sovereign Place IGA meat department members Richard Skellern, Broden Whyte Shane Hughes, Store Manager Carol Leach, and the entire team whose joint efforts are attributed to the win.

ARTHUR DIXON – LIFE MEMBERSHIP PMSCC

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today, I welcome the news that Arthur Dixon from Lake Cathie has been honoured with Life Membership of the Port Macquarie Senior Citizens Club [PMSCC]. Arthur Dixon is an inspiration to everyone he meets. At just 102 years young, Mr Dixon is still gracing the dance floor every Monday while living independently at home. His favourite New Vogue dance is the 'waltz' clearly demonstrating that 'age has no limits' as he effortlessly steps his way around the dance floor without missing a beat. President of PMSCC Marjorie Utley proudly presented Mr Dixon with Life Membership on 19th July to recognise his contribution to the organisation over a number of years and the positive influence he expresses through his dance moves to other Club members. Mr Dixon estimates he has been dancing for around 38 years to 'Old Time and 'New Vogue'. He attributes his active lifestyle and social outings as an important recipe to good health. The Port Macquarie Senior Citizens Club meet regularly at Munster Street to socialise through a variety of activities including card games, carpet bowls, table tennis, darts and dancing. Congratulations Arthur on receiving well deserved Life Membership of PMSCC.

RYAN ROBINSON – APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I rise to welcome the exciting news that Camden Haven's Ryan Robinson was recently announced Apprentice of the Year at the North Coast Training Awards. Ryan was recognised for his studies in Certificate III in Carpentry at TAFE NSW Wauchope Campus and his work ethic and attention to detail at BMB Constructions Bonny Hills. Now a qualified carpenter and Government contractor, Ryan was overjoyed to just be nominated as a top three finalists and sit beside some of the most highly skilled and trained professionals on the North Coast. As the newly crowned Apprentice of the Year, Ryan will become an ambassador for apprentices on the Mid North Coast and encourage others to consider a career as a qualified tradesman. As part of his accolade, Ryan will progress onto a State interview, with the potential of him claiming the prestigious State Apprentice of the Year award. Training Services NSW acknowledge outstanding achievement in the vocational education and training sector through rewarding apprentices like Ryan for their dedication and commitment towards their studies. Undoubtedly, Ryan has a bright future ahead and I congratulate him on his achievements in carpentry through NSW TAFE.

2023 LOCKHART SHIRE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I would like to congratulate and recognise the winners of the 2023 Lockhart Shire Business Excellence Awards. Lockhart Shire Council takes great pride in endorsing and facilitating the chance for local community businesses to be acknowledged for their accomplishments in the biennial Lockhart Shire Business Excellence Awards. The awards serve as a perfect occasion for our Shire's business owners to celebrate their achievements as businesses and their employees. The Presentation Evening was

held on the 31st of May this year at the Yerong Creek Bowling Club and Hall and attracted over 70 attendees. Presenting the awards was Mayor of Lockhart Cr Greg Vernon, along with representatives from Lockhart, The Rock and Yerong Creek Progress Associations. Judging this year was undertaken by Court Sayer-Roberts from Enterprise Plus and Keiran Spencer from Department of Regional NSW. The four winners were: Young Entrepreneur - Joe Kingston of GS, SM and JG Kingston; Employee of the Year - April Kennedy of Delta Ag Yerong Creek; Best New Business - Avalon Farmstay in The Rock; and Excellence in Small Business - Lockhart Bowling Club in Lockhart. Glen Lea Images and Imagine That Butcher Event were Highly Commended.

ALAN GEOFFREY EVANS

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I would like to note the passing of veteran Military Serviceman Alan Geoffrey Evans who died on 9th June and was farewelled at Kapooka on Wednesday 21st June on what would have been his 93rd birthday. Alan had a long and proud history serving in the Australian Army and was deployed to Japan, Malaya, Korea, New Guinea, Vietnam and here in Australia. He served as a Rifleman and Cook and had advanced to Corporal by the time of his discharge. His list of Honours and Awards is impressive, although Alan was really not one for sharing this. Alan always made the effort to attend and support graduates at Kapooka for passing out parades and any significant event. Alan set such a wonderful example of sacrifice to us all and his wife Nancye told me how he always took the time to greet any new recruits he saw, to make himself known and importantly, to always thank them for their service. So to Nancye and to Alan's extended family I offer my condolences and to Alan, I express my heartfelt gratitude and my admiration for your service to our nation and to the whole Defence community.

RIVERINA CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I rise to congratulate the Riverina Conservatorium of Music on the official opening last weekend of their new facility. Pianist Banruo Zhu, vocalist Taylor Brown, guitarist Trang Nguyen and violinist Rachel Roberts - all students - treated us to wonderful performances. All were outstanding and a testament to their musical talents and hard work and that of their teachers. The Wagga Wagga community is very proud of the new facility. It sets the standard for regional conservatoriums, which are so important to regional NSW. I want to thank and congratulate the board, the staff, the students, their families, city councillors, the community and public servants who have helped realise the dream of this new building. However, I particularly wish to acknowledge the work of Hamish Tait and Andrew Wallace who have absolutely tirelessly fought for the Conservatorium in the past decade. It has been a difficult fight, but they have never given up. Bravo. It was fitting that Hamish on piano himself accompanied soprano Larissa Burak in a wonderful, inspiring finale. Wagga Wagga is the city of great sports and now it should also be known as the city of great musicians.

ST GEORGE GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL - MOTHER DAUGHTER GALA

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to congratulate St George Girls High School for hosting a successful Mother Daughter Gala, a tradition each year in the school calendar. The 70's and 80's themed celebration saw much success by all accounts, with special school performances and prizes donated by local businesses. Events like this ensure that the school can continue to fund important educational initiatives during the learning year. St George Girls High School has been supporting local girls within the Oatley Electorate for over 100 years. As a selective school, they focus on achieving only the very best outcomes for their students. Under the leadership of the Principal, Ms Romeo, the school has always thrived academically and continues to do so to this day. Parents play a vital role in the education of their children, and events like this make it possible for school kids and parents to connect, learn and grow together. I would once again like to congratulate St George Girls High School for their successes and wish them all the very best over the next few years.

KEVIN GREENE AM

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I rise to recognise Kevin Greene AM, who was recently appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the Parliament of NSW, local government and the community. Kevin has been a lifelong local and a friend to our community, having resided in the area for over 55 years now. Throughout this time, he played an enormous role in making our local area the great place it is today. His service in Parliament was extensive – throughout 1999 – 2011 he represented the Electorate's of Georges River and subsequently Oatley, whilst also holding several Ministerial portfolios. More recently, I had the pleasure of working with him as Mayor of Georges River Council and our combined advocacy led to many jointly funded projects including the significant revitalisation and upgrade of Gannons Park. Kevin has also been a strong advocate for many local organisations including the St George and Sutherland Medical Research Foundation, Red Shield Appeal, The Salvation Army, and Charity Golf Committee. I'd like to again thank Kevin for his significant contributions to our community and congratulate him on his recent appointment as a Member of the Order of Australia.

WARREN SAUNDERS TRIBUTE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the passing of a local hero in the St George community, Mr Warren Saunders OAM, who served his community faithfully for over 80 years. Known colloquially as 'Mr St George', Warren grew up in Bexley, attending both St Michael's and Marist Brothers Kogarah whilst playing Cricket on the side. Following High School, he quickly rose through the ranks, playing 1st Grade cricket for St George, and eventually going on to captain the NSW State team. Mr Saunders also played a major role in grassroots sport in the community, serving for 37 years on the St George Cricket Committee. As a big supporter of small business in our area, I am so proud that the Insurance Brokers Agency that Warren established over 60 years ago is still going strong. For exceptional service to his community, he received an OAM in 1989. I pass on my condolences and deepest sympathies to his family. I know that Warren Saunders will be remembered fondly for his heart for the St George community, as well as his resilience, enthusiasm and integrity.

ICONIC LEO'S CAFÉ STAYS IN BAXTER FAMILY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—Lismore farewells Judy and Warren Baxter who have run LEO's for the past sixteen years and welcomes in their daughter Cherise Baxter, who has taken over the reins of Lismore's iconic café-eatery. I express my heartfelt appreciation for the remarkable Warren and Judy who stood LEO's back up following the catastrophic damage of the February 2022 floods. Their dedication to serving the community with great food and warm hospitality through multiple floods and a pandemic is commendable. Leo's Cafe has been a staple of the Lismore CBD, and the owners' commitment to treating their customers like family has left a lasting mark on the Lismore community. As we bid farewell, we extend our thanks and well wishes given the past few years. Their legacy endures, and they hold a special place in our hearts. Thank you, Warren and Judy Baxter, for your commitment to our community and to small business, for creating a warm and welcoming business with some of the best hot chips and gravy around. When LEO's reopened Lismore local Harry Gregg who was then part of my electorate team, cried and raced around to buy chips. I was with him!

LARNOOK PUBLIC SCHOOL CENTENARY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—Congratulations to Larnook Public School who recently celebrated centennial milestone. Originally opening in 1922, the commitment to providing top-quality education continues to this day. Former students sisters Betty Bressan (nee Volpatti), Diana Williams and Teresa Conte, joined current school leaders Coby and Talan and Larnook Principal Megan O'Meara, along with many other past and present students and teachers to share memories of playing Red Rover cross-over, shooting marbles in the dirt and learning to swim in the creek. To mark the 100th anniversary Mabel Adams the oldest living ex-student cut the cake and former principal Steven Clough and former student Joe Simpson planted a tree in memory of a recently deceased Elsie Simpson who was also a former student. As part of the celebrations, current students learnt about the rich history of the small but mighty school and its important role within the community. Larnook Public School has been instrumental in shaping the minds and futures of many generations of young people, and this legacy prevails. It is wonderful to acknowledge their centenary and commend their commitment to providing top-notch education to our community for the past 100 years and beyond. We love our small schools.

KYTHERIAN RADIO ANNOUNCER HARRY CRETHAR CELEBRATES 40 YEARS ON RADIO

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—It is with great pleasure that I extend my congratulations to Harry Crethar for this remarkable achievement: 40 years of broadcasting on community radio. For four decades Harry Crethar has been a familiar voice on local community Kytherian radio, providing a vital connection to Kytherian immigrants as they settled into our community. Hailing from Greece, Harry has been a cherished member of the Lismore community since he arrived in 1948. He is remembered fondly for opening and operating The Wonder Bar, a beloved establishment with a 24-year history in Lismore. Harry and his wife Maria established the Premier Picture Framing and Art Supplies Store, which operated until February of last year, sadly smashed by the catastrophic floods of February 2022. Harry's contribution to Lismore and the Kytherian communities is immeasurable, and his dedication to local radio since 1983 is a testament to his passion for community values. Harry should take immense pride in his impressive accomplishments and the positive impact he has had on the Lismore and Kytherian communities. Congratulations, Harry Crethar on this incredible milestone and we look forward to hearing your familiar voice for many more years.

BINGARA ORANGE FESTIVAL

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the Gwydir Shire Council and Bingara Tourist Information Centre and volunteers, for staging a great week of festivities for the annual Orange Festival, which I had the pleasure of attending. The event commenced with the traditional ceremony, picking of the Oranges, followed by market stalls, street parade, pageants, sporting and cultural activities, with approximately 1500 people in attendance. I congratulate all those who assisted throughout the week on events, grounds, facilities

and catering. Events such as this in regional towns cannot function without the ongoing support and commitment their volunteers give. I commend all those involved in the successful week of festivities, for celebrating local produce and Bingara's cultural heritage, especially honouring the memory of those who have fallen in WWI & WWII, for whom the Orange trees represent.

RECOGNITION OF TAMMY ELBOURNE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Tammy Elbourne for her contribution to the Moree Plains community, through her role as CEO of Moree Tourism, with her service spanning the past 23 years. I congratulate Tammy on her many accomplishments whilst with Moree Tourism, including being the recipient of Regional Tourism Awards in 2010, 2012 & 2013; State Tourism Awards in 2013, 2014 and 2015; Australian Tourism Awards 2013, 2014 & 2015. Under Tammy's guidance Moree Tourism was also inducted to the Hall of Fame for being the only Visitor Information Centre to have received back-to-back wins. I commend Mrs Elbourne on her leadership, professionalism and for delivering the best experience and version of the 'Plains' possible, to the many visitors to the Moree Plains region. We make special thanks also to Board members Katrina Humphries, Margi Kirkby, Michelle Gobbert, Nikki Griffiths, Julie Rushby and Matt Hayes; to fellow staff, Maddison Ashley, Julie Ashley and Jaymie McDonald; and to the Moree Plains Shire Council, for your cumulative support.

WALCHA FIRE & RESCUE CAPTAIN PETER DUNN

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of Walcha Fire & Rescue Captain Peter Dunn AFSM on his 46 years of service to the community. Peter is a well-known and respected member of the Walcha community and has proudly served as an on-call Firefighter and Captain of the local station. We congratulate Peter for mentoring many firefighters over the years, attending countless fires and road crashes and often as a consequence, supporting his colleagues along with many community members in their time of need. I commend Peter for being a great example to those in the community for selfless dedication and commitment to protecting his fellow citizens – and pleasingly, he isn't ready to hang up his fire helmet yet!

CUMBERLAND GANG SHOW 2023

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville)—I have had the great honour and privilege of being the Patron of the Greater Western Sydney Region of Scouts for almost two decades. During these years, my favourite activity is attending the annual Cumberland Gang Show presented by 100's of scouts and girl guides. The 2023 Cumberland Gang Show was a two-hour production full of live, fast-moving, musical comedy theatre, packed with loads of fun, fantastic sets and costumes and some wonderfully catchy songs and dances. Cumberland Gang Show is more than what happens at the theatre, it is a huge commitment by everyone involved, who are all volunteers. It is also about sharing something special with our families and the friends we make. These relationships are shaped throughout the rehearsal season, from rehearsal to rehearsal, and year to year. That is what makes the Gang very special. BRAVO!

COLIN HAWTHORN

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I recognise long-serving teacher, Colin Hawthorn. Mr Hawthorn was recently named the Western Region VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year, teaching students and mentoring the next generation of educators for more than 40 years. His role in Vocational Educational Training at Red Bend Catholic College in Forbes equips students with workplace skills and technical knowledge to pursue a future career. Since arriving at the college with a goal to develop the school farm and teach wool classing, he now has an expanded role teaching science and agriculture, serving as the school's agriculture co-ordinator for more than 10 years. Inspiring his students on a quest for knowledge, he has encouraged students to pursue a range of careers in agriculture from veterinary science to agronomy, research and much more. Coming from a background of agriculture himself, after growing up on a farm between Forbes and Grenfell, Colin's passion for the land has been interwoven through his personal and professional life. Teachers like Colin play an important role in combating the intellectual migration of young people from rural areas and instead, encouraging them to pursue a career utilising their professional skills in a rural area. I congratulate Colin on receiving this award.

DOOLEYS LIDCOMBE CATHOLIC CLUB

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I acknowledge Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club for its extraordinary generosity in providing a large donation to the Cudal Bowling Club just days after the devastating floods hit the small village in November 2022. Cudal Bowling Club which operates with a staff of between two and four people, became an evacuation centre for locals who had lost their homes, vehicles, stock and pets during the devastating floods. When Dooleys came to the rescue of the bowling club with a donation of \$50,000, board members had been frantically doing the sums to work out how long they could continue paying staff to keep the club operating. It had become a central point for the community, providing food and shelter with staff working round the clock

providing what support they could for those who were impacted by the disaster. The bowling club not only purchased food, it distributed tools, and cleaning up equipment and supplies to local residents who faced the heartbreaking task of trying to clean out their houses and salvage what they could. On behalf of a grateful community, I wish to thank the Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club for their extraordinary generosity and support.

LIFELINE CENTRAL WEST

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I acknowledge the magnificent efforts of Lifeline Central West staff and volunteers who responded over several weeks to assist victims of floods in various locations in the Orange electorate. In November 2022 when the devastating floods hit Eugowra, Cudal and Forbes, Lifeline immediately responded by sending personnel to provide emotional support to flood victims, many of whom were only left with the clothes they were wearing when the floods swept through their villages and towns. The mere presence of Lifeline staff and volunteers provided a comforting and reassuring presence at a time when many residents were in shock after fighting for their survival and so many others losing all their possessions and their houses. For the days and weeks after the disaster, Lifeline was a welcome sight for locals when their van arrived and barbecue was fired up, providing free meals for residents, emergency services workers and volunteers from various organisations helping with the clean-up. But more than just providing a meal, the Lifeline van became a gathering point for locals to come together to tell their story, many of their survival, and to check on the welfare of their neighbours so the healing process could begin.

COUNCILLOR JIM AITKEN OAM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—A giant in the Penrith community, Councillor Jim Aitken OAM has retired from Penrith City Council and today I want to recognise his service to my community. First elected in 1995, Jim has served as Mayor and twice as Deputy Mayor. Public service is an admirable path to take. It comes with constant scrutiny, a responsibility to deliver the best outcomes possible for those you represent and work for. Jim was also a leader in the local business community. His real estate business, Jim Aitken and Partners become a household name over the years and has seven offices across the Penrith region. I want to commend Jim for his service to the community, his loyalty to the community and for all the positive differences he made to our community. He will be missed and I wish him all the best with his health.

LAM TANG

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—One of Glenmore Park's favourite Chinese restaurants will be closing its door soon as its owner Lam Tang enters retirement. Today I want to recognise his presence in our community where for two long decades he has been plating up family favourites with a mixture of Australian Chinese as well as dishes inspired by other countries. Mr Tang settled in Australia in 1987 to provide him and his children with more opportunities and a better future. He first opened the doors to his restaurant in Glenmore Park in 2003 and has been successful for two decades since. Mr Tang's presence in our community for such a significant period of time is a testament to the opportunities available right across the Badgerys Creek electorate. We are filled with possibilities and the chance to do something great without the need to leave the area. Congratulations Mr Tang and I wish the happiest of retirements.

VALE JOHN WARD

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—I was saddened to hear of passing of John Oastler Ward in April of this year. John was a former mayor of Ashfield Municipality and was fiercely passionate about history and heritage. John was born in Melbourne in 1940, moving to Sydney's Inner West in his adulthood. John ran for Ashfield Municipality in 1977, motivated by a desire to protect historical buildings in the area under threat from large scale demolition. This run for office would prove successful, and after election as an alderman, John was Mayor of Ashfield Municipality from 1991-1995, totalling 18 years of service to Council. Clearly, John had deep respect for the heritage of the Ashfield area, and was a founding member of the Ashfield and District Historical society along with his wife Gail. Both John and Gail would later become life members of the society. Ever enthusiastic about history, John also lectured and researched medieval history for 36 years at the University of Sydney and conducted historical walking tours of Ashfield after his term as Mayor. John is survived by his wife, three children and three grandchildren. Vale John Ward and thank you for your immense contribution to the Ashfield community.

NEWTOWN JETS – WELCOME DAY AND BEER FOOTY AND FOOD FESTIVAL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Newtown Jets continue to prove they are Australia's coolest rugby league club, hosting two recent fantastic events. The inaugural Welcome Day was held on June 24, to show that rugby league is a game for all and ensure everyone feels welcome and at home at Henson Park. Held in conjunction with Heaps Gay and The Music and Booze Co the day was a great example of the diversity and welcoming spirit of the Inner West. The 2023 Beer Footy and Food Festival has seen its biggest

event yet with an enormous crowd of over 10,500 packing Henson Park under brilliant blue skies on July 22. More than 25 brewers and a host of local foodies kept the enthusiastic and happy crowd well fed and refreshed, with great entertainment both on the field and off. Unfortunately, the valiant Newton Jets went down to the Blacktown Workers Sea Eagles 28-12. Congratulations and thanks to the Newtown Jets, The Music and Booze Company and Heaps Gay for yet again putting on sensational events for the Inner West community.

COAST SHELTER WYONG

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Not-for-profit organisation Coast Shelter celebrated the launch of their new Community Centre located at the Wyong Village Plaza in the heart of Wyong. Coast Shelter Operations Manager Mark Trevaskis spoke about the services Coast Shelter offer to the region followed by an uplifting speech from the Hon David Harris Member for Wyong followed by the cutting of the ribbon, surrounded by members of the community, local organisations across the Coast, volunteers, and Coast Shelter staff. The new facility is to serve as a vital hub for community engagement and provide essential services and a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space for people in need. A range of services including hot meals, emergency accommodation and transitional housing assistance, social work support, domestic violence support and counselling, mental health and drug and alcohol counselling, and life skills training and workshops. Coast Shelter CEO, Michael Starr and staff are thrilled for the new facility in Wyong, it is another step forward in Coast Shelters mission to provide comprehensive support and resources to those in need and will serve as a much-needed hub on the Northern end of the Central Coast community.

NORAH HEAD MARINE RESCUE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—The new appointed Commissioner Alex Barrell of Marine Rescue NSW visited the members at Marine Rescue Norah Head. Commissioner Alex Barrell commenced his new role in April this year and has spent 30 years working in emergency and rescue service organisations. Marine Rescue Norah Head were a successful applicant in the Community Building Partnership program receiving a \$65,000 grant. The grant went towards a new custom branded vehicle, capable of towing their rescue vessel to required locations and transport crew to other bases. Deputy Unit Commander Rodger Bruce spoke about future plans on how to improve the rescue facility for all members involved at Norah Head. Commissioner Alex Barrell is looking forward to leading the Marine Rescue NSW into the future and importantly with the industry partners and supporting the boating community. I welcome Alex Barrell as the newly appointed Commissioner of Marine Rescue NSW and to share our beautiful waterways at Norah Head. Volunteers at Norah Head Marine Rescue serve their community by responding to emergencies and other incidents on the water.

JERRY SENT ME

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—The new cocktail bar Jerry Sent Me has recently opened at Wyong in the historic Chapman Building. Owner Jonathan Lee grew up in Wyong beginning his bar career at the Grand Hotel in Wyong, moving to 'the Godfather of tequila' Phil Bailey at the famous Cafe Pacifico in Darlinghurst and poured up drinks at the infamous Club 77 basement on William Street. After a decade of managing various venues across the city in Sydney, Jonathan felt the pull to head back to the Coast, first taking on the role of Venue Manager at Hotel Gosford. Jonathan is creative and loves all things artistic designing his bar with heavy barn-style doors, to the timber rafters, and rustic concrete floors, piecing every little aspect of the venue together. Bringing a venue with city vibes to the Coast creating an atmosphere that people can enjoy with interactive, and highly knowledgeable staff. The unique name Jerry Sent Me relates to the underbelly of Sydney, tales of slums, gangs, speakeasies, and the two 'Queens of Surry Hills. Jonathan has future plans for Jerry Sent Me and also has plans to give back to those in need.

FRANK RINALDI - DENILQUIN

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise and congratulate Frank Rinaldi of Denilquin. Frank is a taxi driver in the town of Denilquin in my Electorate and drives the wheelchair taxi service throughout the week. Often driving the elderly and the disabled, Frank's work ensures the continued independence for some of the most vulnerable in our community. The care and compassion Frank shows to his clients, often spending hours pushing them from shop to shop before driving them home, shows his care and dedication to his clients and community. I commend Frank for his caring and dedicated attitude towards his clients, and I hope he continues his invaluable work for many years to come.

SAM COOPER - LEETON

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise the exceptional work of Sam Cooper, an exercise physiologist dedicated to helping individuals living with disabilities in the Leeton community. Through his role at the start-up business, 'Bounce Abilities', Sam provides valuable outreach services to young students and community members, focusing on areas such as milestone development; gross motor skills and improving access to necessary services. His regular visits to Leeton, supported by the NDIS and school funding, ensure that participants receive ongoing intervention and support. Additionally, Sam utilises telehealth to maintain engagement between visits and collaborates with physiotherapists, support workers, schools and other caregivers to create a comprehensive support network. Sam's dedication and passion for improving the lives of others is truly inspiring, and I commend him for his valuable contributions to the Leeton community.

TEGAN ALLOTT - HAY

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise Tegan Allott of Hay for her outstanding achievements and dedication to her profession as a local AgFlite pilot. Tegan was recently honoured with the prestigious Professional Pilot Award at the Aerial Application Association of Australia annual convention. This esteemed recognition celebrates her unwavering commitment to professionalism and safety within the industry. From dreaming of flying as a child, to becoming an application pilot and forging a fulfilling career in the agricultural aviation industry, her journey is an inspiration to all. Tegan's innovative work and contributions, especially as a woman in a male-dominated industry, make her a remarkable role model. Tegan, I commend you for your invaluable contributions to the Hay community and congratulate you on your outstanding achievements.

CHARLESTOWN AZZURRI 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—It's an important milestone in the history of any club but Charlestown Azzurri have special reasons to celebrate their sixtieth anniversary. Many Italians migrated to Australia after World War II and, learning a new language in a new country far from home, lots of the Italian immigrants who made their home in Newcastle would congregate together to play football. Hamilton was the centre of migrant life in Newcastle in the 1960s, and the club was formed as Hamilton Azzurri by Mario and Basilio Rufo, Antonio Martinelli and Chris Lloyd in 1963. The club took its name from the Italian word for "blue"—the colour of the Italian national team. Starting off in the third division, they'd reached first division by 1966 and by 1969 had won their first league title in Newcastle's top flight competition. Over the years, they have also been known as Highfields Azzurri SFC, Azzurri FC, and Charlestown City Blues FC. Whatever name they've been known by, Azzurri have been a great source of community pride. I am a great supporter of Charlestown Azzurri and I can't wait to celebrate their anniversary with them. Happy sixtieth birthday and here's to many more!

CHARLI LAUGHTON OF WARNERS BAY HIGH SCHOOL

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—A huge congratulations to Warners Bay High School Year 10 student, Charli Laughton, who recently competed in the 2023 International Cheer Union World Cheerleading Championships at Disney's Wide World of Sport Complex in Orlando, Florida. Attracting the very best young cheerleaders from all over the world, the ICU Championships are a highly competitive showcase of the best the sport has to offer—and I'm thrilled that a Warners Bay High Student was selected to represent Team Australia at the event. Charli was one of sixteen representatives from the East Coast Allstars selected for Team Australia, including staff members and athletes. The East Coast Allstars were founded in 2008, developing from outdoor practice at a public park to a school hall before setting up their own gym at a warehouse in Gateshead. They now operate in Gateshead and Silverwater and have developed into a world-class cheerleading gym, putting NSW on the world cheerleading map. I would like to acknowledge Molly Holmes, Jaimi Coleman, Yasmin Leopold, Katie Price, Rebecca Clearly, Mia Barbara and Kyah Rostron on their selection for Team Australia alongside Charli. What an achievement!

HUNTER SPORTS HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL ACADEMY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Hunter Sports High School at Gateshead is part of a long and noble sporting tradition in the Hunter, and has made its mark across a range of sports. I would like to congratulate the Hunter Sports High Baseball Academy for winning the Proud Shield Baseball Boys Knockout Hunter Final earlier this month. Coached by Ian Hook, who is a Level C accredited Baseball Coach and is also the Hunter Academy of Sport head coach, the boys took to the diamond against an older side and came away with a convincing win. The Hunter Sports High Baseball Academy supports talented athletes with their academic and

welfare needs, allowing them to gain a quality education whilst still pursuing their sporting dreams. A big thanks to Coach Hook, and once again a big congratulations to the team—they will progress through to the next round of competition and compete in the State Championships next term. All the best for the Championships, boys, and keep up the great work!

JAMES DOYLE – VIRTUS GLOBAL GAMES

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Cootamundra local, James Doyle recently represented Australia as part of the Boomerangs basketball team at the Virtus Global Games in Vichy, France between 4-10 June 2023. Virtus Global Games is the world's largest elite sports event for athletes with an intellectual impairment and hosts representatives from across Europe, America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. The last time the Global Games were held was in 2019, in Brisbane and the Boomerangs finished as very respectable silver medallists. Australia also has two women's teams I would like to acknowledge, 'the Pearls' who achieved silver and bronze medals in 2019. All three teams recently competed in France. The Boomerangs squad consisted of twelve players; James was one of just two representatives from New South Wales. At the 2023 Global Games the Boomerangs defeated the United States of America, France, Poland, and Japan which saw them qualify for the gold medal match-up against Portugal. In an emphatic grand final match, the Boomerangs triumphed over Portugal, boasting a comfortable 98-68 victory. It is always special to see our nation compete on the world stage, but to finish as gold medallists is extraordinary. Congratulations to James and the Boomerangs squad.

BENJAMIN BURGERS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to recognise and personally highlight the incredible achievements of a local student from West Wyalong High School. Benjamin Burgers is a year 12 student who will soon be graduating from high school. Benjamin started at West Wyalong High School as a nearly completely non-verbal student who was unable to enter the classroom due to anxiety and poor social skills. Through Ben's hard work, commitment and dedication to his learning, Ben has designed a flag named "The Freedom flag for Indigenous Australians". The design of the flag incorporates pieces of the Australian, Aboriginal and Indigenous Flags into one. Ben has joined these flags to symbolise the culture, unity, and equality of our first nations people. Ben recently presented his flag design and its meaning to the senior English Class at West Wyalong High School. This was a huge and significant step for Ben and demonstrates a massive leap in developing Ben's social skills. Well done to Ben, and to the teachers at West Wyalong High School for your ongoing support to students.

TEE OFF FOR BREAST CANCER EVENT

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to congratulate the achievements of Erin and Adam Ferguson and their team for organising another successful 'Tee Off for Breast Cancer Trials' Day in Grong Grong. Held on Saturday 3 June 2023 the event raised an amazing \$7,048 for breast cancer trials exceeding last year's \$5,000 tally. Grong Grong Sports Club was a sea of pink with players and patrons all wearing pink. There were 18 teams and 71 golfers in total competing in this year's Ambrose event. This was Grong Grong's third year hosting its Tee Off for Breast Cancer Trials event and was even bigger and better than previous years. Tee Off is a national initiative where clubs all over Australia are invited to combine their love of golfing with their passion to raise funds for breast cancer clinical trials research. Congratulations is extended to all the organisers, sponsors, and supporters who make this incredible event possible.

DAVIDSON ELECTORATE YEAR 12 SCHOOL LEADERS 2022 / 2023

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I rise to acknowledge the contributions of our Year 12 School Leaders from the Davidson electorate in 2022 / 2023. I acknowledge Sarah Hudson and Daisy Daddo from Brigidine College in St Ives, Carys Yeomans and Nathan Kilby from Covenant Christian School in Belrose, Roya Rossi and Aaron Gerrard from Davidson High School, Filip Gusavac and Mischa Winkel from Killara High School, Laura Strawbridge and Dylan Bailey from Ku-ring-gai High School in North Turramurra, Hannah Tonyton and Leah Reinhardt from Masada College in St Ives, Sydney Bao and Clare Goben from Ravenswood School for Girls in Gordon, Josie Carroll and Sienna Fitzgerald from Roseville College, and Aden Zaki and Tamaryn Chadband from St Ives High School. I want to thank them for their hard work and leadership throughout their final year of schooling and wish them all the best in the upcoming Higher School Certificate. I was honoured to host them at the NSW Parliament on Wednesday 28 June 2023. They are not just the leaders of tomorrow. They are the leaders of today.

KU-RING-GAI ROTARY CHANGEOVER 2023

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Monday 26 June 2023, I was pleased to attend the Ku-ring-gai Rotary Club's annual changeover. Founded in February 1959, Ku-ring-gai Rotary is an entirely volunteer-based organisation which has launched and overseen significant projects in the local community. They have supported our youth by establishing the Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service [KYDS] and donating to charities such as

Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury. They have provided opportunities to small businesses to recognise their employees by sponsoring 'Pride of Workmanship' awards. They have a global footprint by fundraising for worthwhile causes such as education for young people in Uganda, solar panels in Fijian schools, and ShelterBoxes for war victims in Ukraine. But perhaps most importantly, they kindle the flame of community through initiatives such as the Lindfield Fun Run, the Bobbin Head Cycle Classic, Gordon Markets, and of course, the Bunnings BBQ. I would like to pay tribute to outgoing President Chris Lewis for his public service. I congratulate incoming joint-Presidents, Malcolm Braid and Ted Price, and other elected office-bearers, who I'm sure will do a fantastic job. I look forward to engaging with Ku-ring-gai Rotary for many years to come.

LIONS CLUB OF KU-RING-GAI CHANGEOVER 2023

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I was pleased to attend the Lions Club of Ku-ring-gai's Changeover 2023 on Tuesday 27 June 2023. Established in 1954, the Lions Club of Ku-ring-gai have undertaken a tremendous number of volunteer initiatives in the local community. Such initiatives include, but are not limited to, constructing Green Shade Sails at the St Ives Village Green, installing new seats at Swain Gardens in Killara, and fundraising for victims affected by floods in NSW earlier this year. Our community should be proud of the public service that the Lions Club of Ku-ring-gai performs. I would like to thank outgoing President Jude Arianayagam and First Vice President David Erskine for their contribution to the Lions Club of Ku-ring-gai. I congratulate newly elected President Harold Zev and First Vice President Carlo Colpani for their ascendance to the club leadership. I look forward to working and engaging with the Lions Club of Ku-ring-gai into the future.

BROTHERS IN NEED SOUP KITCHEN

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge Dean Mousad, the co-founder of Brothers in Need and their team, for their valued initiative of helping people in need. Their Soup Kitchen not only assists people, but it has also given several high school students the opportunity to learn to cook. Equipping young males with culinary skills to help refugees, asylum seekers, and homeless individuals is a beautiful act of compassion and gives them a sense of purpose. The Brothers in Need is an international organisation dedicated to serving the community and they are determined to improve the lives of those who are most disadvantaged and in need of help. Their programs reflect their commitment to serve. They provide aid to communities regardless of race, religion, or social background. I am delighted to see the active involvement of these young people in carrying out something so incredibly valuable for others. Their wholehearted embrace of the program is making a positive impact in our community. In a world that often feels divided, it is wonderful to have an organisation in my electorate of Bankstown, that brings together the power of youth to make a difference.

RIVERWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE NAIDOC WEEK CELEBRATIONS

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—In recognition of NAIDOC week, I acknowledge the traditional custodians on the land which we are on, the Gadigal People of the Eora nation, and pay our respects to their elders; past, present, and future. On Tuesday, 4th July 2023, more than 200 people attended the NAIDOC week celebrations at the Riverwood Community Centre [RCC]. Local respected Wiradjuri Dugnhutti elder, Uncle John, commenced the event with a traditional Indigenous smoking ceremony and a Welcome to Country. Aunty Lyn Martin, an RCC Board Chairperson, followed the opening by reinforcing the significance of NAIDOC week and the importance of the Voice referendum's success in the Australian Parliament. Additionally, the event officially launched and celebrated the publication of 'The Story of an Aboriginal Grandmother', a book about Aboriginal culture from an Arabic perspective, written by Lebanese Australian author, Dr Jamil Dewihi. I want to acknowledge and thank Councillor Karl Saleh for hosting the event. He recounted that "the day was a chance for our local community to celebrate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements", and encouraged everyone to "vote YES in the referendum on constitutional recognition of the Aboriginal people".

SARA MANSOUR – 2023 ZEST AWARD

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I would like to congratulate the co-founder of Bankstown Poetry Slam, Sara Mansour on her successful win amongst the esteemed winners of the 2023 ZEST Awards. She received the Outstanding Voluntary Leader award to acknowledge her immense contribution to Western Sydney's cultural landscape over the past decade. This significant achievement recognises Ms Mansour's tireless work and dedication to making a positive influence within the Bankstown community. As a co-founder, Sara, played a pivotal role in establishing the poetry slam event in February 2013 and along with the team of volunteers, developing it into the largest regular spoken word gathering in Australia. Despite her full-time career as a lawyer and a mother, Sara's unwavering commitment to volunteering has helped build a thriving spoken work

community. Bankstown Poetry Slam is a platform that allows individuals to feel empowered to communicate their feelings to others through spoken words. While having over 300 attendees involved, it has allowed local and international writers to come together and do what they love. I am pleased to have such an exceptional platform located within my electorate. Again, it is my pleasure to congratulate Sara on receiving this prestigious award.

INGLEBURN KNITTING GROUP

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections)—One of the ways the former First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama found calm in the chaos during Covid-19 lockdowns was to knit. "Something in that tiny and precise motion on repeat, the gentle rhythm of those clicking needles, moved my brain in a new direction," she writes in her book *The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times*. Knitters around the world know too well the meditative power of knit one, purl one. So too the Ingleburn Knitting Group, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in July. Over the years, the group has grown from 10 people to around 50 members and created items for premature babies, our local hospitals, women's refuge centres and dementia patients. Importantly, the group has brought people together to create, connect and collaborate. I've visited the group on several occasions at the Greg Percival Community Centre and always enjoy their companionship. Not only do they love to knit, but they enjoy sharing their passion with others. I congratulate Ingleburn Knitting Group on its fantastic milestone. I trust that there are many more years – and knitted creations – to follow.

VANESSA PRINGLE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—A Bathurst florist and her team have triumphed and can now boast as being the best of the best. Huge congratulations to Vanessa Pringle Floral Designs for taking out the Sydney Market Fresh Awards title of best florist in the state of NSW. That's a huge accolade in any terms and is testament to the unwavering commitment to perfection and customer service that Vanessa has. The win against 70 semi-finalists is a big deal as it went to a regional florist and beating everyone from Sydney makes victory even sweeter. The business was nominated in two Fresh Awards categories, service excellence and retail presentation, but ended up taking home the best prize of all: the overall florist of the year award. And with a judging process where a mystery shoppers come to the store on three separate occasions throughout the year taking into account retail presentation, customer service, product quality and marketing and branding, Vanessa clearly has a winning formula for her business. Recently celebrating 12 years in business, the award is validation for the team's years of hard work and commitment to excellence and couldn't have gone to a nicer group of people.

VICTORIA ROTH

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—The dedication shown by St Stanislaus' College head of Creative and Performing Arts Victoria Roth has been rewarded with a nomination for the 2023 Australian Recording Industry Association [ARIA] Music Teacher Award. Ms Roth, who has had an involvement with Stannies for 23 years, is over the moon to be nominated as it more than likely it came from the kids that she is so passionate about teaching. Having this recognition from her students is clearly something she is immensely proud of as it helps her to understand that she is making a difference in their lives. It's the dedication of teachers like Victoria that helps give young students the grounding they need to go onto bigger and better things in their life. There's now a nervous wait for Victoria to see if she makes the cut to be a finalist in the ARIAs as she is up against thousands of other nominations from across Australia. No matter what the outcome, I congratulate Victoria for going that extra mile in her role at St Stanislaus' College where she really is an all-rounder in the music department. Congratulations and well done Victoria Roth.

ALAN BAYLISS

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—The tiny hamlet of Locksley between Bathurst and Lithgow has a new resident and he's brought a new business with him. It's great to see artist Alan Bayliss transform a corrugated garage on the Main Western Railway Line next to the renovated early 20th Century Station Master's house into "Tin Shed Art". Alan is a former Bathurst businessman who previously owned Goods and Chattels in Keppel Street. His decision to make a tree change a few years ago and decision to live only a few metres from a railway line might not be suited to everyone but living in such a remote location is just what Alan was after and he can't imagine a more peaceful and lovely place to call home. He now sells a collection of artworks that are a bit eclectic, including repurposed objects including barbed wire and shovels. Alan's decision to move to Locksley shows that there's something for everyone when they decide to live in the Bathurst Electorate. Good luck with the venture Alan, I am sure many residents will jump at the chance to come and say hello when you are open for business each weekend.

DUCK CREEK RACES

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to recognise the committee of Nyngan's renowned Duck Creek Races for their outstanding efforts and contributions to the community. From humble beginnings as a fundraiser, the event has grown to be huge and injects an enormous amount of money into the local economy. Despite overcast skies, the event attracted more than 5000 racegoers, demonstrating the strong support and enthusiasm for this annual event. The combination of country hospitality, exciting racing, fashions on the field, and live entertainment undoubtedly created a memorable experience for all attendees. Moreover, the committee's tradition of choosing a local charity as the beneficiary of the races displays their commitment to giving back to the community. This year's choice, Macquarie Homestay, is a vital organisation that provides much-needed accommodation for individuals and families traveling to Dubbo for medical treatment. The generous donation of \$40,000 made by the Duck Creek Race Club Committee will undoubtedly make a significant difference in supporting the invaluable work of Macquarie Homestay. Congratulations to the entire Duck Creek Race Club Committee, the volunteers, and all the attendees for making this year's event a resounding success and for their unwavering support of Macquarie Homestay.

ISABELLE RUSSELL

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to congratulate Dubbo's Isabelle Russell, who was recently awarded the Western Region Academy of Sport's [WRAS] Chairman's Award for Excellence 2023. Isabelle's results this season, including 2 medals at the National Track Championships and two 5ths at the National Road Championships, have seen her selected as part of the NSW Team to race in Europe. She is the only Under 19 female chosen for the team, which will race in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. Beyond her sporting achievements, Isabelle's dedication to her studies is equally commendable. She exemplifies the true essence of a well-rounded and mature athlete. Her time management skills and unwavering commitment to her academics have given exceptional results. As a vital member of the WRAS Cycling squad, Isabelle's dedication and positive attitude have undoubtedly contributed to the team's success. Her exemplary work ethic shines through in everything she does, be it excelling in her studies, cycling events, or extra-curricular school activities. Congratulations Isabelle, and good luck in Europe!

MOST WUTHERING HEIGHTS DAY EVER

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to congratulate Camilla Ward, Sharon Quill, and all those who participated in Dubbo's inaugural "Most Wuthering Heights Day Ever" at the Old Dubbo Gaol on Sunday! The yearly flash mob started 2013 after the unofficial record attempt at the Brighton Fringe in the UK and sees red-frocked dancers lining parks and streets around the world to recreate the iconic video clip to Kate Bush's 1978 hit 'Wuthering Heights'. Choosing to support Samuel Johnson's charity, Love Your Sister, in its mission to increase access to cutting-edge cancer trials and treatment in the Dubbo region is a testament to the commitment of Camilla and Sharon to make a positive impact on the community. Dubbo's Most Wuthering Heights Day started with a warmup to Nutbush City Limits and then Dr Mary Nushaj, who works in the oncology unit at Dubbo Hospital, lead the crowd in the main dance. Organising such an event is no small feat, and while there were no records broken, the efforts of Camilla and Sharon to bring this unique and fun celebration to the community deserve recognition and appreciation.

DELHUNTIE YOUTH CARE

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—Mr Speaker, I rise to recognise the outstanding work of Delhuntie Youth Care, a not-for-profit organisation that has made a significant impact on the lives of countless young people. For 48 years, Delhuntie Youth Care has provided holistic adventure therapy programs that have transformed the lives of many. Through their innovative programs, Delhuntie Youth Care has assisted young people across Australia and even overseas, helping them navigate the challenges and struggles that life presents. Their commitment to supporting and empowering young individuals has allowed them to overcome depression, anxiety, low self-worth, anger, and boredom. I commend Delhuntie Youth Care for their tireless efforts in making a positive difference in the lives of young people. Their commitment to holistic and transformative programs serves as an inspiration to us all.

MRS DONNA RANKIN

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—Mr Speaker, I rise to recognise Mrs Donna Rankin of Forster. Donna, a talented artist, is the founding member of Heart to Heart, an art-based social program. This initiative utilises the power of creativity to make a profound and positive impact on the lives of young individuals facing significant challenges. Through Heart to Heart, carefully selected students are provided with an eight-week art program. As these young individuals immerse themselves in painting, their self-esteem grows alongside their artistic skills. These classes, coupled with other activities, provide students with invaluable opportunities to

enhance their emotional and social well-being. They are nurtured and encouraged to overcome their challenges, within a safe environment that fosters connections with adult mentors, supportive peers, and professional assistance if needed. This program has proven to be a catalyst for change, transforming the lives of numerous students within our local schools. Donna's dedication to the welfare and growth of these young individuals is truly commendable. I thank Donna for her exceptional efforts that show the transformative power of art in shaping the lives of our youth.

SUNDAY SIPPERS

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—Mr Speaker, I rise to recognise the wonderful community initiative known as Sunday Sippers, which has become a weekly gathering in support of our local Blackhead Surf Lifesaving Club. Organised and run by volunteers, this social event serves as an important fundraiser for the club. Over the years, the funds raised through Sunday Sippers have played a pivotal role in supporting the thriving Nippers contingent within our community. Most notably, these funds have been utilised to purchase essential boards for the Nippers' competitions, ensuring that our young athletes are equipped to excel in their chosen sport. As we celebrate the twentieth year of Sunday Sippers, I congratulate the dedicated volunteers of the Blackhead Surf Lifesaving Club on this well deserved recognition.

NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD – DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE DANIEL DIGNAN

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Detective Senior Constable Daniel Dignan on receiving a NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence in Policing Award on Tuesday 16th May 2023, presented by the Rotary Club of Holroyd. Detective Senior Constable Dignan has 12 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with 2 of those years attached to the State Crime Command. He is currently with the Cybercrime Squad and was nominated for his investigation under SF Glene which investigated a criminal syndicate which conducted the online supply of prohibited drugs using dark web marketplaces and encrypted communication platforms. Detective Senior Constable Dignan was instrumental in the retrieval of significant digital evidence. The evidence identified over 30,000 instances of drug supply with gross total earnings to be more than \$1.3million. As a result, the NSW Crime Commission commenced proceedings against the targets, issuing a restraining order on personal bank accounts, cash seized, and a property valued at approximately \$500,000. Thank you, Detective Senior Constable Dignan, for your commitment to preventing and responding to crime, and for helping bring justice to victims. Congratulations again on your receipt of this Award.

NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD – DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE ASHLEIGH MCCUDDEN

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Detective Senior Constable Ashleigh McCudden on receiving a NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence in Policing Award on Tuesday 16th May 2023, presented by the Rotary Club of Holroyd. Detective Senior Constable McCudden has 12 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with 4 years attached to the State Crime Command. She is currently with the Child Abuse Squad and was nominated for her investigation under SF Nadene which investigated a case where a 5-year-old child with ASD was sexually harmed. As a result of the investigation, the Person of Interest was charged with over 50 offences for 8 victims. Detective Senior Constable McCudden was also nominated for her investigation under SF Baria which charged the Person of Interest with 47 offences for 6 victims. She is further nominated under SF Wudgong which, working with the Unsolved Homicide Squad, charged the Person of Interest with a murder of a 2-year-old in 2009. Thank you, Detective Senior Constable McCudden, for your commitment to preventing and responding to crime, and for bringing justice to victims. Congratulations again on your receipt of this Award.

NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD – DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GARETH MICHAEL

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Detective Senior Constable Gareth Michael on receiving a NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence in Policing Award on Tuesday 16th May 2023, presented by the Rotary Club of Holroyd. Detective Senior Constable Michael has 12 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with 4 of those years attached to the State Crime Command. He is currently with the Criminal Groups Squad and was nominated for his investigation under SF Tippet which investigated the criminal activities of several high-profile members of Middle Eastern Organised Crime who were involved in sophisticated large scale money laundering syndicate. Detective Senior Constable Michael oversaw and led numerous covert operations and reviewed electronic intercepted evidence. As a result of the investigation, SF Tippet identified numerous offenders that laundered over \$200 million and seized several residential assets and \$500,000 in cash. These offenders were subsequently charged and convicted for substantive offences and received custodial

sentences. Thank you, Detective Senior Constable Michael, for your commitment to preventing and responding to crime, and for helping bring justice to victims. Congratulations again on your receipt of this Award.

SORRY DAY/RECONCILIATION WEEK

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—27 May to 3 June is National Reconciliation Week. It is a time for all Australians to learn about and reflect on our shared histories, cultures and achievements and carve a path together toward our shared goal of reconciliation in this nation. I had the opportunity to attend the Commemoration of Sorry Day by Liverpool Regional Museum with Aunty Pearl Wymarra and members of the Gandangara and Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Councils. Apologising for the past is an important step in the path of reconciliation and healing. Sovereignty was never ceded, and this land always was and always will be, Aboriginal land. Reconciliation Week is particularly important this year, as we progress further toward reconciliation with the Federal Government beginning to implement the Uluru Statement of the Heart in full: voice, treaty, and truth-telling. I look forward to joining with my community in supporting this invitation to walk with our First Nations Australians.

LIVERPOOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—On 27 May I attended the launch of Building Liverpool Exhibition, hosted by the City of Liverpool and District Historical Society at Liverpool Library. The Exhibition tells the story of the building of the Liverpool. It starts with the origins of Liverpool as a convict built town lead by Thomas Moore, through to the building of contemporary housing in Liverpool's suburbs by local builders such as Masterton Homes, and more recently the 32 storey high-rise apartments that now tower the skyline. It was a fantastic exhibition as always, but sadly will be the last at the prestigious Harvard Room. I also had the pleasure of bequeathing some important historical artefacts to their Society's collection. I handed over a recent campaign shirt, and some corflutes to their vast collection which documents decades of Liverpool political history across all three levels of government. Thank you to Glenn Op Den Brouw, President of Liverpool historical Society, for inviting me and continuing your work in preserving the great history of Liverpool.

MACARTHUR MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—The rain held off after a stormy Saturday for a great Macarthur Multicultural Children's festival on May 7. Made possible by Brian Laul and the whole team at the Multicultural Children's Festival and Rainbow Crossing, the festival celebrates the best of cultural diversity in Macarthur. Children from over 50 multicultural community groups came together under the banner 'Playing together and Living in Harmony.' It was a day of fun and a display of cultural talents and specialities. The festival was packed to the brim with an amazing range of stalls and activities. Events that capture the harmony and cohesion between residents from many different ethnicities, religions and cultures shows our enthusiasm for a peaceful multicultural society. It ensures that the next generation learn their languages, cultures and customs while building on our collective commitment of a cohesive society. From the Cosplay Corner to the Children's Parade, the festival did just that. I am truly inspired by our lively and diverse community, and I hope everyone enjoyed themselves to their fullest.

GOULBURN GOLF CLUB

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise members of the Goulburn Golf Club. Following the loss of her brother back in 2008 and being identified that she too carried the gene for Motor Neurone Disease, Debbie Collins started the charity golf day fifteen years ago. Sadly, Debbie passed away in 2020 from MND. It is with grateful recognition that the Goulburn Golf Club has continued to hold the charity event, with Debbie's husband Brett Collins, acknowledging that Debbie would be so proud that the event has retained its longevity. Mr Collins also paying tribute to Debbie's nephew, Justin Newberry also affected by the disease, with significant paralysis, he continues to undertake activities to fight MND with research. With more than fifty members teeing off, and access to raffles and merchandise, organisers Jean Dooley and Kelly Weir were happy to present the winners with their prizes at the completion of the event. Mr McEntee from First National RE and Steven Jones who run the Charity Golf Day, made the presentation of the two thousand dollars raised for MND research to Mr Collins. Mr Collins is hopeful that the funds raised will continue to support research into MND. Well done to all those involved.

MERCURY BRANDS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise the opportunity presented for the composite wool industry in Goulburn to supply wool to the Shanghai Mercury Home Textiles Co. Ltd. Based in Shanghai, the Mercury Group produces a range of products including homewares. With sales exceeding \$4 billion annually, the Group is responsible for the largest sales in this category of any company in China and today they are looking towards the Goulburn region for wool. I thank Deccor Wool Buyer Harry Ying, Elders NSW Wool

Sales Manager Andrew Combe, Mercury Chairman Robin Li and Elders District Wool Manager Craig Pearsall for creating this connection and arranging to visit the region and see the product first-hand. I was pleased to welcome them to visit Fairfield, just outside of Yass last month. The delegation is now planning to return to launch a campaign targeting the Chinese domestic market, for approximately 1 million quilts made from Australian-grown composite wool. As I understand, it is estimated that 11,000 bales of wool will be required for those quilts. I sincerely hope that this partnership will provide many more future opportunities for the region and the industry in the future.

WINNERS OF THE GOULBURN BUSINESS AWARDS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise winners of the Goulburn Business 2580 Awards. Hosted by the Goulburn Chamber of Commerce. The event acknowledges and celebrates the talents and achievements of local business and rewards business excellence and presents awards to category winners at a gala dinner. A very sincere congratulations to all category winners for your exemplary contribution to business in Goulburn. Excellence in Business – RJ Sidney Craig; Excellence in Innovation, sustainability, or social enterprise – Agent 2.0; Employer of Choice – Michelle Renee, Personal Home Care; Start-up Superstar – Results Float – Wellness Centre; and, Business Leader of the Year – Stacey Yeadon (JDY Electrical). Goulburn's Favourite: Restaurant, café, diner, take-away – Wendy's Milk-Bar; Hairdresser of beautician – Mirror, Mirror Hairdressers; Pub or Club – The Hibernian; and, Retail Shop – Bek's Bloomz. Agricultural Animal Business – Southern Tablelands Veterinary Services; Real Estate, Housing and Development – Ray White Real Estate; Business and Training Services – Kaitlin's Administration; Entertainment and Media – Makin' Memories with Kira; Health, fitness, and well-being – Lambert Karate Dojo and Family Fitness Centre; Businesswoman of the Year – Julie Rigney (Agent 2.0); and, People's Choice – Fair Dinkum Painting Services. Community contribution Award, Robert Rampton and Steve Jones for the Abbey Motel, Verner Street.

DUFFYS FOREST RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I thank the Duffys Forest Residents Association [DFRA] for having me at their planting session for National Tree Day on 30 July. Since its inception in 1965, the DFRA has worked to preserve the special natural beauty of the suburb. Encompassing approximately 125 properties, Duffys Forest is one of the smaller suburbs in Sydney. The DFRA has a strong track record of advocating for the unique needs of their community. The DFRA does a wonderful job fostering a sense of community through social events and several bush preservation and regeneration projects. The DFRA works closely with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to preserve Waratah Park, famous for being the filming location of the 1960s television show 'Skippy the Bush Kangaroo'. It was a privilege to join the DFRA to plant 300 trees at Waratah Park, which were kindly donated by Harvest Seeds and Native Plants Nursery, a local business in Terrey Hills. Thank you to Jenny Harris for organising the planting, and thank you to the whole committee – Michael Burrell, Richard Smallwood, Bob White, David Harris, Joanne Drewett, Angela Beale, Deborah Frack and Judith Macpherson - for all your ongoing work.

AVALON SLSC

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I rise to congratulate the Avalon Beach Surf Life Saving Club on another successful year. Thank you for having me at your 2023 AGM, it was wonderful to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of all the volunteers this past season: 5,794 patrol hours, 587 preventative actions and 26 rescues. Thank you to Club President, Bernadette McKay and the rest of the board and office bearers. Congratulations to all the major award recipients: The Norman Cook Most Outstanding Member of the Year – Alan Moran, President's Award - Leena Wood and Richard Cole, The Steve Parkes Award for Achievement in Lifesaving Education – Charlotte Broderick, Rosemary Morgan-Smith and Helen Tan, Rookie of the Year – Gordon Morrison, The Chris "Detho" Dethick Boatie of the Year – Angela Carter, Patrol Captain of the Year – Andrew Clark, Patrol Member of the Year – Tom Colley, Junior Member of the Year – Chloe Mills, Cadet of the Year – Sophie Lane and Ella Wood, The Warren Mitchell IRB Award – Sophie Valentine, The Max Watt Competitors of the Year – Harrison Schaut, and Patrol of the Year – Patrol 15. A special thank you to Michael King and the Education Team on a record year, with 213 awards attained by Club members.

ALAN MORAN – AVALON SLSC

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Alan Moran on receiving Avalon Beach Surf Life Saving Club's most prestigious award, The Norman Cook Most Outstanding Member of the Year, for the 2022-23 season. Pittwater is home to the most beautiful beaches in the world and it is because of our selfless and heroic surf life savers that they can be enjoyed safely. Alan's dedication to ocean safety and his community is inspiring. 20 years of service, 1250 hours on patrol and an unimaginable amount of work behind the scenes, Alan is certainly a worthy recipient of this award. Alan currently serves on the Club's board as the IRB (Inflatable Rescue Boat) Captain and, according to Club members, is an outstanding "Fixer Upperer of Boats"

always keeping the IRBs in optimal condition. As well as being on the IRB crew, Alan is a driver trainer, equipping Club members with additional skills to keep beachgoers safe. If you need a hand, Alan is always there. I am pleased that acknowledgement of his service will now be preserved in the records of the oldest Parliament of our country.

VETERAN WALLSEND TRAINER HENRY NORMAN

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Congratulations to Veteran Wallsend greyhound trainer Henry Norman for achieving a place in the group 1 Vic Peters Classic Final (520m) at Wentworth Park on Saturday night 8th July 2023 with Calypso Rogue. In his qualifying heat for the final, Calypso Rogue burst to the lead from box seven to win by 2.25 lengths. Mr Norman has been in the industry for 44 years and only ever has three dogs in work at a time. He has never previously had a runner in a group race, so qualifying for the finals was a magic moment for Mr Norman. Mr Norman stated "I've been in them 44 years and it's the biggest thrill of my life, for sure. I had a good talk to him yesterday and told him he could be the pride of the Hunter if he wins. He's a beautifully natured dog at home, but when you put the collar on him to go to the races, he really steps up. He's mister business. He knows what he's there for and he puts in every time." Once again, congratulations to Mr Norman and Calypso Rogue on your exceptional performance.

HUNTER CHILDREN'S RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—The Hunter Children's Research Foundation was founded in 1996 by Lorraine Gardner OAM and Janelle Shakespeare OAM. The Foundation raises funds for important research into children's terminal and debilitating illnesses, such as asthma, cancer, cystic fibrosis, diabetes and sleep disorders. Funds raised stay in the Hunter and assist in the provision of research equipment, employment of research support staff and funding of research grants for new and ongoing research. Over \$2.5 million has been raised to date. An initiative of the Foundation is ReaCH 200, which is a group of local businesses and individuals who contribute to research. Since its inception in 2002, \$309,000 has been raised and has been an integral part of the Foundation's fundraising activities. Patrons include Dr Cliff Hosking, with Ambassadors being Michael and Sue Hagan and Matt Hall. In 2022, both Lorraine and Janelle were awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for their work with the Foundation. Thank you to all involved with the Hunter Children's Research Foundation for your ongoing commitment to the health of our children.

LACHLAN SCORSE

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—A very hearty congratulations to Waratah jockey, Lachlan Scorse, for his first win aboard Rockbarton Roman at Muswellbrook on 3 July 2023. This is Lachlan's fourth race ride. Lachlan took out the class 3 handicap over 1450m on the four-year old gelding for his boss, Newcastle trainer David Atkins. Rockbarton Roman overtook the favourite, Seahaven, with a 1.21-length win. Lachlan, aged 19, had his first race rides at Tuncurry on Saturday, 1 July, prior to his first race win on Monday. It is great to see Lachlan achieve a win so early in his career after riding trackwork for two years. Lachlan is from a proud Newcastle racing family. Lachlan's father, Matthew, is a jockey, and Lachlan's grandfather, Alan was a two-time group 1 winner with more than 1400 victories before becoming a successful trainer. I wish Lachlan a very long and successful career with many more wins ahead of him.

FAREWELL DINNER FOR MS FIONA FAN

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—On Wednesday night 28 June, it was an honour to attend a farewell dinner at King Dynasty Chatswood for Fiona Fan who is stepping down as Director-General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Sydney. The Taipei Economic and Cultural Office [TECO] was established by the Taiwanese government to promote bilateral exchanges in tourism, culture, trade and economics between Taiwan and NSW. Ms Fan has served TECO with distinction and I thank her for all she has done to advance community awareness of Taiwanese affairs and to strengthen Taiwanese-Australian ties. As Director-General of TECO, Ms Fan has been a fearless advocate for Taiwanese interests and, indeed, for the liberal democratic values that bind Australia and Taiwan. As Ms Fan has reminded us, Taiwan plays a critical role in the global supply chain and in the rules-based order. In a world where liberal-democratic norms are challenged, Taiwan shines forth as a beacon of freedom. Australia is home to some 45-55 thousand people of Taiwanese origin, and I am proud to have many of these Taiwanese Australians in my community of Willoughby.

ROTARY CROWS NEST CHANGEOVER NIGHT – NORTHBRIDGE GOLF CLUB

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—On Monday night 26 June, I had the honour of attending the Changeover night for the Rotary Club of Crows Nest which saw the appointment of a new Club Executive for 2023-24. I warmly congratulate the incoming President Tom Sweeney and wish him well as he leads Crows Nest Rotary for the next twelve months. I know that he will be ably supported by the Secretary Mark Staples, the Treasurer Owen Houston, and the whole incoming board. I would also like to commend the outgoing President

Ross Gugliotta for his past year of leadership. Held at the Northbridge Golf Club, the Changeover night was a great success which saw long-serving members of Crows Nest Rotary recognised for their service. I would like to congratulate Joanne Cardell and Wendy Solomon on their appointments as Paul Harris Fellows. From supporting youth exchanges to humanitarian aid projects overseas, the Rotary Club of Crows Nest makes a wonderful contribution and I wish its new leadership team a great year ahead.

COMMISSIONING MASS FOR WORLD YOUTH DAY PILGRIMS – OUR LADY OF DOLOURS (CHATSWOOD)

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—World Youth Day is a momentous occasion for the Catholic Church in Australia and around the world as many thousands of young Catholics prepare to travel to Lisbon, Spain, for WYD 2023. Held from 1–6 August with His Holiness Pope Francis officiating, this youth festival will encourage young Catholics to experience the presence of the risen Christ in their lives. Attracting young pilgrims from around the world, a sizeable contingent of these will be from Australia. On Wednesday 19 July, I was privileged to join the Chatswood Parish of Our Lady of Dolours for a commissioning mass to bless local WYD pilgrims on their journey to Lisbon. It was a beautiful service of prayer and worship as the whole congregation prayed for the pilgrims. I would like to thank Fathers David Ranson, Joseph Frez and Marek Woldanfor making me feel so welcome at this commissioning mass for the local WYD pilgrims. I wish each of these pilgrims a safe, blessed and unforgettable WYD experience in Portugal with new friendships and unforgettable memories.

FESTIVAL OF CHARIOTS

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—It was a pleasure to attend the annual Festival of Chariots event at Bigge Park, Liverpool on Saturday 24 June. The auspicious Hindu festival, with its rich history dating back thousands of years, beautifully showcases India's cultural heritage, and simultaneously transcends borders and promotes peace and harmony among diverse communities. The festival provides a unique opportunity for the community to strengthen bonds with the culture their parents and grandparents brought with them. Serving as a powerful platform to raise community awareness, the festival promoted the appreciation of art and engagement in cultural activities that enriches our multicultural and multi-faith society. The event was an enormous success and I would like to congratulate Arvind Baldeo from Vedic Festival Inc for his work in organising the event. I look forward to next year's iteration, as the event will go from strength to strength as years go on. I also look forward to supporting the Indian communities in my electorate of Holsworthy the best I can, and support events like these that encourage social and communal harmony.

MOOREBANK CRICKET CLUB ANNUAL PRESENTATION DAY

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—In June I had the privilege to attend the Moorebank Cricket Club Minis and Junior Presentation Day at Hammondville Park. I was bestowed with the honour of presenting awards and trophies to participants – as well as presenting "baggy blue" hats to the Under 10's team. As one of the largest clubs in the district, the club prides itself on a family culture – and placing emphasis on participation and enjoyment of the game. This was on full display at the presentation day, with hundreds of kids and parents in attendance full of energy from the last season, and determination for the upcoming season later this year. There was plenty of fun for the participants as well, with a Sydney Thunder Bus with kid's activities, a jumping castle, and a sausage sizzle for all. I congratulate everyone who played for the Moorebank Cricket Club, along with everyone within the Fairfield Liverpool Cricket Association for participating in the grassroots of Australia's greatest sport. A special shout-out to Remesh Cheriapurath, who organised and facilitated the event. As the club's mission statement says, "winning comes naturally" – and win or lose, the values of teamwork, hard work, and camaraderie from playing cricket are vital skills for our youth.

HAMMONDVILLE DENTAL

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—I would like to recognise the newly established dentist that opened in Hammondville on the 24 June 2023. Hammondville Dental provides a much-needed service to our local community. I had the honour to attend their grand opening, and it pleases me to know that the community has access to state-of-the-art dental health care. I want to congratulate the owners – Stella Ko and Kenny Tieu – for achieving this milestone. I wish them success in their journey, and I hope they can be successful in all areas of their business. The opening of the Hammondville Dental is not only good for the community, but it is marked extra joyous as they are neighbours to my electorate office in Hammondville. The entrepreneurial spirit of Stella and Kenny in establishing their own small business during difficult economic times is admirable – and offer innovative patient care measures include the option to watch television whilst undergoing a procedure! I wish everyone at Hammondville Dental all the best for their new business venture – and look forward to seeing them in and around Hammondville shops.

BRAITHEN VELLA

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)—We have so many talented young people throughout the entire Heathcote electorate. Whether it be in the south in the Illawarra region or in the north in the Sutherland Shire, there are certainly a lot of young people achieving great things. Engadine's Braithen Vella is one of those. A proud student of Loftus TAFE, the teenager is preparing to test his cooking skills against some of the best throughout the nation. From August 17-19, Braithen will compete in the Worldskills National Competition in Melbourne. Worldskills is a partnership between government, TAFE and industry to encourage young people to study a trade. Braithen's love of cooking began at just the age of 12, and it's heartening to hear that people like Braithen are embracing cooking at such a young age. It really is a vital skill and one that we should all know how to do. On behalf of the Heathcote electorate, good luck Braithen. I know that you will do our community proud and will perform extremely well in the competition. It is clear that you can stand the heat in the kitchen.

DUANE BYRNES

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)—Duane Byrnes may have been stranded alone on Tasmania's west coast, but he always had the support of the Illawarra community to keep him comfort. The Thirroul resident recently shot to fame as a contestant on Alone Australia. The show sees contestants try to outlast one another in a game of survival. It's a challenge not for the faint hearted – but one that Duane gladly accepted. While he didn't walk away with the title, he certainly exited the show with a new cohort of fans who admired his strength and resilience. The father of two, who also coaches a Thirroul Butchers junior rugby league team, ended up spending 10 days by himself in the cold in Tasmania. It was an incredible effort that given the challenging environment Duane was forced to navigate. The proud first nation's man and Wonnarua Gamilaroi descendent, Duane's adventure on Alone Australia no doubt gave him a greater appreciation for Australia's native flora and fauna. Well done again Duane on an incredible achievement. Both myself, your family, and the entire Illawarra region are incredibly proud of you achievements, dedication and perseverance.

ST PATRICKS PRIMARY SCHOOL LOCHINVAR

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Recently I was thrilled to welcome Kaitlin Babaran, Scarlett Whybrow and Ivy Chavez, Year 6 students from St. Patricks Primary School Lochinvar, and their families and teachers to Parliament House. Each year the Moving Forward Together Association holds a Harmony Day song and poster competition. The girls took it upon themselves to enter the competition with the help of their teacher Michelle Harvey. They were announced as the Northern NSW Regional winners of the primary school division for their poster "We are One - Living in Harmony" from over 4000 entries received. Thanks to Minister Steve Kamper for hosting the award ceremony which recognised very talented school students from across the country as they share their vision and dreams for an inclusive society in poster or song format. Congratulations also go to Shia Coates from St Paul's Primary School, Rutherford who was highly commended in the primary school poster competition. Ruby Levitt, a 13-year-old past winner spoke to the importance of the competition "Art has the remarkable ability to communicate across languages, cultures and backgrounds...in a world where division often prevails, art can serve as a universal language that unites us all."

BAILEY'S JEWELLERS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—I pay tribute to the remarkable service and unwavering dedication of Doug and Tanya Crich, owners of Baileys Jewellers. With heavy a heart, I acknowledge the closure of this Maitland business which was started by Des and Jim Bailey in 1967. Doug and Tanya Crich have held the reigns since 1993, leaving a permanent mark on the fabric of our town and as beloved members of our community. Beyond their role as purveyors of fine jewellery, the Baileys team have actively supported local events and sponsored charitable initiatives. Their commitment to Maitland extends far beyond their business exemplifying the true essence of community spirit. The staff and family of Baileys Jewellers have touched the lives of countless individuals bringing joy, celebration, and elegance to every occasion. Their expertise, diligence and genuine care have touched the lives of countless individuals, transforming ordinary moments into extraordinary ones. On behalf of the entire community, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for their passion and commitment, it will be missed, but their impact will forever resonate in our hearts and on our fingers.

MAITLAND POLOCROSSE CLUB

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to Maitland Polocrosse Club on the success of their recent Polocrosse Carnival. After a few years of covid related interruptions the club held a very competitive and well attended Carnival. Teams came from across the state with the men's A grade final played between Bunnan and Inverell and the women's between Bunnan and Quirindi and the competition went down to the wire, such a fabulous display of all that this Australian born sport has to offer. Congratulations to the Maitland women's c grade on their finals performance. Polocrosse originated in NSW in

1939, often referred to as rugby on horseback. Polocrosse is now played in New Zealand, Ireland, South Africa, the United States, the UK, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the sport is played by players aged from 5 to 80 years, something very few sports can claim. Congratulations to all involved in the Maitland carnival. The Maitland club is 66th years old and is in safe hands with the committee and dedicated team of volunteers putting on a wonderful event. It's not every sporting event where the food on offer includes lamb shanks and sticky date pudding but it sure was a crowd pleaser.

WESTERN SYDNEY WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—In July, I attended a Hima's Network event and panel discussion with founder Charlotte Mortlock and two formidable women in business, Amanda Rose and Wendy El-Khoury. Amanda Rose is an inspiration for many professional women having founded six successful businesses. She is a jack of many trades and is also a professional development trainer, business consultant and keynote speaker. Demonstrating that with hard work and passion for business, being a business owner can be a successful professional career pathway for women and that we too also belong at the helm. I am proud to say that Amanda is also a local constituent of the electorate. Wendy El-Khoury is the Founder and Director of 'The Global Wedding Destination, Wedded Wonderland.' She is an internationally renowned entrepreneur, keynote speaker and a pioneer in digitising the Wedding industry. Wedded Wonderland has its headquarters in the Drummoyne electorate. With nearly 800-thousand digital followers, the platform helps couples discover their dream wedding destination, suppliers, and inspiration. Congratulations to Charlotte Mortlock for facilitating this supportive network to empower women. Thank you to Amanda and Wendy for an honest and insightful chat, inspiring women to pursue their professional goals.

FRESKIN

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I had the pleasure of attending the Freskin grand opening on the 14th June in Burwood. Freskin Burwood is the fourth store that the brand have opened in approximately five years, with a fifth store opening soon. This growth is an indication of the exceptional service provided to customers and the passion of the team. A guest at the event told me that the store and the team are welcoming and lift her self esteem every time she visits. I would like to sincerely congratulate to Sammy, Lisa, Kelly and indeed the whole Freskin for their continued hard work. I wish you well in your business journey and success. Thank you for the invitation.

BREAKFAST POINT REALTY

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I want to share a local success story and congratulate Breakfast Point Realty for operating in the local community for over 20 years. They have helped countless local families achieve their home ownership dreams and bring smiles to their faces. Principal Alison Beveridge started the local business over 20 years ago, and it has now grown to be a local institution, where locals know that they can trust Alison and her team with selling, buying and renting their home. Sister Cilla Green, long-standing staff Stephanie Galante and Kylie-Anne Cleary have been with the team at Breakfast Point Realty for over 15 years and delivered for our local community. To the dedicated team at Breakfast Point Realty, thank you for all that you do. Breakfast Point is a strong and vibrant community in my electorate of Drummoyne, it's a little slice of heaven. With lots of green space that backs onto the foreshore, it's a wonderful place that local families, partners and retirees call home. Thank you and Congratulations to Breakfast Point Realty, for the role you play in keeping our community strong and supporting locals in realising their home ownership dreams.

BARNIER PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—I rise to acknowledge Barnier Public School in Quakers Hill for initiating and implementing a strategy which has resulted in a 100 per cent attendance rate in many classes. The school has been emphasising the importance of attendance for academic success, especially through their innovative use of social media and they are achieving results. For perspective, in 2022 the average attendance rate in NSW Public schools had dropped to 85.7 per cent, a decrease from 2019 when it was 90.2 per cent prompting the NSW Government to launch a new school attendance campaign to help boost student attendance. The target attendance rate was set at 95 per cent. Every day, classes who have achieved 100 per cent attendance are announced and congratulated. Barnier Public School's goal is to produce life-long learners and all students are encouraged to make the most of the learning opportunities provided for them. Students are encouraged to develop a love of learning through positive reinforcement and an engaging learning environment. Barnier Public School's proactive approach to lifting attendance rates before this policy was announced, and their success in achieving full attendance in some classes should be commended. I congratulate the staff and students on their fantastic efforts in striving for excellence.

CASUARINA - ACTIVE CARE PROGRAM

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—Casuarina School is one of many specialist schools across New South Wales that provide intensive educational and behavioural support for students. The school is situated in my electorate in Riverstone and services 49 children within our local district. This month I learned about three of the senior students Ben, Michael, and Tyson, who have recently achieved the successful completion of their training in the Active Care Program. In this program, students mow lawns and maintain the gardens of elderly people and people with disabilities - caring for the community while learning work-related skills. The Active Care network provides young people with a program that aims to give work experience and practical life skills to those who, for many reasons, have had a hard time with school or have had life circumstances get in the way of their dreams. After meeting Ben, who told us with a cheeky smile how much he hated the program, much to his teacher's horror, I could tell he was bursting with pride. Congratulations to Ben, Michael and Tyson, who are developing excellent life skills to help themselves and their community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TANIA GLOVER

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—Congratulations to Tania Glover of Tarn's keto cafe in Riverstone who this month celebrated 12 years in business. Tarn opened her business in Garfield Rd Riverstone, baking and decorating the most beautiful cakes in the north-west. Tarn is a destination business, with people travelling far and wide for her amazing cakes. As the population grew in and around Riverstone, the crippling traffic started to bite into a profit. Tarn had put everything into her cake shop, and in the first wave of Covid, she realised she needed to do something different to fortify her business. She took the time to look at how she was doing business and invoke some changes time, decided to use her cooking expertise to become a keto cafe, no longer specialising in sugary sweets. Tarn has taken on the keto dieting world with preprepared keto meals, advice and baked goods now being delivered throughout Sydney. Congratulations to Tanya Glover and the team at Tarn's keto cafe, who are winning at business by demonstrating outstanding entrepreneurial spirit.
