



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Eighth Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday 4 June 2024

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 4 June 2024

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Members

MEMBER FOR SHELLHARBOUR

MEMBER FOR BANKSTOWN

MEMBER FOR NEWCASTLE

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the member for Shellharbour, the member for Bankstown and the member for Newcastle, who celebrated their birthdays during the break.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery guests from my electorate of Lake Macquarie: student leaders from Lake Macquarie High School and their principal, Brendan Maher. I also welcome guests of the member for Fairfield, students and staff members of Fairfield Public School; guests of the member for Wollondilly, Bronwyn Elliot and Stephen Griffiths; guests of the member for Wakehurst, members of the Glenside Club; and guests of the member for Ryde, from Kent Road Public School and Northcross Christian School, who are currently watching question time from the theatre, where there is more space. I also welcome to the public gallery attendees of the Introduction to the Legislative Assembly public sector seminar, whom I met this morning, and Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner Jeremy Fewtrell, AFSM.

Announcements

FIRE AND RESCUE NSW WINTER FIRE SAFETY EVENT

The SPEAKER (12:03): I inform the House that the Minister for Emergency Services is hosting the Fire and Rescue NSW Winter Fire Safety event until 3.00 p.m. in the Speaker's Garden. The firefighters will be in attendance, demonstrating a broad range of Fire and Rescue capabilities and providing information on services delivered to the community. I encourage members to see how Australia's leading fire service works to be prepared for anything and to pick up some winter fire tips to help inform and protect their communities. Members can even visit friends from the dog unit, don firefighting uniforms and try the door entry simulator. I acknowledge all Fire and Rescue personnel who were recently put to the test and showed their skills during the tragic event at Whalan. I thank everyone at Fire and Rescue NSW.

CHAMBERS RESTORATION PROJECT

The SPEAKER (12:05): The Parliament of New South Wales recently received a prestigious National Trust (NSW) Heritage Award for the wonderful restoration of the Chambers in which we meet. I know the Premier agrees that it has been a fantastic upgrade. I congratulate and thank the Department of Parliamentary Services for carrying out that important project as part of recently completed critical maintenance and conservation works at Australia's oldest Parliament, the largest program of work to be completed in 40 years.

Governor

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

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

Bills

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (DE-AMALGAMATIONS) BILL 2024
HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2024
EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY AMENDMENT BILL 2024
JURY AMENDMENT BILL 2024
BETTER REGULATION, FAIR TRADING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024
HEALTH PRACTITIONER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024
PROPERTY NSW AMENDMENT BILL 2024
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (VIBRANCY REFORMS) BILL 2024
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (EMPLOYMENT ARRANGEMENTS) BILL 2024

Assent

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

*Question Time***BUILDING INDUSTRY**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (12:07): My question is directed to the Minister for Building. Have the Minister's agencies confirmed that the New South Wales construction industry will have the capacity to meet the housing targets announced last week?

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) (12:08): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his interest in the Government's building reform agenda. Certainly, we cannot have quantity without quality. The Building Commission is working closely across all governments to make sure we continue to build the houses that the New South Wales community needs. As members are well aware, the reforms passed by the Parliament last year are about bringing trust and confidence back into the system, dealing with legacy issues of poor construction and poor regulatory oversight and, of course, making sure we continue to bring that trust and confidence to the market. Delivering housing for the people of New South Wales is more than just about demand and supply; it is about trust and confidence.

The SPEAKER: The member for Goulburn will come to order. The member for Wollongong will come to order.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: People will not come into the market if they do not believe that the biggest investment that they will make in their lifetime does not produce the quality house that they need for themselves and their families. This Government is getting on with the job of making sure that it delivers the housing that the New South Wales economy and people need. Through the great work of the Minister for Planning—

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat. The Leader of the Opposition rises on a point of order. The member for Oatley will come to order.

Mr Mark Speakman: It is Standing Order 129, regarding direct relevance. The Minister was asked about the agency's confirmation that the construction industry has the capacity to meet the targets. We know that they are targets without a plan. Is there a confirmation from the agency that it can meet the targets?

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Minister will be directly relevant to the question.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: To ensure that we work towards delivering the houses that the New South Wales economy needs, it is going to require changes to the planning laws, on which the Minister for Planning is working hard and to which the Opposition keeps putting up roadblocks. It will require me, as the building Minister, to make sure that we—

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat. The Leader of the Opposition rises on a point of order.

Mr Mark Speakman: He is flouting your ruling, Mr Speaker. The question is about advice about—

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Minister has the call.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: The Government is getting on with the planning. We will make sure that we advocate for the skills that we need to try to build the houses that the New South Wales people want.

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

HOUSING SUPPLY

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (12:11): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the community response to the New South Wales Government's commitment to prioritise building better homes for New South Wales?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:11): The Government listened to the productivity commissioner, who issued a report last year that recommended to this House and to the people of this State that infill development has the lowest infrastructure cost per dwelling and greenfield has the highest cost per dwelling. The commissioner went on to say that the estimated infrastructure for greenfield housing typically costs two to four times what it does for infill sites. The commissioner went on to say that, based on those estimates, Sydney infill infrastructure typically appears to cost approximately \$39,000 per property less than greenfield. That is the result of a comprehensive analysis by the productivity commissioner and, as a result, the Government has to respond to what is overwhelming evidence with a stretched budget. If social infrastructure is pulled over a greater plane, it will cost all taxpayers in the State more in the long run.

As a result of that, the planning Minister and I issued a new five-year housing target under the National Housing Accord that will apply to New South Wales. As part of the accord, greenfield developments will fall from 36 per cent of new houses in 2023 to 11 per cent in 2028-2029. Of those targets, 82 per cent now comes from infill versus 18 per cent from greenfield and of the new homes in that target, 53 per cent will be in the eastern suburbs local government areas, and that includes Ku-ring-gai and northern beaches. That compares with 34 per cent for homes that are already in the pipeline due to be delivered. By way of comparison, it means that Western Sydney local government areas such as Penrith and Hawkesbury will have a target of 18 per cent compared to the current target of 25 per cent.

It is about rebalancing Sydney's growth while taking into consideration mums and dads who have already swapped contracts with a particular builder, and taking into consideration major builders and developers that have already taken out major options for new housing in Western Sydney. It has not been met with universal praise, I have to say, and many of those who have been opposed to the housing targets sit on the opposite side of the Chamber. There is a new king of the nimbys. He is the member for Pittwater. He is up the back there.

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

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Recently on social media he said, "Yesterday the Government doubled our five-year housing target from 3,000 to 5,900."

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Premier will resume his seat. The Leader of the Opposition rises on a point of order.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: It is Standing Order 129, relating to direct relevance. The question was not about what the Government was doing; the question was about community response. The Premier has come nowhere close to that and you certainly should not be giving him an extension when he has wasted three minutes not answering the question.

The SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. There is no point of order. The Premier was immediately directly relevant. He met that threshold and is continuing to address the issues.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: He said, "You can sign the petition against Labor's developments plans." [*Extension of time*]

By way of comparison, Georges River, which has a population 100,000 people fewer than the Northern Beaches Council area, has to take an additional 1,000 houses over the same accord period and the Cumberland City Council area, which is roughly the same size as Northern Beaches Council area, has a housing target double that of the Northern Beaches Council area. That shows the unreasonableness of some of the nimbys that are well within and entrenched in the modern Liberal Party.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I call the member for Wollongong to order for the first time. The member for Pittwater will come to order or he will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: That got me asking, "What does the member for Pittwater support?" So we went back to the archives. I found a motion moved by Councillor Amon on 27 July 2019 to "identify a new structure or statue on the northern beaches of the former Prime Minister and member for Warringah, Tony Abbott". He does not want people building houses but he does want a statue. That statue will become a tourist attraction.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Forget Michelangelo's *David*; the northern beaches will have Tony Abbott—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CHRIS MINNS: —but instead of a fig leaf, it will have speedos.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I make the point that, at the end of the day—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. I call the Premier to order for the first time. Opposition members will come to order. The member for Pittwater will ignore interjections and not take the Premier's bait. The member for Pittwater will be removed from the Chamber if he continues to interject. This is the second time I have risen to my feet to call members to order. All members will respect the Chair, including the Premier.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Fair enough. Since the member for Ryde has taken down Jinxy the cat from social media, I have had to go through some other social media accounts.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

Mr CHRIS MINNS: That is the fourth time.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Premier will resume his seat. The Manager of Opposition Business rises on a point of order.

Mr Alister Henskens: Statues of Tony Abbott and references to cats have nothing to do with the question that has been asked. It goes to direct relevance.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. As I said before, the Premier has met the test of being directly relevant. He is allowed more latitude. The Premier will continue.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: In the Herald on 9 April there was the saga of the Palm Beach restaurant. Its request to open at night was rejected by the local council. A Liberal MP, Mr Rory Amon, was quoted in the Herald criticising Minns for meeting with the owners of The Joey. He said, "Get your priorities right. It's just a virtue signal." What happened to the Liberal Party? It does not like business, housing, progress, development or the modern, open economy that we need in New South Wales.

BUILDING INDUSTRY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (12:19): My question is directed to the Minister for Building. The Albanese Labor Government has prioritised yoga instructors over skilled construction workers for the core skills visa list. Will the Minister for Building advocate for that order to be reversed?

The SPEAKER: The Minister does not need any assistance from the member for Wollongong.

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) (12:19): I thank the member for Albury for his question. Seemingly, somebody has Canberra ambitions, given that his electorate is near there. What can I say? Jobs and Skills Australia is a Commonwealth agency and has drafted a list. If Coalition members want to ask questions about what is on it, their colleagues in Canberra should ask.

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

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: Members opposite are a bit late to the party when it comes to the skills that the New South Wales economy actually needs. In 12 months I have had a number of conversations—

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

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: In the first 12 months of this Government, I have advocated strongly to Federal Ministers to ensure that New South Wales gets the skills it needs for our strategic priorities in housing. We have reached a multi-year agreement with the Commonwealth to make sure that we get the planning right for the skills to build the houses needed for the people in our community. We have done more in 12 months than members opposite did in 12 years. I am proud of the work that we have done to make sure the New South Wales economy has the skills that it needs. More importantly—

Mr Justin Clancy: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister has done more contortions than a yoga instructor. It was a simple question about whether he is advocating for the reordering of the skilled migrant list.

The SPEAKER: The question was about advocacy. The Minister will return to the leave of the question.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: It is not only the member for Albury who is interested in yoga; the member for Ryde is as well. Former member Victor Dominello posted, "Thank you to Sandra and INTO-ARTS Studio for introducing Jordan Lane and I to a relaxing yoga sound bath."

Mrs Leslie Williams: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: There he is—Jinx the cat on Melba Road, doing the downward dog.

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

Mrs Leslie Williams: I am sure it is no surprise that my point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister has still not talked about the question that was asked about advocacy.

The SPEAKER: The Minister's time has expired.

MENTAL HEALTH

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (12:23): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, representing the Minister for Mental Health. Will the Minister update the House on work that the New South Wales Government is undertaking to care for the mental health of people across New South Wales?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (12:23): I thank the member for Coogee for her work and her advocacy on behalf of the community that she so proudly represents in the eastern suburbs. She has done so very proudly in this place for a long time. This morning the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Mental Health and I announced one of the big planks of the budget, which is a \$111 million increase in mental health funding to go through a range of different initiatives that will help communities right across New South Wales in every electorate.

We are listening to the community, and community members are telling us that times are very difficult for them at the moment. I do not think there would be an MP in this place, if they are doing their job, who is not meeting people in their own community who are doing it really tough. Of course, that increases the mental stress on families, on individuals and certainly on vulnerable people. The Government has been working on a comprehensive plan to address that in a range of different portfolios. In the health and mental health portfolios, we started rolling out those budget initiatives this morning. That \$111 million package will include \$40 million specifically to help people with a mental health illness, who often languish in hospital for months or occasionally years on end. Sometimes they are in and out of hospitals many times.

The funding is designed to provide wraparound support services to enable people to live and function in the community. That is exactly what the Government, which gives a damn about those people, wants to see changed. In addition to that funding, \$39 million will be allocated to a single digital front door initiative. Around 124,000 people present to emergency departments across New South Wales each year with a mental health issue or challenge of varying degrees. Of those 124,000 people, 25 per cent are either non-urgent or semi-urgent cases that can be dealt with in the community. [*Extension of time*]

The Government will make sure that people have access to psychiatrists, psychologists and mental healthcare workers through a single phone call to Healthdirect, to enable them to avoid a trip to an emergency department where possible. As Erin Longbottom from St Vincent's talked about today, the Government is trying to close up the gaps that people with mental health issues can fall through. One of the gaps is exactly around getting treatment to those people as close as possible to where they are. If people can access that in the community, that is of far greater benefit to them and to the system.

That is why the Government is not only investing in the single digital front door, which is designed to enable people not to go to an emergency department. As Erin Longbottom said, sometimes the very worst place for a person experiencing a mental health challenge is one of our busy emergency departments. A really important part of that initiative is the rollout of an additional 35 mental healthcare workers across New South Wales in community mental health in all of our respective regions and communities, which is designed to help people recover and get access to the treatment they need and deserve.

Our communities are doing it very tough right now, and this is a Government that is listening. We are developing a comprehensive plan across government, but particularly within health and mental health, to try to address those challenges and to deliver the services the community needs, wants and deserves. I am very proud to be part of the Minns Labor Government in delivering record spending for mental health and, more importantly, delivering the mental health services that some of the most vulnerable people in our communities need and deserve.

STATE BUDGET AND REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (12:28): My question is directed to the Premier. The State budget is said to be pretty tight. Regional New South Wales has significant needs, with ageing infrastructure and issues with health and other services. How will the Government ensure that regional New South Wales is not left behind in those important areas?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:29): I thank the member for the question. The budget is tight, and part of the reason for that is the former Treasurer's decision to spend \$27 billion on new policy measures in nine months. That was largest amount spent in the shortest time in the history of New South Wales.

Mr Matt Kean: I thought it was the GST.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We will be talking about both, Matt.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The truth of the matter is that was unprecedented spending. It would come as a shock to a lot of people in New South Wales because it was non-COVID spending. I think the average taxpayer in New South Wales would find it generally reasonable that in the circumstances of COVID the Government would prop up businesses and keep the economy going.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: So much industry was being shut down—of course the Government should spend money. But as soon as we emerged from the COVID pandemic, the former Government pumped out \$27 billion in new spending initiatives in a very short time. There was only one reason for it: members opposite were desperate to hang onto government at the cost of the taxpayers of New South Wales.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I thank the member for his question because, notwithstanding those serious challenges, regional New South Wales is of course important for the State.

Mr Matt Kean: Point of order: It is regarding relevance. The Premier should outline if he is going to cut the record spending we put aside in the budget for the bush. He should outline to the House today if he is going to make further budget cuts to the bush.

The SPEAKER: The member for Hornsby will not make a speech. I call the member for Hornsby to order for the second time. There is no point of order. The Premier has the call.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I do not know what we are going to do without Matt when he goes. He is fantastic for the Government. We call him an important foil. Notwithstanding the challenging budget situation, of course the Government needs to invest in regional New South Wales. That is why we have announced \$350 million in a regional development fund.

Mr Dugald Saunders: It's not your money.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The member is right: It is not our money; it is the New South Wales taxpayers' money.

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo will cease interjecting.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Last month in Orange we announced \$35 million in funding, including \$15 million to improve regional and remote airstrips, \$10 million to establish and expand early childhood education in Bourke,

Broken Hill and Cobar, \$5 million for Indigenous businesses and \$5 million for low interest rate loans, particularly for farmers in regional communities, alongside the drought-proofing fund that was set aside. It is raining at the moment and fortunately large parts of the State are out of that drought condition, but we must be prepared for the weather to change again. Last year's budget included a record \$1.4 billion for regional schools in this State. That came after historic underinvestment from the so-called "party of the bush", the National Party. Come on! Is it a fair dinkum regional party when it is led by Dugald Saunders? It is self-evident that he is not up to the job. We need to bring Toole back. I want to make this point—

Mr Roy Butler: If the Premier will be relevant to the question, I request an extension of time.

The SPEAKER: An additional two minutes is granted.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Mate, I am trying but they keep biting. There is only so much I can do. The most important thing the Government has announced is the end of cronyism and the politicisation of funds designed for regional communities.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Who could forget the bushfire recovery grants—

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: —when 26 of 27 projects were held for Coalition electorates?

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: There was nothing for the Blue Mountains—nothing for communities that had been hit so hard as a result of the disaster. Funds were desperately needed but never came.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Some 92 per cent of the Schools Renewable Energy Infrastructure Pilot project went to Coalition-held electorates, and \$9.3 million of the Regional Cultural Fund went to Coalition-held electorates. It should not matter who one votes for; what is important is that this State is lifted up. That is particularly the case for regional communities. I thank God that members of the National Party no longer have their hands on the Treasury of New South Wales.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (12:33): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport. Will the Minister update the House on the work the Government is undertaking to build better communities for New South Wales through transport infrastructure?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:33): I thank the member for Parramatta because she is such an incredible advocate for public transport services in Western Sydney. The communities there are some of the most densely populated, not just in New South Wales, but in all of Australia. The second stage of Parramatta Light Rail has been promised for years. In fact, those opposite promised it 17 times. But what did they deliver? Absolutely nothing. People bought homes, made investments and opened businesses on the promises of the former Government, but they were let down time and again. What a difference a change of government makes for the people of Western Sydney. This is a perfect example of what a change of government means for people each and every day.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: Just yesterday our Government committed to make Parramatta Light Rail stage two a reality. The Government's \$2 billion investment in the upcoming budget will get construction started on that critical project in this term of government, just as promised. We did not promise it 15 times, 16 times, or 17 times; we promised it once and it will be delivered in the budget.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: We are getting on with the job. We are delivering on our promises, and we are delivering for the fast-growing communities of Western Sydney, particularly on that critical public transport project. It means that homes that are being built right now in communities like Melrose Park, Sydney Olympic Park, Wentworth Point, Camelia and the Carter Street precinct will be connected by public transport. By 2040, 280,000 people will live along the corridor of Parramatta Light Rail stage two. That is more than a quarter of a million people. They cannot all get in their cars and drive. We are already seeing congestion around the riverside suburbs. Those people need and deserve frequent and reliable public transport services, and that is what the Government will deliver.

The Government's \$2 billion investment will also be a game changer for the Sydney Olympic Park precinct. Our biggest stadium and some of our biggest venues will not only be connected by bus and train; they will also be connected by light rail and metro to help people get in and out of that area more efficiently. Of course, the light rail will connect to Parramatta because we want to make sure that the people who live in the surrounding areas, who own businesses in Parramatta and who study in Parramatta, are able to catch public transport to their places of work and connect to each other. This will be a 12-kilometre-long light rail line with 14 stops connecting these rapidly growing suburbs. Early works will start this year, which includes moving utilities to make room for the rail line. [*Extension of time*]

Major construction will start next year on the 320-metre bridge between Wentworth Point and Melrose Park, which will deliver the vital north-south connection across the Parramatta River. I know that the member for Parramatta and Western Sydney MPs would like to know how this important investment has been received. First, it was welcomed by the Property Council of New South Wales. The council applauded the New South Wales Government and called it, "a move that will enable the delivery of well-located housing at the heart of Sydney's central river city". Business Western Sydney said that the Government's investment in Parramatta Light Rail stage two is, "a significant milestone for Sydney's west, marking a major step forward in creating better, more connected communities". The Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue said, "Premier Chris Minns has stuck to his word. This will turbocharge investment and urban renewal in what is one of the city's fastest growing areas."

That is a positive response from business groups, groups supportive of urban renewal and groups supportive of housing and economic growth. One would expect those opposite, particularly members of the Liberal Party, to have similar views. But what do we get? Just some whinging from the Leader of the Opposition. He asked, "Where is the rest of the funding?" Well, \$2 billion is \$2 billion more than members opposite ever put in over 12 years of government on a project that was announced 17 times. The people of Parramatta and the people of Western Sydney know that when they hear a promise from this Government, it will absolutely be delivered—unlike those opposite, who promised things again and again and delivered nothing.

STATE BUDGET AND HEALTH

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (12:39): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Last week the Australian Medical Association noted that the 2023 budget effectively gave the State's health system a cut after inflation; that the proportion of patients spending less than four hours in emergency departments is the lowest it has been since recording began in 2010; that this Government has not renewed the previous Government's elective surgery funding program; and that elective surgery numbers have now fallen dramatically. Will the Minister guarantee no further real cuts to health spending in the coming budget?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (12:39): This will take a lot of time, so I remind the Speaker what was in the question. The member mentioned emergency departments, the budget and surgery numbers, so I have a wide berth.

The SPEAKER: The Minister should not forget that I heard the question also.

Mr RYAN PARK: I know those opposite know only one standing order, but they can stay seated for that. I thank the honourable member for his question. I will get to some of *The Wizard of Oz* analogies in a minute that the member for Hornsby recently posted on social media. Firstly, I will deal with the question. Last year's budget had record funding.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order.

Mr RYAN PARK: I assure those opposite that health will be a key component of the budget to be announced by the Treasurer in a couple of weeks. I will refer to a couple of things that the member for Hornsby raised. He mentioned emergency departments. Members may know that in a few weeks—on 1 July—it is the beginning of a new financial year. For the nerds, that is a great thing to celebrate. It is also the date that 1,112 nurses would have lost their job under those opposite. Some communication might have gone out to electorates around that time to say that the roles of 1,112 nurses would be terminated but, because of the Minns Labor Government, those roles have been saved. I will refer now to elective surgery. When this Government came into office, around 14,000 people were waiting longer than clinically recommended for elective surgery.

Mr Matt Kean: Point of order—

Mr RYAN PARK: The Government has been able to bring that number down. The Minns Labor Government, through the hard work of frontline healthcare professionals, has been able to bring that number down.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr Matt Kean: It is taken under Standing Order 129, relevance. The health Minister has not gone anywhere near answering the question, which was to guarantee whether there will be no real funding cuts in the upcoming budget. Will the Minister admit that the health system is falling apart because of Labor's budget cuts?

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being directly relevant at this stage.

Mr RYAN PARK: In a few weeks 1,112 nurses would have been out of a job because of those opposite.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Hornsby to order for the third time. He has no more wiggle room. The member for Goulburn is also trying the Speaker's patience.

INDUSTRIAL MANSLAUGHTER

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (12:43): My question is addressed to the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety. Will the Minister update the House on the New South Wales Government's commitment to legislate industrial manslaughter as an offence?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (12:43): I thank the member for East Hills for her question and for her strong advocacy on behalf of the families that have lost loved ones who have been killed at work. I thank her for her contribution and the work that she has been doing for a long time. If there was ever a law that I hope will never be used, it is this one. Sadly, it is an entirely necessary one. The Labor Party has long been committed to legislating industrial manslaughter as an offence. I announced in September last year that the Minns Government was committed to introducing legislation into Parliament in June this year. The legislation did not start then; it is the culmination of decades of advocacy by the mothers, fathers and families whose loved ones never came home from work, as well as the union movement, which represented many of those workers who were killed at work. They have been campaigning relentlessly on behalf of their loved ones and fallen members. Despite years of campaigning, New South Wales is, shamefully, the last mainland State without an industrial manslaughter offence or legislation in Parliament.

The time has come for this Parliament to right that wrong. The Government wants to get it right, and I believe that it has. The Government has consulted extensively and widely. It opened up public consultation, to which it received 46 written submissions and a further 420 contributions via the Government's survey portal. Along with my colleague the Attorney General I undertook further targeted consultation with key stakeholders. We sat around for hours through round tables with key partners from the legal fraternity, business, farmers, miners, industry, small business and the families of people who have been killed at work. It has been devastating. All members, no matter what political party they are from, have sat together and hugged mothers and fathers who have lost their sons and their daughters at work. All members in this place know that workers deserve to go to work in a safe workplace and come home to their families and their loved ones. They deserve to come home safely. We do not want to have to use these laws. [*Extension of time*]

If passed by this Parliament, the laws will carry a clear and strong message that every life in every workplace matters and that those responsible for an offence will be held accountable. The model that the Government proposes has been informed by wide and extensive consultation. As the last mover on the mainland, the Government has examined how other jurisdictions across the country have modelled their own industrial manslaughter offences and associated penalties. It has used the learnings of other jurisdictions to ensure that New South Wales has a fit-for-purpose offence. I make it clear that it is a very serious offence. The legislation will not impose new obligations on businesses; that is already in the existing Work Health and Safety Act. It is intended to send the strongest possible message to anyone with a duty to ensure a safe workplace.

I am only too aware that the legislation is deeply personal for many families who have spent years of their lives campaigning for this day. In Griffith I met with Mrs Catanzariti, who talked to me about her beautiful son. I urge everyone who has six or seven minutes to spare today to listen to what Mrs Patrizia Cassaniti said on 2GB this morning to Ben Fordham. She is the loving mother of Christopher Cassaniti, who was killed at work in 2019, just a few days after his eighteenth birthday. She expressed that she had not properly grieved for her son. She has spent the past five years campaigning for these laws in New South Wales. Some 300 workers have been killed at work since 2019. I thank Mrs Cassaniti and the many families and mums and dads who have raised this with not only me but also the Premier and those opposite. I urge those opposite to support the legislation.

PAYROLL TAX AND GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (12:48): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Following the March 2023 Court of Appeal decision on payroll tax, many GP practices will face retrospective payroll tax bills of hundreds of thousands of dollars, which the Minister is aware could force them to close or, if not, to pass

on fee increases to patients. Given that, and that emergency departments are already overwhelmed under the Government's real cuts to health funding, will the Minister urgently guarantee a payroll tax amnesty to June 2025?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (12:49): This is a very interesting question. When I took over as the health Minister, it was surprising how, after a few months, this issue started percolating again. I thought it had just happened and this unusual thing had come on quickly. Of course, because I am a nerd and I probably micromanage, I spent an enormous amount of time diving into the issue. This was first raised—this fact is going to be terrible for members opposite—not in 2022, which might have given them a little bit of breathing space; not in 2021, which would have started to give a little bit less breathing space; and not in 2020. We are getting to the start of the 2019 election and we are still not there. Members opposite became aware of this when it was first raised in 2018.

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order—

Mr RYAN PARK: That is phenomenal.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister will resume his seat. Members will come to order.

Ms Eleni Petinos: We have wasted a minute and a half with the Minister debating the timeline. Mr Speaker, I ask that you instruct the Minister to be directly relevant. He is well aware that the question referred to the Court of Appeal judgement that was handed down in March 2023.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Miranda will resume her seat.

Mr RYAN PARK: I am glad the member brought up the court case. Who was fighting them in the court case? This is interesting. It is a classic case where a member gets a question from the Opposition leadership group, and they fail to do the one thing they are responsible for—to check whether they may be on the end of it. I happened to guess that Miranda might ask this question today.

Mrs Leslie Williams: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister will resume his seat. Members will come to order. I call the member for Oatley to order for the second time.

Mrs Leslie Williams: My point of order has two parts. First, the Minister should refer to the member by her correct title.

Ms Yasmin Catley: He said "Miranda".

Mrs Leslie Williams: That is not the title we are supposed to use, according to the standing orders. How about you read them.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mrs Leslie Williams: Second, the Minister should direct his comments through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the second part of the point of order. The Minister will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr RYAN PARK: Pre-empting that this may happen today, I thought I would dive down into what the member for Miranda said about the GP payroll tax issue when in government. That is a reasonable thing. It has been around since 2018.

Mr Matt Kean: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Matt Kean: If the Minister cannot stand up for the health system to his Treasurer, then he should just admit it. If he is not going to defend the health budget and the health system from his Treasurer, he should just stand up and admit it.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Hornsby to remove himself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A for the remainder of question time.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Hornsby left the Chamber at 12:54]

Mr RYAN PARK: I dived into it, and the member for Miranda has not once raised this issue. But do not panic; we have a budget coming. All will be revealed in the budget.

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister's time has expired.

WESTERN SYDNEY INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (12:55): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Western Sydney. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the New South Wales Government is standing up for the people of Western Sydney by investing in vital infrastructure?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (12:55): I will gladly answer the question from the wonderful member for Penrith about what this Government is doing to invest in vital infrastructure in the rapidly growing parts of Western Sydney. It is pertinent that this question comes after the Premier's answer, given earlier in question time, about the rebalancing of Sydney's housing growth. This will be felt very dearly by residents in Western Sydney whose electorates, like Penrith, Leppington, Camden, Liverpool and the one I represent, shouldered the lion's share of the urban sprawl and growth under the previous Government but did not get the infrastructure to match that growth. Time after time, we can tell the story of that lack of investment in infrastructure like roads, public transport and the public schools that just did not exist, while people were building homes. The only thing that mob delivered were the toll roads we were forced to drive on.

As well as rebalancing Sydney's housing growth, we are now coming good on delivering the infrastructure that the people of Western Sydney deserve. In particular, on Sunday we were pleased to announce that, in partnership with the Federal Government, we are delivering a serious cash injection to ensure that the roads leading to the airport and the aerotropolis in Western Sydney will be delivered under a Labor Government. We know the Liberals talked a very big game about the airport and the aerotropolis. We have lost count of the number of Ministers and Premiers that went there with a hard hat and a high-vis with a Waratah on it.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: But it still looked the same. They went there with the big vendors saying, "We are going to build this." But what happened? There were crickets. Under a Labor Government, we are actually delivering the infrastructure that the people of Western Sydney deserve. We are investing \$400 million in Elizabeth Drive, which brings the total funding for four main divided roads to \$800 million. Work on Mamre Road will unlock employment opportunities for the people of Western Sydney.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

I will not take any lectures from the member for Wahroonga about investment in Western Sydney. Maybe he should just sit this one out. *[Extension of time]*

I would hazard a guess that the member for Wahroonga would not know where Mulgoa Road is, but let me tell him that we, along with the Federal Government, are investing \$115 million between Glenmore Parkway and Jeanette Street. I know the community has been crying out for that investment in that part of Mulgoa Road—oddly, during the last Government, to Liberal members in both State and Federal governments. It's taken a Labor government to deliver the funding.

Mrs Tanya Davies: You cancelled the funding and now you're putting it back again. It's a joke.

The SPEAKER: The member for Badgerys Creek will come to order.

Ms PRUE CAR: The member for Badgerys Creek is wrong. We are delivering the funding for this project, so it is probably a little bit embarrassing for her that the Labor Government is doing that. We are also investing in Appin Road, as well as planning for the Eastern Ring Road and Badgerys Creek South Road. It might strike at the heart of those opposite and pain them to hear these facts, but it is the Labor Government that is coming good on the promise of building infrastructure where it is needed for Western Sydney. We represent those communities; that is the difference between us and those opposite. We represent those communities and we have lived the experience of the lack of investment in infrastructure.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Opposition members might find that hilarious, but it impacts the people we represent not having the opportunities that we need to realise from the airport. The reason the people of Western Sydney are excited about the airport is not just the planes but also the job-creating opportunities that will be truly unlocked with this investment in infrastructure. We make no apology for standing up for the residents of Western Sydney when it comes to that investment.

BUILDING INDUSTRY

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (13:00): My question is directed to the Minister for Building. Does the Minister accept responsibility for construction industry insolvencies increasing by 111 per cent under his watch? One hundred and eleven—you would think it is a joke, wouldn't you?

The SPEAKER: That is not how a question should be asked. The last comment will be deleted from the question. The member for Dubbo will desist from making comments when asking questions.

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) (13:01): I thank the Leader of The Nationals for his question regarding building insolvencies. It is certainly a very tough economic climate for business at the moment. We have had a number of challenges around skills shortages and material supplies. It is, of course, a tough financial industry. But the best way to reduce insolvencies is to make sure we uplift the standard and performance of the building and construction industry so that it does not have to retrospectively fix projects or construction sites that are not up to standard. That is why we established the Building Commission NSW: to bring trust and confidence back to the industry. For 99 per cent of people, buying a property is the biggest investment they will ever make in their lifetime. To gain consumers' trust and confidence, construction companies must lift their skills, their quality standards and their performance.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: Reforms were passed by this Parliament last year to strengthen and expand the powers of the Building Commission to regulate the industry, to look at class 1 buildings in addition to class 2 buildings, and to encourage more businesses to take out annual liability insurance. We want to ensure that we continue to employ the right enforcement and compliance powers to inspect buildings, to lift standards and to make good builders better builders. That is an important part of ensuring that we deliver the houses that the New South Wales economy needs. Part of all of this is to make sure that companies do not experience financial difficulty and so they do not have to fix substandard work. We do this by having a strong Building Commission, good compliance, good enforcement, making good builders better builders, making sure those tradespeople are properly licensed—particularly in the area of waterproofing, which is the top defect in class two buildings. Later this year the Government will be introduce a building bill to ensure that enforcement, compliance and licensing of the building and construction industry are centralised. Resolving insolvency is about lifting the standard of that industry.

STATE BUDGET

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:04): My question is addressed to my learned friend, the Attorney-General in his capacity representing the Minister for Finance.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. It is hard to hear the member for Prospect's question. Members are talking instead of listening.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: Will the Attorney General update the House on the importance of the New South Wales Government responsibly managing the State's budget after years of neglect?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (13:06): I represent the Minister for Finance. I do not think everyone heard that bit. I thank the Parliamentary Secretary for his question about government debt, which is timely given that the State budget is just around the corner. This Government is taking steps to reduce the levels of debt in our budget. We have been on that mission since day one. The fact is, we inherited a budget that was totally out of control, evidenced by the two biggest deficits in our State's history—\$15.3 billion in 2021-22 and \$10.6 billion in the following budget. By the time those opposites had left office, they had racked up an incredible \$129 billion debt.

[Government members interjected.]

It is a shame. It is not only a shame, but also the largest debt ever handed from one government to another in the history of this State. The House would recall that when we came to power in 2023 the State was destined to owe its creditors \$187 billion by 2026. We determined on day one that we would begin to reduce that number. In our first year, in our first budget, we managed to reduce that debt figure by \$14.8 billion. The member for Hornsby, also known as "the Spending Machine", who was in the Chamber before his glorious self-immolation a few minutes ago added \$27 billion in what he called "new policy measures" before his lot were turfed out of office, after 12 long, profligate years characterised by crazy spending sprees. Record sales of assets, record spending sprees, record debt—that is the legacy they left.

I can advise the House that it is costing this Government \$25 million a day to pay off the debt racked up by "the Spending Machine", and these extra billions were baked into the forward estimates. I inform the House that New South Wales will soon be paying more in interest than it does to fund the entire NSW Police Force. By 2026, the State will be paying its bondholders \$6.8 billion in interest. That is the equivalent of 15 per cent of every dollar raise in direct taxation. We are stabilising the debt for the families of New South Wales by cleaning up the fiscal messes that were left to linger by those members opposite for way too long.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Oatley to order for the third time. I direct the member for Oatley to remove himself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A until the end of question time.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Oatley left the Chamber at 13:08.]

Dr Hugh McDermott: I ask for an extension of time to learn more about the incompetence of Liberal governments.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: That is not the way to ask for an extension of time. The member for Prospect will resume his seat. I will hear the point of order from the Manager of Opposition Business.

Mr Alister Henskens: That is not the way to request additional information and, in my submission, it should be refused as a consequence.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. I thank the Manager of Opposition Business for his suggestion.

Dr Hugh McDermott: I will ask again. May the Attorney General have an extension of time, please?

The SPEAKER: He may. An additional two minutes is granted.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: We are cleaning up the mess. That is the truth of it. We have tackled problems like the Transport Asset Holding Entity, TAHE, the glorious structure that we were told meant we could have it all. We could run a rail network, not record any losses, incur losses and hide them off the books, and it would all work out perfectly well. That went well for the State, didn't it? We were told by members opposite that it would be fixed, yet all that happened, year after year, was that we needed to find more money to pump into the former Treasurer's and former finance Minister's failed structure. I am pleased to say we are correcting the mistakes left to us by those opposite. We are cleaning up the financial mess. The former Government fell into a bad habit of wasteful spending. That does not even touch the \$7 billion in unfunded promises that the last Government had no plan to pay for. It racked up debt, issued promises and had no plan to pay for them. We are getting on with the long-term plan to rebuild essential services.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: We are getting on with providing cost-of-living support.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Those sorts of things are only possible with a government that makes better choices for the people of New South Wales. We need to stabilise the levels of debt in this State. That is a challenge for this Government, particularly with the extra challenges we will face when we deliver the budget in a couple of weeks.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: We will be calm, we will be up-front and we will be methodical.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: It starts with telling the truth about the situation we inherited.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Members on that side of the House privatised assets, blew the budget on major infrastructure projects and then left us with a big mess to clean up. But we will clean it up.

P&C FUNDS

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (13:11): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. I have recently heard from two P&C committees in my community that much-needed equipment and facility upgrades have been delayed and that funds raised by the P&Cs but now held by the Asset Management Unit have been frozen. What

is this Government doing to ensure that P&C committee fundraising efforts and the projects they work so hard to support are not being thwarted or delayed by the Department of Education?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (13:11): I thank the member for Balmain for her important question. It gives me the opportunity to clear up a couple of conflated issues and be very clear to the House. I would like to find out the specifics of those two particular schools. I will chase them up for those school communities. Before I correct the record regarding the confusion around school bank accounts, I stress that our Government is delivering record funding to public schools.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Except for where you have ripped it out.

Ms PRUE CAR: I urge the leader of The Nationals to listen because he might learn about what has happened.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The Minister has the call.

Ms PRUE CAR: That funding is \$700 million more than members opposite ever put into public schools in New South Wales. To the question, this is a detailed response that the member for Balmain is owed on behalf of her community. In fact, the people of New South Wales are owed it. There are two types of school bank accounts and they have been confused. I am surprised that those opposite spent so long in government and still do not know how school bank accounts work. School managed funds are known as 6101 accounts. I am talking about the code of the bank account. Community raised funds are known as 6300 accounts. They are entirely separate funds and entirely separate buckets of money. We have made changes, but they do not impact P&C funds or community raised funds from all the sausage sizzles, bake stalls and trivia nights. The only thing that has impacted on those P&C funds is years and years of mismanagement by those opposite. Projects were the given green light, and they were never delivered. There have been changes in the 6101 accounts but make no mistake. Let me be clear. I am attempting to clear up the confusion. These funds represent lost learning because the Liberal-Nationals Government—

Mr Dugald Saunders: Own up.

Ms PRUE CAR: I am owning up. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: Members will be respectful of the Minister while she answers the question. A number of members are on two calls to order. Members will be removed from the Chamber if they continue to interject.

Ms PRUE CAR: Those opposite oversaw a teacher shortage crisis. Principals could not hire teachers. To be clear, the 6101 funds are for teaching and learning. Reports about schools saving that money up are concerning. The money should be spent that year. It should not be saved up to buy things that School Infrastructure should be providing to schools. It would be like the health Minister saying that the CEO of a local health district decided not to treat patients to save for a footpath. That is exactly the same thing. All members who go to our local P&Cs know that community raised funds, and the effort that goes into them, are highly valued by our public schools. Schools raise those funds with the help of their parents. They take in funds. That is not what is happening. They go to the department and then School Infrastructure delivers the projects. But there is a backlog of projects in the tens of millions of dollars that this Government has to work through. It is not frozen.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Goulburn to remove herself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A until the end of question time.

[*Pursuant to standing order the member for Goulburn left the Chamber at 13:16.*]

Ms PRUE CAR: We are working through the backlog that members opposite left us, which is in the tens of millions of dollars.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: That money was raised by parents to contribute to their local public schools. Those opposite are thoroughly confused. I hope that clarifies matters for the member for Balmain and her community.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: They are not frozen. It is fake news delivered by those opposite.

HOUSING SUPPLY

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (13:17): My question is addressed to the important Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister update the House on the importance of all levels of government working together to address the State's crisis—in the next 19 seconds?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (13:17): It is the responsibility of all levels of government to work on the housing targets, a responsibility that I wish the Leader of the Opposition would remind his backbench of. I reckon I will be back here later this week to tell you more about it.

Documents

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016, I announce receipt of the report of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *Bail Compliance checks in NSW - Issues Paper*, dated May 2024 and received on 21 May 2024. I order that the report be printed.

INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSION NSW

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the Government Information (Information Commissioner) Act 2009, I table the report of the Information and Privacy Commission NSW entitled *Report on the Operation of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009: 2022-2023*, received on 21 May 2024. I order that the report to be printed.

Committees

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON ARTS AND MUSIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Establishment and Membership

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That:

- (1) This House agrees with the Legislative Council's resolution relating to the appointment of a Joint Select Committee on Arts and Music Education and Training in New South Wales.
- (2) Ms Julia Finn, Ms Liza Butler, Mr Kevin Anderson, Dr Joe McGirr and Ms Judy Hannan be appointed to serve on the committee as members of the Legislative Assembly.
- (3) A message be sent informing the Legislative Council of this resolution.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

MULTICULTURAL NSW

Reports

The CLERK: In accordance with section 14 of the Multicultural NSW Act 2000, I announce receipt of the report of Multicultural NSW entitled *Community Relations Report 2022-2023*, received out of session and authorised to be printed.

STATE CORONER

Reports

The CLERK: In accordance with section 37 of the Coroners Act 2009, I announce receipt of the report by the New South Wales State Coroner into deaths in custody/police operations for 2023, received out of session on 20 May 2024 and authorised to be printed.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION

Reports

The CLERK: In accordance with the Law Enforcement and National Security (Assumed Identities) Act 2010, I announce receipt of the report on the statutory review of the Law Enforcement and National Security (Assumed Identities) Act 2010 by the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission for the year ended 30 June 2023, received out of session on 28 May 2024 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING****Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government response to report No. 1/58 of the Committee on Environment and Planning, entitled *Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill 2023*, received out of session on 21 May 2024 and authorised to be printed.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES**Reports**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the report of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services entitled *Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023*, dated 3 June 2024, received out of session on 3 June 2024 and authorised to be printed.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**Reports**

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ: As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 14/58*, dated 4 June 2024. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES
AMENDMENT (PROHIBITING NO GROUNDS EVICTIONS) BILL 2024****Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 29 May 2024 Ms Donna Davis was elected Deputy Chair of the Select Committee on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Prohibiting No Grounds Evictions) Bill 2024.

Membership

The CLERK: In accordance with the resolution of the House of 16 May 2024, I advise the House that Mr Tim James has been appointed to the Select Committee on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Prohibiting No Grounds Evictions) Bill 2024.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESSENTIAL WORKER HOUSING**Membership**

The CLERK: In accordance with the resolution of the House of 16 May 2024, I advise the House that Mr James Griffin has been appointed to the Select Committee on Essential Worker Housing.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Moruya Police Station

Petition requesting that the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to ensure that the Moruya Police Station is resourced to remain open during business hours, received from **Dr Michael Holland**.

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

Illawarra Renewable Energy Zone

Petition drawing attention to opposition to the Illawarra Renewable Energy Zone and the Federal Government's proposed offshore windfarm, and calling on the Legislative Assembly to suspend progress on the REZ until a thorough, inclusive community consultation is conducted, received from **Mr Gareth Ward**.

Opportunity Classes

Petition requesting that the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to refrain from implementing cuts to existing opportunity classes in certain schools and engage with the community on any proposed changes, received from **Mr James Griffin**.

Housing Supply

Petition requesting that the Legislative Assembly halt the proposed Diverse and Well-located Housing reforms and Transport Oriented Development plans, and calling on the Government to build good-quality public and social housing, maintain local planning and heritage controls and consult with communities and councils about strategies to lift the supply of affordable, sustainable housing, received from **Ms Kobi Shetty**.

[Notices of motions given.]

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

Bills

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT (INDUSTRIAL MANSLAUGHTER) BILL 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Sophie Cotsis, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (14:31): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

On behalf of the Labor Party, I am proud to introduce the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. The primary objective of the bill is to introduce an industrial manslaughter offence into the New South Wales work health and safety framework. The Government believes that every worker who goes to work in this State should come home safely at the end of the day. Every workplace death represents a preventable death—a tragedy that could have been avoided. Despite 20 years of campaigning by families, friends, campaigners and unions whose members have been killed at work, New South Wales is the last mainland State without an industrial manslaughter offence. The families who have lost loved ones at work in New South Wales are the ones who have been given a life sentence. This bill is aimed at rectifying that injustice. This bill continues the Labor Party's legacy of supporting working people's right to a safe workplace. It has campaigned for many years and a lot of work has gone into this. This bill builds on the legacy of that important work.

Sadly, data shows that in the past five years there have been 300 fatal workplace incidents in New South Wales. That means 300 families who have been given a life sentence. The establishment of an industrial manslaughter offence in New South Wales demonstrates that the Minns Labor Government will do everything it can to create safer workplaces in New South Wales. As the Minister for Work Health and Safety, I receive daily notifications of serious injuries and fatal incidents befalling workers. We have seen too many cases of workers dying on worksites because protection measures and systems failed, leading to a fatal fall from a roof or through an uncovered hole, an electrocution, or a crush injury from moving equipment or heavy objects.

Today Labor delivers on a key commitment to protect working people, and this represents the culmination of a 20-year campaign by families, friends and unions to effectively deter and prevent workplace deaths and injuries in New South Wales by discouraging unsafe work practices and holding those individuals responsible to account. It also reflects the contributions received during the extensive public consultation that has occurred with this bill. This includes feedback, comments, submissions, meetings, phone conversations and emails from family members of deceased workers, as well as the long campaign by the union movement, legal associations, the legal fraternity, the Government and businesses. A few months ago I was at a roundtable meeting in Griffith, where I heard robust discussion about this issue.

The bill will see the establishment of part 2A within the Work Health and Safety Act, which will establish an industrial manslaughter offence. In certain circumstances, workplace deaths in New South Wales may be prosecuted as an offence of common-law manslaughter under the Crimes Act 1900, but this has rarely happened and has plainly been insufficient in dealing with workplace deaths, both for individuals and where there is a duty owed by a person who is conducting a business or undertaking and who is a larger corporation. Under existing provisions of the criminal law, the prosecution of large corporations for manslaughter is difficult. This is because it requires proof of criminal negligence on the part of a particular individual who can be identified as the directing mind and will of the company. This can be hard to establish and in part explains why so few prosecutions have been made in workplace settings in New South Wales.

Similarly, the highest tier offence under the Act, being a category 1 offence, can include circumstances where a workplace death has occurred, but it is not designed to specifically address this. As a result, there is a gap in the existing legal framework, and no alternative policies to effectively address it exist. The bill addresses this deficiency and as a result will make our workplaces safer by acting as a deterrent. I turn now to the substance of the bill. The bill will amend the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to introduce an industrial manslaughter offence into the New South Wales work health and safety framework, including a minor consequential amendment to the Industrial Relations Amendment Act 2023, and additionally implements a model Work Health and Safety Act amendment to clarify the application of gross negligence to offences.

Firstly, new section 34C outlines the application of the offence and the elements required to establish the offence of industrial manslaughter. This is a new section under section 34. To commit industrial manslaughter, a person must firstly have a health and safety duty and either be the relevant person conducting the business or undertaking [PCBU] or an officer of a business or undertaking. Under work health and safety laws, PCBUs are subject to a number of health and safety duties, including a primary duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers while they are at work. Officers of PCBUs are also required to comply with duties including exercising due diligence to ensure that PCBUs comply with their duties and obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act.

It is important to note that this new offence will not create any new work health and safety obligations or duties but rather reinforces the importance of complying with these duties by introducing a significant new offence into the work health and safety framework. This will send a clear message that unsafe practices will not be tolerated and that due diligence must be carried out in the fulfillment of all existing health and safety duties. Secondly, although everyone has a responsibility to ensure workplace safety, under this bill an industrial manslaughter offence will cover those whose behaviour or decisions have the power to strongly influence the activities and culture of a workplace. That is why new section 34C (b) states that a person who can commit the offence is limited to a PCBU or an officer of a PCBU.

This is in direct accordance with the recommendation in Marie Boland's report published in December 2018, entitled *Review of the model Work Health and Safety laws: Final report*, and consistent with how other jurisdictions in Australia have constructed their own industrial manslaughter offences. Those persons have greater responsibility within the workplace safety context because they influence the safety environment and govern specific activities and behaviours that determine the success or failure of health and safety initiatives. A PCBU can include a corporation, partnership, unincorporated association, a self-employed person or a sole trader. By utilising existing definitions and concepts within the work health and safety legislation—that is, PCBU and officer—the bill avoids the complexities and uncertainties that may arise from introducing new definitions.

Using the existing definitions from the Work Health and Safety Act for industrial manslaughter also ensures clarity and consistency. Through proposed new section 34D, the bill makes it abundantly clear that the industrial manslaughter offence is not intended to apply to volunteers. That is consistent with the current exception for volunteers who are acting as PCBUs or officers under the Work Health and Safety Act and the approach taken in other jurisdictions. To be clear, volunteers can still be liable under criminal law. The bill inserts a note to clarify that volunteers may still be subject to an offence of manslaughter under the Crimes Act. The insertion of the note makes it clear that volunteers may still be liable for a workplace death caused by their own dangerous or unsafe actions.

The bill outlines that a PCBU or officer of a PCBU that has a health and safety duty will commit the offence if they have engaged in conduct that constitutes a failure to comply with their health and safety duty, and the conduct causes the death of a worker or another individual to whom that health and safety duty is owed. The definition of worker in the Work Health and Safety Act is broad and includes an employee, a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a labour hire company that has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking, an outworker, an apprentice or trainee, a student gaining work experience, a volunteer, or a person of a prescribed class. The offence could therefore apply in circumstances where not only a direct employee is killed but also a subcontractor at a construction site or a gig worker such as a food delivery rider. The offence of industrial manslaughter will apply where there has been a death of a person to whom a duty is held.

I acknowledge that each workplace death has everlasting mental, emotional, physical and financial impacts for the families, friends, colleagues and community of the worker. Immense pain, grief, anger and trauma follow workplace deaths, which happen far too often in New South Wales. A number of people in the gallery are families of those who have lost loved ones in the workplace. They can tell us that living that life sentence of grief, sorrow and trauma—and helping each other to get through—is just devastating for both family and community. The offence will be the most serious in the Work Health and Safety Act. The penalties prescribed reflect the intrinsic impact and justice that should be afforded to the loved ones of someone who went to work and never came home.

The final element that must be established for manslaughter to have been committed is detailed in new section 34C (d)—that is, a person is required to have engaged in the conduct with gross negligence. The concept of gross negligence, or criminal negligence, has been thoroughly explored in the common law that applies in New South Wales. It denotes such a great falling short of the standard of care that a reasonable person would exercise, and must involve such a risk that death or grievous bodily harm would follow, that it merits criminal punishment. Gross negligence is the appropriate legal benchmark for an industrial manslaughter offence because it is in line with the treatment of manslaughter under the Crimes Act 1900. The elements of industrial manslaughter ensure the effectiveness and appropriateness of the offence and its application to breaches of work health and safety duties and will hold responsible those whose behaviour or decisions govern workplace safety and who have failed in that paramount duty.

This Government is committed to creating the strongest possible deterrent for organisations and PCBU's who would breach their work health and safety duties. The bill details that the offence will carry a maximum penalty of 25 years imprisonment for an individual and a penalty of \$20 million for a body corporate. The proposed maximum period of 25 years imprisonment is consistent with the existing maximum penalty for manslaughter under the Crimes Act 1900, which reflects the seriousness of the offence. Grossly negligent conduct that results in the death of a person should not be treated less seriously just because it happens in a workplace. Holding individuals to account is critical in not only ensuring an effective deterrent but also bringing justice to families, friends, colleagues and the community of those who have been so sadly lost.

I recognise that the penalty is above the model work health and safety law of 20 years; however, it is my belief that no life should be held above another, and consistency with the general offence of manslaughter is appropriate and justified. They will be held accountable for their crime. The penalties represent a fair and just punishment, which will also serve to create a strong deterrent for organisations and individual officers against breaching their duties, to prevent further harm and to set the standard for making workplaces safe in New South Wales. The maximum penalties also acknowledge the significant pain and suffering of families and loved ones of workers who have died in preventable workplace incidents. Proposed new section 34E provides that proceedings for an industrial manslaughter offence may be commenced at any time after the commission of the offence and will not be subject to a limitation period. That is consistent with criminal manslaughter offences under the Crimes Act 1900 and all other serious criminal offences in every other jurisdiction in Australia. Again, action that results in the death of a person should not be treated less seriously just because it happens in a workplace.

New section 34F clarifies that category 1 offences will be available as a statutory alternative in circumstances where the court or jury is not satisfied that a defendant has committed the offence of industrial manslaughter but is satisfied the person is guilty of meeting the threshold of a category 1 offence instead. By allowing category 1 offences to be available as an alternative verdict, judges and juries will be empowered to convict with the most appropriate offence in all the circumstances. That provides flexibility and efficiencies in the prosecutions of the most serious of work health and safety breaches. All the elements of the category 1 offence will still need to have been proved for that to occur. As with the industrial manslaughter offence, there will be no limitation period applicable when a category 1 offence is an alternative charge to industrial manslaughter. That is to ensure that an alternative verdict can be returned in conjunction with an industrial manslaughter ruling without limiting the time that can be taken to investigate those matters.

The bill amends section 216 (2) of the Act to clarify that a work health and safety undertaking, also known as an enforceable undertaking, cannot be accepted by the regulator for contravention of an alleged industrial manslaughter offence. That is consistent with the current approach taken to a category 1 offence, because an undertaking cannot be accepted for a contravention of a category 1 offence. By ensuring that this alternative is not available for a contravention of an alleged industrial manslaughter offence, this reinforces the bill's objective to effectively deter and bring justice to those engaging in the most egregious unsafe work practices. This will drive a change in approach to embed a culture of workplace safety across industries and workplaces.

Under amended section 229B (2) of the Work Health and Safety Act, proceedings commenced against an individual for industrial manslaughter must proceed on indictment and may be heard before the District Court or the Supreme Court. This reflects the significant penalties attached to the offence and would entitle an individual defendant to trial by jury. This is consistent with the treatment of other serious offences under the Criminal Procedure Act 1986, the offence of manslaughter under the Crimes Act and the existing category 1 offence in the Work Health and Safety Act.

In contrast, under new section 229B (3A), industrial manslaughter offence and category 1 offence proceedings against a body corporate will be dealt with summarily in the newly re-established Industrial Court, which is appropriate, given this court's specialty and jurisdiction. This does not mean that the penalties available against a body corporate will be limited in any way. In this context, the reference to the offence being dealt with summarily simply has the effect of confirming that these offences will be heard by the Industrial Court. This is

unless the prosecutor elects to have proceedings against a corporation dealt with on indictment, and this gives a prosecutor flexibility to choose the approach that best promotes the interests of justice. For instance, where the offences against the individual and the body corporate arise from the same set of circumstances, it may be appropriate to have both offences heard in the same court. This is a commonsense approach.

SafeWork NSW and the NSW Resources Regulator, as work health and safety regulatory authorities, will have carriage of summary prosecutions, being those prosecutions against a PCBU only. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions will have carriage of indictable prosecutions, as is the situation now. The DPP will be resourced to run the prosecutions through the establishment of a specialist unit within the DPP to conduct the prosecution. I acknowledge our Attorney General, Michael Daley, his office and the Department of Communities and Justice for their assistance with the bill.

It is also the expectation of the Government that both the regulators and the DPP will thoroughly investigate workplace deaths as quickly as possible, with no delay. This must be done to ensure that charges, if necessary, are laid in an expedient manner. Families should not be waiting years for a prosecution to be brought; it must be done as soon as possible. The bill meets the clear community expectations that individuals and corporations be held accountable for a workplace fatality. Further, it allows the regulatory authorities and prosecutors to effectively undertake proceedings in accordance with established procedures, providing rigour and consistency in approach. For clarity, all existing defences for the offence of manslaughter that apply under the Crimes Act and under common law will be available for industrial manslaughter where applicable.

The Government is committed to ensuring that these laws remain fit for purpose and effective, and continue to meet their policy objectives. That is why the amended section 276B establishes a statutory requirement to review the provisions related to industrial manslaughter within the bill. The bill outlines that the review is to be undertaken 18 months from the commencement of the provisions. This timeframe strikes a balance of allowing the provisions to be implemented without taking too long to identify any inefficiencies. The review will consider whether the policy objectives remain valid and the terms of the provisions remain appropriate for achieving those objectives. A report on the outcome of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within three months after the completion of the review. The most serious offence within the work health and safety framework should continue to work effectively, and this review will ensure that. It also provides transparency of government policymaking.

The bill inserts new section 244BA, which clarifies how the fault element of gross negligence is attributed to a body corporate. New section 244BA will apply if gross negligence is an element in the commission of an offence. Under new section 244BA (2), gross negligence may exist on the part of a body corporate despite no individual of the body corporate having engaged in the conduct with gross negligence, if the conduct of the body corporate is grossly negligent when viewed as a whole, as determined by aggregating the conduct of more than one authorised person. New section 244BA (3) provides:

... gross negligence may be evidenced by the fact the conduct was substantially attributable to—

- (a) inadequate corporate management, control or supervision of the conduct of 1 or more authorised persons, or
- (b) failure to provide adequate systems for conveying relevant information to relevant persons in the body corporate.

This amendment establishes clearer parameters for the attribution of gross negligence to a body corporate for offences under the Work Health and Safety Act, which will include the industrial manslaughter provisions of new part 2A of the Act. Importantly, this will provide a stronger basis to prosecute a body corporate on the basis of the aggregated conduct of its authorised persons. This amendment will align New South Wales with the provisions of the model work health and safety laws, promoting greater consistency and meeting New South Wales's obligations under the intergovernmental agreement. The bill inserts new section 244B (1A) to clarify that the state-of-mind provisions in section 244B do not apply when establishing gross negligence, as new section 244BA provides for that. This will enable a stronger basis to prosecute a corporation on the basis of the aggregated conduct of its authorised persons.

The bill will make a minor consequential amendment to the Industrial Relations Amendment Act 2023 to ensure consistency in prosecuting alternative charges. The Industrial Relations Amendment Act was passed in November 2023 and is due to commence in full on 1 July 2024. It made consequential amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act as a part of the re-establishment of the Industrial Court. Specifically, an amendment to section 229B of the Work Health and Safety Act was made to clarify when proceedings for an offence against the Work Health and Safety Act would be dealt with summarily or on indictment.

An amendment made to section 229B (3) of the Work Health and Safety Act applied to District Court proceedings for backup or related offences to an indictable category 1 offence, allowing the court to deal with these as though it were sitting as the Industrial Court. However, it is not appropriate for the District Court to deal with backups as though it is sitting as the Industrial Court, as the Industrial Court is a higher jurisdiction.

Removing this subsection will allow the existing process provided by section 168 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to apply, so that, when a court deals with backup charges following proceedings for an indictable offence, it will be subject to the same restrictions and procedures as the Local Court. This consequential amendment is not intended to result in any change to the existing procedures related to the prosecution of indictable offences.

The provisions of the bill related to industrial manslaughter will commence via proclamation. This is to ensure that all procedures and processes can be thoroughly considered and well established prior to the commencement of the offence. It will allow for all affected government agencies, including those that are responsible for the prosecution of industrial manslaughter offences, to consult and engage with each other to ensure the optimal outcomes. All other provisions—that is, the model provisions related to gross negligence, consequential amendments and the statutory review provision—will commence on assent of the bill. I give my condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of all those people who have lost someone in a workplace. It is our hope that these very strong laws never have to be used.

This bill is the culmination of years of campaigning by the families who have lost loved ones, as well as the unions and workers who have lost workmates. I pay special tribute to the Family and Injured Workers Support and Advisory Group and its considered engagement with the process leading to the creation of this bill. I say to the families and all those who have lost a loved one that this bill is for them and their loved ones. Just yesterday I was speaking to Mrs Pringle, who has lost her son Connor, who was 20 years old. It is very sad to have lost that young man. Since 2019, 300 workers have been killed. People have been waiting a long time for this bill.

I pay tribute to Patrizia Cassaniti and her husband, Rob Cassaniti, who are both here today. They have been campaigning for many years for this offence to be put on our statute book. I urge everyone to listen to the interview Mrs Cassaniti gave this morning on 2GB. She talks about the fact that, after five years, she still has not grieved for her beautiful Christopher. I am very sorry for that. I hope that she can grieve now. I hope that she and other mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers and family members can now grieve properly.

Hundreds of tireless advocates have advocated for many years—not just over the past few years, but for over 20 years—for an industrial manslaughter offence. The enacting of this offence in New South Wales is part of the legacy of that campaign. I thank the great union movement of New South Wales. Over the past 20 years, the unions have fought for the introduction of this offence. Many unionists have been involved in this campaign. There are so many, and I do not want to miss anyone, but I extend my thanks in particular to the Secretary of Unions NSW, Mark Morey, for his very hard work. I thank all the union secretaries and members. They have been running a campaign for a very long time. I extend my thanks to someone who has been working very diligently—there are many people to thank, but I give a shout-out to Sherri Hayward from the CFMEU.

Many unionists are sitting in the gallery today, along with former MPs and others. I ask anyone I have not mentioned to please forgive me. This bill is very important for the families, who are at their most vulnerable and had not been able to see justice. I have talked to many of the mums recently—I am not singling out the mums, but it is just heartbreaking. I have an 18-year-old son. In the past six months, I have received notifications about apprentices aged 18, or young workers crushed at 20, 21, or 22—the breadwinners that lose their lives. It is devastating for their families. This has got to stop. Enough is enough. The bill is a deterrent. It says to those workplaces that they have to change the way that they work. This is 2024. No worker should be killed at work. It is simple as that: No worker should be killed at work in 2024.

I acknowledge that the bill would not be possible without the effort and attention of all the persons that participated during the extensive public consultation. I thank each and every person who took that time. I thank the 420 people who responded to the Government's survey and took the time out to express their views. We have read the responses and taken them on board. The respondents included members of the public and groups representing all areas of the workforce, including work health and safety professionals. Businesses support this legislation; they want to keep their workers safe. They tell me that all the time, because their workers are like family to them. They do not want to lose their family members. That is why the bill is so important. It sends a very strong message to those who are doing the wrong thing.

The Attorney General and I have met with the legal fraternity from all sides to make sure that we get this right. We met with legal associations, farmers and miners. I acknowledge the Attorney General for his work. I also acknowledge my agencies and, very importantly, my staff, who have done a brilliant job. I acknowledge an amazing member of my staff, Tom Craven, who has been working solidly on this legislation. All my staff, led by my chief of staff, Ayshe Lewis, have done important work. All of us have worked together. I know that a number of crossbench members have been advocating for this bill for a very long time.

I am very proud to be standing here. It is very hard. It is very difficult, because we wish that we were not in this position. We wish that we were not losing young workers. We wish that it was not necessary to introduce this legislation. But we are taking a very important step today. We are fulfilling the Minns Government's

commitment to introduce an industrial manslaughter offence in New South Wales to ensure that the most serious work health and safety breaches carry a severe penalty. These new laws are intended to profoundly alter the safety culture in New South Wales by raising the bar higher. I commend the bill to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Hon. Adam Searle, who is seated in the gallery, along with the families and friends of lost loved ones and our comrades from the trade union movement. It is lovely that they are present, and I thank them very much.

Debate adjourned.

TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Jo Haylen, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (15:08): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Transport Administration Amendment Bill 2024. The bill amends the Transport Administration Act 1988 to deliver on the Government's commitment to transform the Transport Asset Holding Entity and also to reinforce Transport for NSW's role as the lead agency for delivering the Government's vision for mode shift to active transport. The bill will convert the Transport Asset Holding Entity of New South Wales, known as TAHE, from a State-owned corporation to a new New South Wales Government agency called the Transport Asset Manager of New South Wales, or TAM. The Transport Asset Manager will replace TAHE as the owner of the New South Wales rail asset portfolio.

This bill will also broaden the functions and objectives of Transport for NSW to include promoting active transport and improving the activation of public spaces. This Government committed to reforming TAHE and ending the requirement for TAHE to provide returns to government. This bill will remove TAHE's status as a State owned corporation and, in its place, TAM will be established as a statutory corporation and New South Wales government agency within the broader Transport portfolio. This bill is the final step in a reform that has been delivered in stages. In November 2023 I issued a direction to the board of TAHE under the State Owned Corporations Act 1989 so that, to the greatest extent possible, its operations are less guided by commercial imperatives. Then, in December 2023, the Transport Administration Act 1988 was amended to make it clear that the principal objective of TAHE is to undertake its activities in a safe and reliable way.

The other objectives, which include being a successful business, are secondary to that overriding objective. With these changes, the Government ensured that TAHE is focused on maximising the safety and reliability of its transport assets. This shift will enable long-term investment in rail assets and the transport network. This bill enables the third and final stage of this reform. It amends the Transport Administration Act to adopt a new model for the management of the State's rail assets. This new model establishes a new entity with clear accountability for rail asset management across New South Wales.

Effective asset management supports a safe, resilient and reliable rail network for passengers and for the movement of goods across the State. A significant backlog of infrastructure maintenance was identified as a major factor in Sydney Trains' declining performance levels. The Government's rail repair plan has been developed and implemented to address that backlog. The reliability and resilience of the rail network is essential to supporting the movement of freight on rail and encouraging greater mode shift. For rail freight to be a viable and competitive option, the network needs to be accessible, reliable and cost competitive. However, the final report of the Sydney Trains review found that effective asset management is hindered by a complex operating model across TAHE, Transport for NSW and Sydney Trains. Many transport functions have unclear, overlapping roles. This complexity adds cost in an already challenging environment.

The Sydney Trains review panel recommended that the new operating model for asset ownership be designed to reduce complexity and minimise the duplication of functions. A single entity with clear accountability is needed to take a strategic approach to the management of rail assets. This bill will establish a new entity with clear accountability for asset management, which will simplify planning for rail. There will be a single entity responsible for ensuring that investment in rail delivers for New South Wales from an asset assurance perspective. Investment in rail will continue to be prioritised, in line with the Government's objective for the rail network and the broader transport network. TAM will establish a clear link between budget and asset performance, providing Transport for NSW with information and options to manage the performance of the integrated transport network.

While the Transport Asset Manager's principal objective will be to undertake its activities in a safe and reliable way, it will also have an objective to operate at least as efficiently as a comparable business and to maximise the net worth of the State's investment in TAM. Its customers will be Sydney Trains, NSW Trains and third-party access seekers such as freight operators. TAM will promote and facilitate access to the parts of the New South Wales rail network that it owns, in line with the NSW Rail Access Undertaking. TAM will receive access fees and lease fees for making the assets it owns available to its customers. There have been criticisms of the current avenues available to access seekers to negotiate access agreements for the New South Wales rail network.

In its review of the New South Wales rail undertaking last year, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART] noted that access seekers are required to engage with multiple parties and find it difficult to hold anyone accountable. Protracted negotiations and uncertainty can add costs, potentially making rail freight a less viable option. The creation of TAM, together with any changes identified by the freight reform program, will make it easier for TAM's customers to negotiate and make informed decisions about access to the New South Wales rail network. I make it clear that in the new operating model, Transport for NSW retains accountability for leading the development of a safe, efficient and integrated transport system across New South Wales. This means that it will continue to lead on transport planning and policy. It will still be responsible for the allocation of public funding for the transport sector and the planning, oversight and delivery of transport infrastructure, in line with the Government's transport and land use strategies.

Transport for NSW will retain accountability for prioritising projects and expenditure across the transport system. Importantly, the safety of the rail network will not be impacted by the bill before the House. Rail safety is regulated by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator, or ONRSR. Rail operators, including Sydney Trains and NSW Trains, retain accountability for operational safety. By removing the requirement for the rail asset owner to provide a return to government, and by making it clear that the safety and reliability of its activities is its principal objective, there is no longer a tension between maintaining safety and delivering a commercial return.

I now describe the role of the new entity, TAM. Its primary responsibility is to provide the framework for a safe and reliable rail network, including fleet and fixed assets, and allow Sydney Trains and NSW Trains to deliver services. TAM will retain the ability to carry out development, but with the approval of the Minister, ensuring that the focus of any development is transport-asset optimisation and that the development is in line with the Government's broader objectives for housing, urban regeneration and the development of public open spaces. TAM will be able to carry out development, including for residential, retail, commercial, industrial and community purposes, but with greater ministerial oversight.

The Transport Asset Manager will be managed by a chief executive appointed by the Minister for Transport. Both the chief executive and the Minister will have the benefit of an advisory board, replacing the current governing board. A skilled advisory board will give advice on matters that are referred to it. It is intended that the board members will be experts in rail safety, asset management and transport operations to provide guidance to the CEO and the Minister on the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of rail assets. I thank the board of TAHE for its service and know that it will continue to support the transition to the new model over coming months.

The chief executive will be subject to the control and direction of the Minister. A direction from the Minister will be able to limit the exercise of TAM's functions. This power of direction is intended to support the collaboration and engagement between TAM and Transport for NSW, Sydney Trains and NSW Trains that is needed to deliver an integrated transport network. I will seek the advice of the transport secretary on matters related to the governance of TAM to ensure the continued delivery of an integrated transport network for passengers and communities across New South Wales. Consistent with arrangements for other agencies within Transport, Transport for NSW will provide TAM with corporate and shared services, including the deployment of staff and corporate policies. Additionally, TAM will determine its service delivery priorities in line with the annual statement of expectations issued by the Minister.

The Transport Asset Manager will be required to publicly consult on its draft corporate plan each year and make the final corporate plan publicly available. Like any other government business, TAM will also have to comply with NSW Treasury's Commercial Policy Framework and the Asset Management Policy for the NSW Public Sector. TAM will commence operations on a day, or days, to be proclaimed. This will enable time for TAHE and Transport for NSW to work together on the supporting contractual, commercial and administrative arrangements needed for this new operating model. It is intended that TAM will be a public, non-financial corporation, or a PNFC.

This bill also makes changes to the functions and objectives of Transport for NSW to ensure that it can lead on promoting active transport and improving the activation of public spaces. Currently, Transport for NSW's

functions do not explicitly include active transport. This bill reinforces that the agency leads on active transport and will promote mode shift to active transport. Transport for NSW will be empowered to do what the community already expects of it. It is estimated that more than 1.5 billion walking and cycling trips are taken each year across the State. Promoting active transport, including encouraging a shift towards greater usage, and ensuring that walking and cycling are integrated with other transport modes will improve the connectivity and health of our communities.

By expanding Transport for NSW's objectives and functions through the bill, the agency will be equipped to develop and implement critical programs, projects, strategies and campaigns that will help realise our active transport and public space activation commitments. These programs, projects, strategies and campaigns will help create a future where road space and our transport networks are centred around active transport as the mode of choice. These active transport and public space activation activities will improve the vibrancy of our neighbourhoods. They will contribute to our goal of net zero by 2050 by reducing car use and air pollution. Active transport and the activation of public spaces through programs such as Safer Cities, Vibrant Streets and Community Improvement Districts will also support the overall health and wellbeing of our communities.

The bill will also finalise the machinery of government change that started in early 2022. Two key teams—the Cities Revitalisation and Place team and the Smart Places team—were transferred from what was then the Department of Planning and Environment and will be fully transitioned into Transport for NSW. Those teams are responsible for planning, developing and implementing activities that are focused on active transport and the improvement of the activation of public spaces. Transport for NSW will be empowered to provide advice and assistance to public and local authorities, enabling a more collaborative approach to delivering for local communities across our State.

I now turn to the detailed provisions of the bill. Schedule 1.1 to the bill gives Transport for NSW two new objectives. They are to promote active transport and its integration with other modes of transport and to improve the activation of public spaces. The bill amends Transport for NSW's functions to enable the agency to do the following for an active transport and activation purpose: develop, conduct, implement and coordinate programs, projects, strategies and campaigns; develop, implement and coordinate plans and proposals; conduct and coordinate activities; allocate resources; develop and implement new technology; and evaluate activities. Transport for NSW will also be able to provide advice and assistance to public and local authorities for an active transport and activation purpose. The agency may also, with the approval of the Minister, administer grant schemes and enter into partnerships. Most of the amendments related to active transport will commence on assent.

Turning to the establishment of the Transport Asset Manager, the bill will amend the Transport Administration Act 1988 to convert the Transport Asset Holding Entity of New South Wales into the Transport Asset Manager of New South Wales. Schedule 1.2 to the bill provides for the constitution and objectives of the Transport Asset Manager. TAM will be a continuation of the same legal entity as TAHE to streamline the administrative processes associated with the change to the entity. As has been the case with TAHE since this Government amended the Act in late 2023, the principal objective of TAM will be to undertake its activities in a safe and reliable way. All other objectives will be secondary to that objective.

TAM's functions will include to hold, manage, operate and maintain transport assets; to establish, finance, acquire, construct and develop transport assets; to promote and facilitate access to the New South Wales rail network; to acquire and develop land for the purpose of carrying out its functions; and to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of land. TAM may also enter contracts or other arrangements with public transport agencies so that it is able to manage assets on their behalf. TAM will need the approval of the Minister to exercise three of its functions. TAM may undertake residential, retail, commercial, industrial and community development only with the approval of the Minister. TAM must have the approval of the Minister before it can issue a notice to compulsorily acquire land. Finally, the Minister must approve the disposal of vehicles, vessels, wharves, engines, carriages, plant machinery or equipment. In the exercise of each of these functions, TAM is subject to the control and direction of the Minister for Transport. The bill provides that the Minister may direct TAM to cease exercising one or more of its functions or to exercise its functions in a limited way.

The bill includes several mechanisms to ensure an integrated transport network. Firstly, TAM must have regard to the common objectives of the public transport agencies set out in section 2B (1) of the Act, including: to put the customer first and design the transport system around the needs and expectations of the customer; to enable the transport system to support the economic development of the State; to promote coherence and integration across all transport modes and all stages of decision-making; and to contribute to the delivery of social benefits for customers, including greater inclusion, accessibility and quality of life. Finally, TAM must exercise its functions in line with its corporate plan. As previously mentioned, TAM must prepare a corporate plan each year, publicly consult on a draft plan and make the final corporate plan publicly available. In addition, TAM

cannot employ staff. People employed in the transport service of New South Wales will be deployed to enable TAM to carry out its duties.

The bill provides that a regulation can be made which deals with any transition of staff from TAHE. Transport for NSW will lead the engagement on this transition with the unions. This first schedule also provides for the management of TAM. A chief executive appointed by the Minister will manage and control the affairs of TAM. There is to be an advisory board with between three and seven board members appointed by the Minister. The Transport secretary will also be on the advisory board. The chief executive of TAM will not be a member of the board but may be invited to attend meetings. TAM must give the Minister for Transport any information the Minister may require and keep the Minister informed of the general conduct of and any significant developments in its activities. This schedule establishes the TAM fund and provides for the payments into and from this fund.

Schedule 1.3 to the bill contains savings and transition provisions which enable agreements entered into by the Cities Revitalisation and Place and Smart Places teams for or on behalf of the Crown to be transferred to Transport for NSW. This schedule also sets out the transition arrangements that will apply to the current TAHE CEO and the directors on the TAHE board, TAM's first corporate plan and the continuation of TAHE's licences, permits, approvals or consent to ensure that they also apply to TAM. Schedule 2 makes consequential changes to other legislation, including omitting TAHE from the schedule which lists statutory State-owned corporations in the State Owned Corporations Act 1989. The bill will allow Transport for NSW's important work in active transport and public space activation to continue. It will also complete the transition to a new operating model for the strategic management and assurance of the State's transport assets. The bill is critical to ensure the ongoing delivery of safe, integrated and reliable transport services. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

ELECTORAL FUNDING AMENDMENT BILL 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Jo Haylen, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (15:26): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I bring before the House the Electoral Funding Amendment Bill 2024. The bill proposes amendments to section 84 of the Electoral Funding Act 2018 in relation to payments from the Administration Fund. Firstly, the bill clarifies that the scope of what is an administrative expenditure which may be claimed from the Administration Fund does not exclude expenditure which may be met from a member's electoral allowance. Secondly, the bill inserts a positive regulation-making power for the regulations to prescribe expenditure that can be claimed from the Administration Fund. The Administration Fund is established under part 5 of the Electoral Funding Act 2018 and is managed by the NSW Electoral Commission. One of the objectives of the Electoral Funding Act 2018 is to "provide for the effective administration of public funding of elections, recognising the importance of the appropriate use of public revenue for that purpose."

Division 2 of part 5 of the Act deals with administrative funding for parties and independent members. The purpose of the Administration Fund is to reimburse eligible political parties and independent members of Parliament for specified administrative and operational expenditure incurred in a quarterly period, up to a capped amount. Section 84 (1) of the Act sets out what is included and what is excluded from the scope of administrative expenditure and operating expenses which are claimable from the Administration Fund. Relevantly, section 84 (1) (b) (ii) excludes administrative expenditure for which a member may claim a parliamentary allowance as a member. Independent members of the Legislative Assembly have sought legislative clarity and certainty in relation to the exclusion in section 84 (1) (b) (ii) of the Electoral Funding Act 2018, which precludes claims from the Administration Fund for expenditure for which a member may claim a parliamentary allowance.

I thank members for raising this matter with the Government. The bill intends to provide clarity to stakeholders, including independent members of Parliament and the NSW Electoral Commission, as to the operation of the exclusion in section 84 (1) (b) (ii) of the Act. Elected members of Parliament are entitled to an electoral allowance and other additional entitlements under the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal Act 1989. The Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal determines the amount of the electoral allowance and other additional entitlements that are available to members of Parliament pursuant to the provisions of its annual determination.

The Tribunal made an annual determination on 15 June 2023, effective 1 July 2023, under sections 10 (2) and 11 (1) of the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal Act 1989. The determination provides that the electoral allowance is intended to be used by members to pay for expenses incurred in the efficient performance of a

member's parliamentary duties. It sets out the circumstances upon which the additional entitlements, including the electoral allowance, may be used for parliamentary duties, for example, for activities undertaken in representing the interests of constituents but excluding activities of a direct electioneering or political campaigning nature.

The determination also specifies particular items which the electoral allowance and other entitlements should not be used to fund. The determination also lists, for the first time, the following non-exhaustive list of the types of expenses which may be met from the electoral allowance: leasing or purchasing a motor vehicle and additional vehicle equipment expenses; telephone, internet, office and equipment expenses which are not met by the Parliament; member and staff travel expenses not compensated for by the Parliament and/or the Sydney, travel and communications allowances; expenses incurred in communicating with constituents not compensated for by the communications and travel allowances; and staff expenses incurred in addition to those borne by the Parliament. Relevantly, the determination also provides:

Nothing shall prevent the use of the Electoral Allowance for legitimate electorate expenses which might also fall within the categories of expenses such as those covered by the Communications Allowance, General Travel Allowance and Skills Development Allowance.

But the determination does not specify all the types of parliamentary and electoral expenses for which the electoral allowance is intended to be used. This is reflective of the fact that the amount of members' allowances differs, as does the size and locations of members' electorates. The Tribunal's determination also provides for additional entitlements including the Sydney allowance, communications allowance, committee allowance, general travel allowance and the skills and development allowance. On 13 December 2023, following the publication of the Tribunal's determination, the NSW Electoral Commission published a new statutory guideline, Guideline 23, setting out its approach to assessing claims for expenditure for which a member may claim a parliamentary allowance and thereby expenditure which is not permitted to be claimed from the fund.

The bill addresses concerns raised by independent members with the Government that they can no longer claim certain items of administrative expenditure from the Administration Fund where that expenditure may also be met by the electoral allowance, being an allowance that is paid monthly to elected members. The intent of the bill is that the exclusion in section 84 (1) (b) (ii) will not preclude claims for payment of administrative expenditure from the Administration Fund where that expenditure may also be met by a member's electoral allowance, payable under part 3 of the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal Act 1989. The aim is to provide certainty and clarity for stakeholders who are both making and determining claims for payment from the Administration Fund.

I move to the details in item [3] of schedule 1 to the bill, and the amendment to section 84 (1) (b) (ii) of the Electoral Funding Act 2018. The bill proposes to amend the exclusion in section 84 (1) (b) (ii) of the Act to clarify that the reference to a "parliamentary allowance" does not include expenditure for which an electoral allowance is payable under the Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989. Independent members have requested that this clarity is urgently required to ensure they can continue to claim certain administrative expenses from the Administration Fund. The amendment will apply retrospectively from 1 April to enable members to re-submit claims that may have already been determined.

I now turn to items [1], [2] and [4] of schedule 1 to the bill. The bill inserts a new regulation-making power at section 84 (1) (a) (xi) of the Act to provide that the regulations can prescribe expenditure that can be claimed from the Administration Fund, and a transitional provision allowing a regulation prescribing types of administrative expenditure for a period before 1 July 2024 to take effect on or from 1 April 2023. The Act currently allows regulations to be made which specify expenditure which cannot be claimed from the Administration Fund, at section 84 (1) (b) (iv).

The positive regulation-making power proposed by the bill will provide flexibility to identify administrative expenditure which should be covered by the Administration Fund but which may not clearly fall within the existing categories under section 84 (1) (a). The transitional provision at item [4] in schedule 1 to the bill expressly allows such regulations to be made with retrospective effect, limited to 1 April 2023. That is to align with the date of the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal's 2023 determination and the financial year. The Government is seeking to progress the bill urgently in the June sittings of Parliament to enable commencement in time for the new financial year. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

ENERGY SECURITY CORPORATION BILL 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Jihad Dib, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (15:36): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am very pleased to introduce the Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024. The bill was an election commitment I made as a shadow Minister. I remember the announcement clearly. It was made with the now Premier and a number of members of Parliament, in Nowra. It was an important commitment to make, and I am incredibly proud to see the Government honour it today. We have an exceptional Minister in Minister Sharpe, who has made this bill a reality.

Climate change demands effective action to ensure a sustainable and fair future for the people, economy and environment of New South Wales. The Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 sets minimum greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for the entire State, including the achievement of net zero emissions by 2050. Though our electricity system in New South Wales has provided us with reliable power, it is also the highest emitting sector in the State. This means rapid decarbonisation of the electricity sector is essential to ensure New South Wales can take urgent action on climate change and safeguard our environment for future generations.

But while the grid is decarbonising, we need to make sure the system can provide enough power to keep the lights on. Electricity needs to remain secure and reliable. The Australian Energy Market Operator [AEMO] has indicated in its latest update to the National Energy Market Electricity Statement of Opportunities report that without critical generation and storage investments, New South Wales faces higher reliability risks. Indeed, AEMO has projected an increased risk of power outages in New South Wales for the next four summers in its latest report, highlighting the urgency of the task at hand.

The Government is committed to ensuring a reliable, safe and secure electricity grid during the transition to net zero by supporting necessary investments in the sector. Reliable electricity is especially important to the residents of Western Sydney, who continue to experience significant urban heat, with temperatures often 10 degrees Celsius higher than their counterparts in eastern Sydney. We are fortunate to have bipartisanship when it comes to that objective. Both sides of this House supported the establishment of the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, and I acknowledge that the shadow Minister, the member for Manly, is in the Chamber. The road map is already decarbonising our energy system and paving the transition away from coal-fired generation. It is delivering clean generation, storage and firming infrastructure, as well as the new network infrastructure required to connect generation to customers.

We have made the successful delivery of the road map a whole-of-government priority. But after a decade of privatisation under the previous Government, we need to do more. The purpose of the bill is to accelerate the transition to a zero emissions grid and help meet our ambitious State decarbonisation targets by creating the Energy Security Corporation, or the ESC. The ESC will inject funding into much-needed clean energy projects, including storage and firming assets. The bill delivers on the Government's election commitment to establish a new corporation, seeded with \$1 billion, to accelerate investment in clean energy assets and ensure that New South Wales has a dispatchable supply of renewable energy for when the sun does not shine and the wind does not blow.

In layman's terms, it makes sure that we have what we call dispatchable energy—in other words, stored energy that is ready to send out when the sun is not shining and when the wind is not blowing. That is often an argument that those opposed to any action on climate change talk about. Yes, sometimes the sun does not shine and sometimes the wind does not blow. That is why we have storage capacity. For example, look at the Snowy Hydro; look at the batteries. There are many different options. We cannot bury our heads in the sand. That is why the bill is an exceptional step forward by a government that believes in it.

We have heard from the energy industry that medium- to long-term duration storage and distribution-connected storage are necessary for the transition but are not attracting enough investment. We also know that capital for those sorts of clean energy technologies is available but, for a variety of reasons, those projects are not able to attract the required investment from the private sector. Those reasons include policy uncertainty on the timing of coal power station closures, a lack of market price signals for system benefits created by essential system services such as inertia, and construction cost uncertainty. The Government has a key role to play in supporting or de-risking clean energy assets. It can also benefit from the economic opportunity the renewable energy transition presents, by ensuring that capital is deployed to receive positive returns. It is imperative that we take action now to accelerate investments in clean energy. That will help to ensure that New South Wales consumers benefit from an electricity system that is sustainable, secure and reliable.

The ESC will help fill the gap and drive investment to ensure that the benefits of the renewable energy transition are enjoyed by all New South Wales consumers. The ESC's goal is to co-finance and crowd in additional

private investment in clean technology projects with funding gaps. I will restate that because that is what it is really about. When we talked about all the issues in trying to secure investment, here is the Government sending a very strong signal: The ESC's goal is to co-finance and crowd in additional private investment in clean technology projects with funding gaps. This is the Government backing in these projects and saying how much we believe in it. There is a \$1 billion seeding. We have modelled the design of the ESC on similar effective bodies in Australian jurisdictions, such as the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, or the CEFC. The ESC will also be able to collaborate with the CEFC and other existing entities to unlock further private and public sector investment into infrastructure to support the energy transition in New South Wales.

The bill is designed to create an Energy Security Corporation and set it up for success. It establishes the ESC as a statutory corporation representing the Crown. I note that the Electricity Security and Reliability Check Up recommended that consideration be given to establishing the ESC as a subsidiary of the CEFC with a New South Wales appointed board. The Government investigated this option, but it was not legally feasible for the CEFC to have a New South Wales controlled subsidiary. The New South Wales Government would not have been able to issue specific investment mandates tailored to the needs of our State or control board appointments. Because the recommendation of the check-up that the ESC be a subsidiary of the CEFC was not feasible, the ESC will be a statutory corporation. That will ensure that the New South Wales Government owns the entity and can appoint an independent board of governance.

The bill sets up the ESC with the appropriate structure, funding and functions to effectively identify and address gaps in the market as we transition to renewables. The bill ensures that the entity has the right balance between independence and government oversight. The Minister for Energy and the Treasurer may direct the ESC through an investment mandate but cannot direct the ESC to make or not make a specific investment. The ESC board must comply with parameters set in the mandate but will make its own investment decisions within those parameters. The bill requires the Government to issue at least one investment mandate to cover matters of investment, such as the portfolio target rate of return, focus areas for investment and risk. Clauses 11 to 13 provide for an independent ESC board of between five and seven members to approve investment decisions on clean energy technologies in accordance with the investment mandate issued by government.

The bill also defines eligible technologies and scope of instruments for investments. The ESC will invest in clean energy technologies. It will not invest in nuclear. It will not invest in carbon capture and storage. Rather, the ESC is intended to support the transformation of New South Wales's electricity system to one based on renewable energy. It will do that in a variety of ways. The ESC can provide concessional debt financing, make equity investments and use a range of financial instruments to fill investment gaps and crowd in private funding. The ESC may invest both directly in projects and indirectly through other investment vehicles. The bill steps out the financial arrangements to enable \$1 billion in seed funding to be transferred out of the Restart NSW Fund into an ESC Special Deposits Account. It also creates a fund for the ESC to access as the ESC's money.

I will now turn to the provisions of the bill. The bill sets four objectives for the ESC. The first is to accelerate private sector investments in clean energy projects in New South Wales that improve the reliability, security and sustainability of electricity supply. The second is to support New South Wales to achieve the targets for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023. The third is to complement other government initiatives relating to clean energy technologies and partner with the private sector to finance clean energy technologies. Finally, the ESC will have an objective to achieve a government-mandated rate of return through a portfolio approach. Those objectives balance the ESC's role as a financier with a commercial filter and its public policy objectives. They allow the ESC to value positive externalities arising from projects, which is imperative to fully capture the benefits of the clean energy transition.

I now turn to part 3 of the bill, which establishes the board. The ESC board will be an independent governing board. It is responsible for providing the overall strategic direction of the ESC, appointing the CEO and approving individual investment decisions. The board can include up to one government employee, but that employee cannot be appointed as the chair. That will allow for collaborative interaction between government and the ESC board but still ensure that the board is making investment decisions at arm's length from government. The ESC's role is to encourage and catalyse private sector funding in needed clean assets by co-investing and de-risking project investments.

To crowd in this funding, it is crucial that the governance structure balances government oversight with enabling the ESC to operate independently and on commercial terms. This bill, therefore, enables the ESC board to make independent investment decisions within parameters set by the Government through ministerial direction. It is intended that the Minister for Energy and the Treasurer may issue directions for two key purposes. The first purpose is to set parameters on the scope of investments through an investment mandate. The second purpose is to allow Ministers to issue directions if there are concerns about the ESC's performance or operation. It is

imperative for private investor certainty that the board is independent and not subject to the political whims of government. We do not want any whiff of pork-barrelling when it comes to ESC investments.

For this reason, clause 8 provides that the Government cannot direct the board to make or not make a specific individual investment. Because the ESC is a government sector finance agency under the Government Sector Finance Act 2018, it will enter financial arrangements under the Act in a way that ensures the Government cannot directly influence the board's decision to invest or not invest in a particular project. The intent is for investment decisions to be exclusively made by the board. The Treasurer and the Minister for Finance will appoint, terminate and determine remuneration of board members. The Treasurer and the Minister for Finance must be satisfied that a person has substantial experience or expertise, professional credibility and significant standing in relevant fields before appointing them to the board. This will ensure the board can make informed and educated decisions, and that it has the credibility needed to attract private sector investment to successfully achieve the ESC's objectives.

The board will prepare and submit a statement of business intent to the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance to ensure clarity between the Government as owner and the board as the investment decision-makers. There are three broad requirements for a technology to be eligible for investment. Firstly, they must meet the bill's definition of "clean energy technologies". Second, they must be solely or mainly within New South Wales to ensure that benefits of investment are received by New South Wales citizens. Third, they must not be a "prohibited technology". Clause 35 defines "clean energy technologies" as technologies—including energy storage and enabling technologies—that contribute to the reliability, security or sustainability of electricity supply. This definition is intentionally broad to enable investment in a range of technologies needed for the energy transition. The board must develop guidelines that set out the issues it will consider in satisfying itself that a technology is a clean energy technology.

The bill also enables the ESC to invest through a range of financial instruments so that instruments can be targeted to the market need and investment gap. This will allow the ESC to tailor its investment decisions to suit the market needs of the time. To crowd in funding, the bill enables the ESC to be flexible and agile in how it makes its investments. This is important because innovative financial instruments and structuring are needed to effectively address market gaps. The ESC will be required to screen and assess projects to determine if they meet the ESC's objectives and achieve the target rate of return with an agreed acceptable level of risk. The board will govern this process and make the investment decisions in accordance with the investment mandate.

I now turn to part 5 of the bill, which enables issuance of an investment mandate to the ESC board. As I mentioned earlier, the investment mandate will set parameters for the ESC to comply with. This may include matters of risk and return, guidance on technology, areas of investment focus, and other investment parameters and limits for the ESC's investments. The intent is for the Minister for Energy and the Treasurer to issue the ESC's first investment mandate prior to the board being appointed. Afterwards, the Minister will consult with the board prior to issuing all investment mandates. A public investment mandate will provide clarity and scope to the ESC. It will also signal to the private sector where in the market the ESC is likely to operate. The board must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the investment mandate has been complied with. The investment mandate can be updated periodically by government.

Finally, part 6 of the bill establishes two funds: the ESC Fund and the ESC Operational Fund. Clause 39 provides that \$1 billion in seed capital will be transferred to the ESC Fund from the Restart NSW Fund by gazetted order of the Treasurer. The ESC Fund will be administered by the Government. This account will hold the seed capital and any other government appropriations provided to the ESC. The ESC Operational Fund will be administered by the board. The ESC will request the Minister and Treasurer make payments from the ESC Fund to the ESC Operational Fund periodically for an aggregated amount to cover forecasted and committed investments and operational costs.

The ESC board will be able to invest and manage the money in the ESC operational account. This structure ensures seed funding is reserved but kept separately to the pool of money that the ESC board can spend. The intent is to ensure that the ESC can only spend money that has been authorised by the Government, both legally and practically, ensuring adequate government oversight of public funds. The ESC will be restricted from borrowing money from outside government except to cover the short-term settlement of a transaction when the borrowing was not required at the time the investment decision was made. Returns on the ESC's investments will be deposited in the ESC Operational Fund and then used for purposes mandated by legislation, such as new investments or paying for operating expenses.

I now turn to the reporting and administrative requirements of the ESC as stated in the bill. The ESC will be required to provide an annual statement of business intent to the Minister and Treasurer. The statement will cover matters such as how the board intends to carry out the investment mandate and the board's business plan for the following financial year. As a government sector finance agency, the corporation will produce an annual report

under the Government Sector Finance Act 2018 and provide it to the Minister and the Treasurer. The ESC will also be required to publish annual investment reports that describe the investments made in that period or, if requested by the Minister or Treasurer, at other times.

The ESC may share information with specified agencies, bodies or persons to facilitate the performance of the ESC's investment functions, or enable or assist the agency, body or person to perform its functions. This arrangement is imperative to enable the ESC to work collaboratively and innovatively with similar entities and parts of government to crowd in and accelerate investment in the clean energy market. The bill also provides delegation powers to ensure smooth governance and operations. The ESC will focus on investing alongside and mobilising private investment in clean energy projects and technologies in our State to support our transition. Having a public policy purpose, this bill sets out the optimal governance structure, roles and responsibilities and functions of the ESC to appropriately balance the entity's autonomy and independent decision-making with government oversight. Passing the bill this sitting will enable the ESC to undertake the necessary preparations to commence investment operations by the financial year 2025-26.

The transformation of our energy system is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for New South Wales. Renewable energy will provide households and businesses with the reliable, low-cost power they need. Through the ESC, the Labor Government is investing in the critical clean energy projects that will power New South Wales for years and decades to come. This will deliver returns for taxpayers, low-cost power for our homes, and a reliable energy system to power our economy. Government has always played a crucial role in providing support to our electricity sector. The ESC continues that tradition, giving the people of New South Wales a real stake in the energy transition.

As I said at the outset, it is a really special day to be in government. When this announcement was first made when I was shadow Minister, it was a really important point. It was a stake in the ground. This Government is looking after the public interest, looking after communities and making sure we not only provide the energy we need but also work on the road map. I acknowledge the excellent work of the Minister for Energy, Penny Sharpe, her team, and everyone who contributed to the bill. This is what it looks like to make a difference in government. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

LAW ENFORCEMENT (POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (KNIFE CRIME) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 15 May 2024.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (15:59): On behalf of the Opposition, I speak in response to the second reading speech on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. The context in which the bill comes before the Parliament includes the following event. On 13 April 2024 there was a horrendous incident at Westfield Bondi Junction in which a large number of members of the public were attacked, six of whom were killed. That horrendous event, which caused great distress to the community and to the families and friends of the victims, placed a great focus on the issue of knife crime within our community.

It is important to observe from the outset that, following a similar horrendous tragedy in Port Arthur back in the 1990s, the Federal Coalition Government, led by John Howard, introduced some of the toughest gun laws in the world, which have had an incredibly effective impact on the possession of illegal firearms in the community. As a consequence of those laws, semiautomatic and other firearms, which can cause so much devastation if used in the wrong manner, are no longer in the community. The success of those laws has meant, however, that people look to other illegal weapons like knives. Knives are part of the context behind the bill, as are the tragic events at Westfield Bondi Junction, which we must acknowledge.

In consideration of the event of 23 April 2024, the Coalition announced its policy for amendments to the laws with regard to knife crime. That policy proposed that non-invasive wandering powers be given to the NSW Police Force without any restrictions as to place or time. The Coalition noted the effectiveness of Jack's law in Queensland, notwithstanding it having those kinds of restrictions. On 1 May the Government made some statements. *The Daily Telegraph* article by Lachlan Leeming attributes the police Minister as saying that the impact of the new law in Queensland would be analysed before progressing it in New South Wales, including whether it had led to instances of racial profiling. The Premier made similar statements about concerns around racial profiling but, to my knowledge, there was not any reaction to the Coalition's announcement that it supported wandering powers when it announced its policy on 23 April.

On 7 May the Government then announced that it would develop legislation based on the Queensland law. On 15 May the Attorney General introduced the bill that is now the subject of this debate and delivered a second reading speech. The Coalition's position can be stated very succinctly: We support giving the police power to do a non-invasive search of members of the public with an electronic wand. The evidence in support of such a policy is fairly compelling. In Queensland, in the seven months following the introduction of Jack's law, 400 illegal weapons were seized by the police, which is a staggering number of weapons having regard to the geographical and other restrictions on the wandering powers under that legislation.

As we know, wandering of the kind allowed by the bill before the House is commonplace within our community. Security guards, whether at airports, music festivals, sporting events or the Sydney Royal Easter Show, exercise those powers routinely within our community. Those security guards are, of course, much less trained than are officers in the NSW Police Force. Our police officers are highly skilled and highly ethical in the discharge of their duties. In the discharge of their duties they are governed by a number of internal oversight procedures. A permanent royal commission—the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, which was brought about as a consequence of the Wood royal commission—has extraordinary powers to scrutinise the execution of the duties of our police officers in New South Wales as part of, or supplementary to, the many internal checks and balances on the performance of their duties.

Under new section 45O of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act, the powers that will be granted by the passing of the bill will become part of that Act and work within that regulatory environment. I am sure that a number of Coalition MPs who are former serving police officers, as well as the shadow police Minister, will speak to the bill. They will have particularly insightful and knowledgeable contributions from a practical level as to how the provisions in the bill will operate. They will be able to give insights into why it is the Opposition's position that the bill should not only be supported but also does not go far enough in advancing public safety and that there are probably unworkable aspects to the bill that give rise to some concern.

I turn now to particular provisions of the bill and make some observations about them. The bill limits the wandering power in a number of different ways contrary to what the Coalition believes should be an ability to wand anytime and anywhere, and similar to the way in which wandering powers are exercised more generally in the community by security guards. The first restriction, under new section 45F of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002, is that the wandering powers granted under the bill may only be exercised in the following places:

- (a) public transport stations,
- (b) shopping precincts,
- (c) sporting venues,
- (d) other public places prescribed by the regulations, including, for example, places at which the following are being or to be held—
 - (i) special events,
 - (ii) events that are part of or support the night-time economy.

If some individuals are outside of those places—for example, in a school, at a local show, at the beach or walking down the street—the police will not be able to exercise the powers and wand members of the public without a warrant in the way that they can in the designated areas. Indeed, what constitutes a shopping precinct? If we take the Bondi Junction Westfield as an example, how far outside of the Bondi Junction Westfield would it have been permissible under the laws to wand somebody behaving in a manner that may give concern to the police without actually giving them a reasonable suspicion that the person may have an illegal concealed weapon?

It is important to remember this legislation is all about concealed weapons. If the weapon is not concealed and is being used in a way that gives rise to a concern about illegal use, then the police have a reasonable suspicion about the commission of a crime and can act accordingly. This power is to check if there are concealed weapons of an illegal kind. So prevalent was that in Queensland that 400 illegal weapons were seized by the Queensland Police Service in the first seven months of its quite limited laws. Not only are the wandering powers limited by area, but they are also limited by further circumstances under new section 45G. It provides that a place where wandering can take place not only must be one of the limited categories of places designated under new section 45F but also must be a place where:

- (a) any of the following has occurred at the place in the previous 12 months—
 - (i) at least 1 offence committed by a person armed with a knife or other weapon,
 - (ii) at least 1 serious indictable offence involving violence against a person,
 - (iii) more than 1 offence of possessing a knife or prohibited weapon in a public place or school, and

...

- (b) the senior police officer considers the use of hand-held scanners is likely to be effective in detecting or deterring the commission of an offence involving a knife or other weapon, and
- (c) the senior police officer has considered—
 - (i) the effect the use of hand-held scanners may have on lawful activity in the area, and
 - (ii) if the place was previously a designated area—whether knives or other weapons were found during the period the place was previously a designated area.

There is an element of closing the gate after the horse has bolted here. There has to have been an incident within the previous 12 months to give rise to the designation of an area where scanning can take place. But wait, it gets even more limited. Under new section 45I, when an area is designated so there can be scanning for knives—

Mr Mark Hodges: Twelve hours.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: It only lasts for 12 hours. There was a bit of Meatloaf there—you took the words right out of my mouth. A limited time, limited circumstances and limited places are the hallmarks of this legislation. It is not entirely clear—and there was not really an adequate explanation in the Attorney General's second reading speech—why the hands of the Police Force are being tied in that fashion and why there is a lack of trust in the Police Force to appropriately use the powers. I certainly hope that it is not a concern about racial profiling by our Police Force, as the comments attributed to the police Minister suggested.

If it is good enough in some circumstances, at some times and in some places, I am at a bit of a loss to understand why not more broadly. Wandering has become ubiquitous within the community and occurs every time people get onto a plane; go to a sporting event, concert or music festival; or even take their kids to the Royal Easter Show. It is good enough for untrained security guards to use the powers on entry, but apparently it is not good enough for our trained police officers to use those powers as and when their policing judgement dictates.

If we were talking about an invasive search, I would completely accept that a reasonable suspicion is an appropriate yardstick. But we are talking about a non-invasive search, running up and down someone's front, back and sides with a wand to detect the presence of an actual or possible weapon. The legislation then specifies what is to happen next. New section 45M tells us what happens when something is detected. If metal is or is likely to be present, the police officer may then require the person to:

- (a) produce the thing that may be causing the hand-held scanner to indicate that metal is, or is likely to be, present, and
- (b) resubmit to the use of a hand-held scanner. It is just like when one goes to the airport. It is not a particularly controversial or difficult thing. In terms of the designated areas, under new section 45K a police officer may, without a warrant, require a person in a designated area to stop and submit to the use of a hand-held scanner. That is the power that is given. Interestingly, under new section 45K (2) there is a special provision so that it does not apply to public transport vehicles in a designated area. There is a special provision under new section 45L for how scanning can take place onboard public transport vehicles. If a person fails to comply with a requirement to submit to scanning, there is an offence under new section 45N. New section 45O sets out a number of safeguards for the exercise of the powers, which the Opposition believes are appropriate.

Under new section 45P there are record keeping provisions and there is provision for a review of that part. It should be noted that under new section 45Q (3) a report will be tabled in Parliament within three years. Under new section 45R, those powers will expire after three years—which is just after the next State election. That is somewhat interesting from a chronological point of view. Schedule 2 to the bill makes various changes to the Summary Offences Act, which the Opposition has no problem with. The increased penalties and the like seem totally appropriate.

It is important to note that the unlawful custody of knives in public places or schools is set out under section 93IB of the Crimes Act 1900. It makes provisions for persons possessing knives in a public place or a school. There is a defence of reasonable excuse. Subsection (3) sets out some of the bases upon which there is reasonable excuse, such as that the knife is in the person's custody for the lawful pursuit of person's occupation, education or training. It is relevant that genuine religious purposes are one of those reasonable excuses. That is, of course, very important to the Sikh community. There are many members of the Sikh community among our communities, including a fantastic temple in South Turramurra within my electorate. The Sikh community will know that there is nothing in this law that will make unlawful their religious practices in respect of knives.

It will not be a surprise that the Opposition agrees with the confinement of wandering powers to designated areas in new section 45K (1), new section 45M, new section 45N, new section 45O, new section 45P, new section 45Q and new section 45R. The Opposition does not agree with other parts of the bill, including new sections 45D to 45J—which would limit the wandering powers by reason of time, circumstance and place—for the reasons that I have already given. I foreshadow that the Opposition will move amendments to keep all the other safeguards on the exercise of powers, such as those under new section 45O, and the requirements to keep records under new

section 45P. We would not propose to change any of those. We would simply seek to make the bill stronger, rather than dilute the police powers to conduct non-invasive searches of the kind we are talking about under this bill.

I will briefly touch on a couple of things that have been raised by the New South Wales Bar Association and that have just been brought to my attention. The Bar Association said that it was not consulted on the draft bill prior to its introduction and has raised a number of concerns. It believes that the thresholds of the designated areas under the bill are "at best inadequate and at worst illusory". That observation could cut either way. It could mean that the bill is wrong in its entirety, which both sides of Parliament would disagree with, or it could mean that the designated areas, if they are illusory, should not be in the bill, which is consistent with the Coalition's position. We would say that the Bar Association's observations support our position, rather than suggesting not having the bill at all, which neither side of Parliament supports.

The Bar Association is concerned that the important principle of reasonable suspicion prior to a search is being eroded by this bill. I think that horse has well and truly bolted, when one considers random breath testing and the like, which is longstanding in this State. Again, I would refer to this as a non-invasive search. If this was a full-body search of an invasive kind, the Coalition's position would be entirely different—but it is not that. It is a non-invasive search—a simple wandering exercise—which is now an everyday event in our community in a number of different contexts. The Bar Association commented that there is no evidence of reduced violent crime rates in Queensland as a consequence of these laws.

Although it is not direct evidence of the kind that the Bar Association is drawing attention to, it is a fact that 400 concealed weapons were seized in the first seven months in Queensland. It is sometimes difficult to prove a negative, which is to prove how many crimes were not committed as a consequence of seizing such a large number of weapons. One would have thought that such a large seizure of weapons of that kind would have a dampening effect on knife crimes. Although not direct evidence of a reduction in crime, it is highly persuasive evidence that the laws are not only necessary but also beneficial. Those are the matters that I make reference to in respect of the Bar Association's contribution. I do not, in any sense, pretend that is a comprehensive response to the Bar Association's letter, which has only recently come into my possession. Those are just some of the matters that occurred to me that required addressing.

The Greens will move amendments in the Legislative Council. On my quick reading of the amendments, they would substantially water down the impact of the bill. I will leave it to members of the upper House to deal with the amendments in a more comprehensive fashion. To restate the Opposition's position on the bill, it will seek to amend the bill so that there are no restrictions on time, place, area or circumstance. If those amendments are unsuccessful, the Opposition will support the bill as it is. I am glad that there is a degree of bipartisanship arising out of the tragic event in Bondi Junction. I hope that by passing a bill of this kind, the incidence of violent crime in the community will be reduced, which is in the interests of all citizens of New South Wales.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (16:31): I make a contribution to debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. I thank the Attorney General for introducing the bill to the House. Our State has suffered numerous horrifying and violent attacks since I became the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism just 15 months ago. In the past two months we bore witness to a stabbing at a bus stop in Doonside where a young boy tragically lost his life; a horrific mass stabbing at Bondi Junction Westfield; an alleged act of terror at a church in Wakeley; and other dreadful stabbings in Lake Macquarie, Narromine and Coffs Harbour.

The Attorney General did a fantastic job of outlining how the bill will work. In my contribution, I highlight some of the excellent work of the NSW Police Force in tackling knife crime across the State, particularly the phenomenon of young adults—in some cases, children—carrying knives on our streets. The NSW Police Force does everything it can to keep the community safe. The bill reflects the desire to give police every tool in the toolkit to tackle knife crime. Those capabilities will soon be expanded as the Government works towards allowing police to conduct wandering operations to take knives off the streets through this legislation. The bill is modelled on Jack's law in Queensland, but it is made fit for purpose for a New South Wales setting. I take this opportunity to thank Brett and Belinda Beasley. They were so gracious with their time in terrible circumstances; as we all know, they lost their son Jack to a knife crime.

The bill is about getting knives out of public places. It is about changing a culture that sees some people, all too frequently young men, thinking that it is acceptable to leave home carrying deadly weapons. It is not okay. We need to change that culture. The NSW Police Force takes knife crime in this State very seriously. We will not accept people carrying knives around on our streets with no good reason. The police are proactively doing everything they can, but these reforms will give them extra capabilities to take knives off our streets and make the community feel safe. I am pleased to report to the House that between 1 April 2023 and 1 April 2024, the NSW Police Force seized 3,855 knives from public places, took action against 2,392 people who have received a

legal process or charge for knife possession, and took action against 823 people who received a legal process or charge for a second or subsequent offence.

Through Operation Foil, the police target the possession of knives and other weapons in public places across the State. The operation targets young people in possession of knives in public and known violent offenders, with a view to an overall reduction of violence-related incidents. Most recently, Operation Foil was conducted from 1.00 p.m. on 11 April 2024 to 1.30 a.m. on 13 April 2024. It resulted in 800 police deployed across New South Wales, 51 knives seized, one firearm seized, 145 people charged with weapon-related offences, 51 people arrested over outstanding warrants, 170 drug detections, 1,065 traffic infringement notices issued, 410 rail infringement notices issued, 500 random breath tests conducted and 469 bail compliance checks completed. I have every confidence in our police. They are doing a great job.

In addition to operations like Operation Foil, the police are engaging with young people through Operation Pivot. Operation Pivot includes the delivery of anti-violence presentations in New South Wales secondary schools, alongside diversionary opportunities such as intelligence-based youth engagement via welfare visits to identified at-risk youth. It includes providing referrals to local PCYCs and external partners and services, including the RISEUP program and community services, and high-visibility patrols in identified hotspots for youth violence. Critical to the program is the police having a positive rapport with local young people.

Operation Pivot is conducted four times a year, coinciding with the final week of the school term and timed to coincide with Operation Foil. Operation Pivot began in 2021 and has seen police engage with more than 3,200 at-risk youths across New South Wales, deliver anti-violence presentations to 987 schools and educate more than 180,000 students. The Government wants communities to feel safe and to ensure that the police have every tool available to them to tackle violent knife crime in the community. I thank the youth command, including Assistant Commissioner Gavin Wood, for its commitment to preventing crime through the education and support of young people across the State. It truly does fantastic work.

I address the Opposition amendments before the House. The Opposition has expressed its desire for wandering to be allowed anytime, anywhere. I ask this to those opposite: Is that really what they think should happen? There is already significant scope within the law for the areas in which police may use these powers, including shopping precincts, transport hubs and sporting grounds. And there is the ability to designate further areas in regulations, such as big events or entertainment precincts. I will not be taking advice from members opposite but instead will be taking my advice from the New South Wales police. That is because they are the experts. They know what they are doing and they have a proven track record.

As I have said already, the New South Wales police are doing a fantastic job, having seized almost 4,000 knives off our streets just in the last year alone. This legislation is about giving the police additional capability in places where they need it most, such as public transport, shopping precincts, sporting matches and other places to be designated by regulation. I trust the New South Wales police and their judgement, unlike that of members opposite. It is interesting that the member for Wahroonga began his speech so positively by praising how successful the Queensland law is and how impressive it was that 400 knives were confiscated in seven months. The bill we are debating mirrors Jack's law in Queensland, yet the member for Wahroonga wants to remove new sections 45E, 45F, 45G, 45H, 45I and 45J. I remind the member for Wahroonga that all those new sections are part of Jack's law in Queensland—the very law that he said is great, which I agree is excellent legislation.

The Government does not support the amendments proposed by members opposite for the reasons I have stated. As a Government, it is our role to ensure that our community can live in peace without fearing violence. We must ensure that our community feels safe and, so far as is humanly possible, is safe. My message to the people of New South Wales today is that it is not okay to carry a knife in public. It is never okay to commit violent crime with a knife. The New South Wales police will do everything they can to tackle knife crime in our community. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:41): I make a contribution to debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. Unfortunately, there is no doubt that we have witnessed an increase in knife crime. Recent tragic events certainly have put knife crime front of mind. It is happening in every corner of New South Wales and right now all our communities are on edge. People should not have to live in a state of panic or be constantly looking over their shoulder. We need this Government to do better on this and we need it to happen now. Towards the end of my contribution to this debate I will deal with the amendments briefly referred to by the member for Swansea.

Just last month the people in my electorate of Dubbo were confronted by a feeling of that state of panic and looking over their shoulders when threats were brought to the Dubbo Show. The show is a community event that people look forward to each year. It is a great day for families and it brings together people from local farms,

the city of Dubbo and visitors who come from other parts of the region. No-one would ever expect that a fun day out would be overshadowed by serious safety concerns and warnings from police. A so-called stab list was circulated on social media. The list had names of children and some of them were as young as eight. Threats were allegedly made against them that, if they attended the event this year, they would be targeted. It turned out that it was a very bad joke, gone wrong, by a couple of children. Police were very proactive in this situation, as they always are, and I commend them for everything they did.

The police had a significant presence at the showground, especially on the Saturday, but in the current climate there was still a lot of angst for people who attended the show that day and into the evening. It is certainly a relief that nothing escalated—and part of that is owing to the incredible work our police did—but that is a real-life example of a situation when something could have happened. That same week, there was an aggravated break and enter at a Dubbo home. Police received reports of four people being involved—all had knives. The group assaulted an 86-year-old man before stealing his phone, wallet and car. I met him only a week after that incident. He suffered minor injuries—obviously he was pretty shaken up—but it is a relief that he did not suffer anything more major, given that knives were involved in that incident as well.

These shocking stories, and stories like them, have become so familiar that they are almost considered the norm, which is ridiculous. We are today discussing this proposal for our own version of Jack's law to get knives off the streets, or at least to try to improve the way we deal with it. We all can see the merits in this bill, but I also know that the recent incidents like those I mentioned on my own home turf and also what happened at Bondi Junction show that this legislation currently does not go far enough. No parent, friend, sibling, or partner deserves to go through losing somebody they love. We cannot take away the hurt and pain that families are going through after the senseless attack on 13 April, and none of our words will help to ease the heavy burden they now carry, but we can try to stop it from ever happening again.

I acknowledge the Government's proposal is a start, but I also note that the Coalition called for this legislation immediately and it has taken the Government some time to get to this point. The other point I make is that we need to get the legislation right. As we have discussed, the current reforms only grant police the power to scan people in designated areas, and only in circumstances where a relevant weapons offence has occurred within the past 12 months. I know the Government has lengthened that period from six months to 12 to include annual events, like shows, but why have that restriction at all? If we apply that parameter to all of the incidents that have been mentioned today, it is unlikely to have made any difference at all to any of them. In that case, what is the point? If we are going to do something, why not make it better? That is what I am asking for—let's make it better. This part of the bill seems to be completely lacking in the areas that people are telling me they want strengthened.

Just to be clear, there is no suggestion of a free-for-all where police just wander willy-nilly around the streets wandering people. It is about providing the capacity for them to do so when there is any concern or suspicion. The police currently have some powers, but the legislation will make it easier. Everyone I talk to is saying they want more certainty. Every person I have spoken to says they want a better solution than what we have, rather than something that feels like it will not quite be enough. We simply cannot risk having another tragedy occur, only to look back and wish we had done the right thing in this very moment. We have the opportunity to do better right now.

The police do an excellent job at keeping us safe each and every day, but they can only do as much as we allow them to do. We need to give them every single tool we can. That is why, as we have heard, the Coalition is putting forward amendments to expand the bill's measures and to enable police officers to scan people anywhere, anytime. Limiting that part of the legislation and hoping it will be enough to deter people is not the right approach. If members opposite consider what I have spoken about today specifically, it is unlikely that any of that would have been impacted in any way by adopting an approach afterwards. We need to be proactive, not reactive.

As members can imagine, a few months on from the Westfield rampage, people are still picking up the pieces of their lives. Workers are triggered by the trauma each and every day when they return to the centre, and shoppers still do not feel safe. It will take a long time to move on from that. We need to look at all those people affected and say with absolute certainty that we have learned from that incident. The same can be said for my constituents after the recent knife-related crimes in the Dubbo electorate. They will feel much more secure in an environment where police have the ability to use metal-detecting wands without having to wait for a senior police officer—and we are talking about regional areas—who possibly is based in Sydney having to declare an area in which the wands may be used. We all need to work on this together because there is no margin for error; otherwise, things can go wrong again. Let's do it together. We need to do what is best for all our communities to keep them safe. Now is the time to do it. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:48): As Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General and State member for Prospect, I support the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. I thank the Hon. Michael Daley, MP, the Attorney General of New South

Wales, for his preparation of this bill, and acknowledge his consultation in working with the Department of Communities and Justice and stakeholders to develop measured reforms to combat the serious issue of knife offences in New South Wales.

April 2024 is marked in the dark history of our State. From across Sydney to the regions, we were reeling from the devastating consequences of violent knife crime. In four days there were five unrelated stabbings across Sydney, and seven lives were lost. On Friday 12 April two teenage brothers were stabbed in Doonside. Our Western Sydney community mourned the death of an 18-year-old boy and saw five 15- to 17-year-old boys facing murder charges. The valuable futures of six young members of our community were taken forever by a knife. On Saturday 13 April our whole State grieved a terrible tragedy. Six innocent lives were lost and 12 individuals were hospitalised with stab wounds when a man with a mental health condition brought a knife to Westfield Bondi Junction. The peace and comfort we once took for granted was shattered by a knife.

On 15 April our community in Prospect and surrounding electorates was shocked by the stabbing of Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel at Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Wakeley. A 13-year-old boy leapt from his seat, attacking the bishop in front of his congregation during a live-streamed sermon. Our Assyrian Australian community was devastated to witness peace, in a place of worship, shattered by a knife. In the aftermath of those horrific stabbings, our Premier urged us to remain calm, to act with kindness and to support each other. As the State member for Prospect, I was moved to see our community do just that.

The incidents of knife crime in April bore tragic consequences, but they also demonstrated the strength and resilience of our New South Wales community. Our State remains a caring, united and welcoming place. It is our responsibility, as members of Parliament in this House today, to ensure we stand with our New South Wales community. It deserves a government dedicated to listening, supporting and acting to prioritise the cohesion and safety of our State. We must address this issue at its core to deter possession of knives. The danger posed by knives is unacceptable.

Our community members should feel safe in our city. They should feel safe taking their baby shopping in the middle of the day, working a busy Saturday at Woolworths, stopping at McDonald's for dinner during a long night shift, going to mass at their church, or sitting in their classroom. But it was not safe for the victims of the Bondi Junction attack. It was not safe for paramedic Stephen Tougher when he was stabbed sitting in an ambulance in a McDonald's car park in Western Sydney last year. It was not safe for Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel in Wakeley. And it was not safe for the students or teachers at Chifley College Dunheved Campus in North St Marys on 9 May this year, when their school was forced into lockdown by a knife.

This bill contains a package of reforms to target possession of knives, particularly by young persons, to reduce knife crime and to boost community safety. The bill will amend the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002, or LEPR as it is commonly known, to authorise the NSW Police Force to stop and scan persons in designated areas with a handheld scanner. It amends the Summary Offences Act 1988 to increase maximum penalties for selling a knife to a child under 16 and introduces a new offence prohibiting the sale of a knife to a child aged 16 or 17 years without reasonable excuse. I will discuss the definition and examples of "reasonable excuse" further in this speech.

The Minns Labor Government is addressing rising community concerns about knife crime, particularly given the high-profile tragic events that have devastated our New South Wales community. The reforms housed in the bill build upon knife crime reforms introduced by our Government in 2023, which doubled the penalties for possession and use of knives. In the awareness that possession of a knife is the necessary precursor to knife crime, we are acting to address the issue at its source. The bill will assist our hardworking New South Wales police officers to identify, confiscate and punish those in possession of knives whose intention is to endanger members of our community. I acknowledge that we debate this significant legislation in the wake of a number of terrible tragedies. I pay my deepest condolences to all those affected by violent knife crime in our community and speak in support of these reforms to keep our community safe.

I will now address the key reforms as detailed in the bill. Firstly, the bill introduces a new legislative scheme to the LEPR to permit the NSW Police Force to stop and scan persons using a handheld metal scanner in designated areas, without a warrant. The proposed legislation is based on Jack's law, an Act introduced and trialled in the jurisdiction of Queensland in 2023. That scheme has been adapted for New South Wales. The Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Act 2023 was introduced in Queensland following the 2019 fatal stabbing of 17-year-old Jack Beasley in Surfers Paradise. I acknowledge Jack's parents, Brett and Belinda, who I was fortunate to discuss this legislation with via videoconference. I thank them both for their strength and their advocacy for these important reforms across Australia. I also thank the Queensland Police Service and the Minister's office in Queensland in helping to draft the bill.

The new scheme will introduce a new part 4A of LEPPRA authorising the use of handheld scanners in designated areas without a warrant. Under the new section 45F, a senior New South Wales police officer above the rank of assistant commissioner may declare public train stations, shopping precincts, sporting venues or other public places as designated areas. To be declared a designated area, the following crucial activities must have occurred within the past 12 months: one offence committed by a person armed with a knife or other weapon; one serious indictable offence involving violence against a person was committed; and more than one offence of possessing a knife or prohibited weapon in a public place or school was committed. Once declared, a designated area remains in force for 12 hours.

New section 45L provides for authorised use of a handheld scanner on public transport vehicles within a two-stop radius of a designated area. This provision ensures persons travelling to or from a public venue may be scanned before their arrival to best protect public safety. At the crux of the scheme is new section 45M, which enables the NSW Police Force to require a person to produce any item causing the scanner to trigger. The new section 45N makes failure to comply with police, in this regard, an offence. Vitally, this will deter the carrying of knives in public spaces and assist police in removing knives from our community. This new scheme will enable the NSW Police Force to conduct a non-invasive search, significantly reducing the carrying of knives in public spaces. If, during a metal scan, an officer suspects possession of a dangerous article, they may conduct a search in accordance with their ordinary powers under part 4 of LEPPRA. [*Extension of time*]

Additionally, the Young Offenders Act 1997 will continue to apply to children found in possession of a knife without a reasonable excuse. Police will have the discretion to confiscate a knife and deal with the child through the Young Offenders Act, such as by issuing a caution. This recognises the inherent need to address knife possession whilst reducing early interaction with the criminal justice system for young people. Substantial reporting requirements and safeguards have been built into this scheme to protect people and minimise any imposition of scans. The bill carefully balances protecting community safety whilst upholding individual freedoms. Further, this scheme will sunset after three years, preceded by a legislative review to ensure the effectiveness of this scheme can be properly assessed.

Schedule 2 to the bill amends the SOA to implement appropriate penalties for the sale of knives to children. Recognising the need to address youth knife crime, amendments focus on restricting access to knives for any persons 17 or under without a reasonable purpose or excuse for purchase. Item [1] amends section 11F (1) of the SOA to increase the maximum penalty for selling knives to a child under the age of 16. It increases the penalty to \$11,000, 12 months imprisonment, or both. Item [2] introduces a new offence in section 11F (1A) to prohibit the sale of a knife to a child who is 16 to 17 years of age, without a reasonable excuse.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): It being 5.00 p.m., debate is interrupted for the public interest debate. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

Public Interest Debate

HOUSING SUPPLY

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (17:00): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that there is a housing crisis in New South Wales.
- (2) Notes that the Government has taken action by announcing fairer housing targets with incentives for councils to build better communities for New South Wales.
- (3) Notes that the Government is rebalancing housing growth across the State with a focus on well-located homes close to transport, jobs and existing infrastructure.

We know, and we have heard from members across the Chamber, that housing is a pressing issue in New South Wales. That is especially true in my part of the world in Leppington and south-western Sydney. For decades south-western Sydney has faced the brunt of urban sprawl in this great city of ours, but sadly the infrastructure has not kept pace. It has lagged behind. We have taken our fair share of housing but, primarily due to 12 years of neglect when members opposite were in government, we did not get our fair share of infrastructure.

Statistics show that there has been an extraordinary surge in demand for housing in Leppington. Prior to these reforms, over the four-year period from 2023 to 2027, Leppington ranked number one in terms of projected occupied dwelling growth, at 19.7 per cent. That is 254 per cent above the Sydney average. I repeat—254 per cent. That shows that, prior to these reforms, a lot of the growth was being taken on by places like Leppington and south-west Sydney. There was not a fair distribution across the City of Sydney. One of the primary reasons for that was because the previous Government adhered to a Red Rooster line approach to governing. For those who are not familiar with the Red Rooster line, it is a straight line drawn between all of the Red Rooster food outlets in Sydney, said to indicate the border between eastern Sydney and Western Sydney.

During COVID we saw Western Sydney treated differently to the rest of Sydney by members opposite. When we look at infrastructure, we again see there are two Sydneys. Eastern Sydney got plenty of infrastructure from members opposite, but parts of Western Sydney, including Leppington, missed out. Leppington has subdivisions, in Austral, that were approved by the Land and Environment Court that have pump-out sewerage. In effect, we have gone back 50 years. The great Gough Whitlam brought sewerage to the western suburbs. We have now reverted 50 years; we are again building houses in Western Sydney with pump-out sewerage. Thankfully, the great Minister Rose Jackson is quickly addressing that problem, and we will have the Upper South Creek Advanced Water Recycling Centre open in 2026 to ensure that we again have sewerage in Western Sydney.

Whether it is servicing infrastructure, such as sewerage, roads or schools, we are getting on with the job. Sadly, there has been a lack of investment in my part of the world. Statistically, the Leppington electorate has the most students in private school. An important part of our education system is giving people the choice to send their kids to private school if they wish. The sad fact remains that for many people in the Leppington electorate, those in Austral, Leppington and Denham Court, it is not by choice; it is because there is no public high school to send them to. The Government has committed to building a public high school in Leppington.

I am happy to say that we appear to have bipartisan support on the issue of rebalancing the housing targets. In a press conference last Thursday, the Leader of the Opposition said, "I think every council will say, 'We're at capacity.' We support a significant uplift, but every council has to pull its weight. Every council has to do its fair share." Hear, hear, Mr Speaker! He was also quoted as saying, in an interview with Clinton Maynard on 2GB on Friday, "I think we're on a unity ticket when it comes to that." He was referring to rebalancing urban sprawl in Sydney. Sadly, I do not think the message has gotten through to some of his newer recruits who were elected last March. In a Facebook post last week, the member for Vaucluse claimed that, "We pull our weight." I do not think that is true. She wrote, "The east has a long record of meeting and exceeding housing targets." Well, that might be the case, but those housing targets are grossly less than places like Leppington are taking on.

The member for Pittwater—or "king of the nimbys" as the Premier referred to him today—was also elected in March last year. He launched a petition on his Facebook page last week titled "Stop Labor's Development Onslaught". Those are emotive words. I am very disappointed in the member for Pittwater. Pittwater is the home of *Home and Away*, but the member does not want any homes there. That is very disappointing. What would Alf Stewart say if he read the member for Pittwater's post? I think his response would be "Stone the flamin' crows!" and he would call members opposite who wish to stop this important reform "a bunch of flamin' galahs". There is confusion among Opposition members; some want the reforms, some do not. It is about time that we vote on this to see who is on board with balancing housing targets in this city to make sure that everyone gets their fair share.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (17:07): I thank the member for Leppington for moving this public interest debate motion before the House. I move that the motion be amended to read:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that there is a housing crisis in New South Wales.
- (2) Notes that under the Minns Labor Government dwelling approvals are plummeting.
- (3) Notes that the Minns Labor Government is holding back construction of new homes with its \$12,000 housing tax.
- (4) Calls on the New South Wales Government to reintroduce the First Home Buyer Choice program.

Having just heard the contribution from the member for Leppington, I say from the outset that framing the housing debate in this State as an east versus west concept or match-up is downright unhelpful. Those who were members of this place during COVID will remember the great anxiety and pressure that members of this Parliament—whether they represent the west, the north-east or rural or regional electorates—were under to make sure that each community was looked after and appropriately served.

Ms Lynda Voltz: I wouldn't be bringing up COVID, mate.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN: My community did it just as tough as yours opposite. The chirping across the Chamber is what we hear more and more from this Government. It is government by press release. Members opposite will put out a press release and announce something, and then do no follow-up whatsoever. The member for Leppington mentioned the good member for Pittwater. If he wants to talk about infrastructure and cancellations, he can talk about the cancellation of the Beaches Link tunnel or the missing half of Mona Vale Road that the member Pittwater often goes on about. They are important elements in the framing of the Government's debate—that is, that infrastructure should come with housing. That is something we all agree upon. The argument put forward by the member for Pittwater is a simple one: If the Government wants to increase the dwellings in his electorate, that should come with the requisite and appropriate funding to communities. The cancellation of half of Mona Vale Road is something this Government should revisit and reconsider.

The facts do not lie. The facts are that the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics building approvals data shows that after a year of this Labor Government, dwelling approvals have dropped to 45,000, which is 5,609 fewer than last year's figure of 50,643, a fall of over 11 per cent. The latest NSW Planning Portal data shows that after a year of Labor, there has been a 22 per cent fall in development applications lodged and a 26 per cent drop in development applications determined. Finally, in the past six months, no progress has been made by the Minns Labor Government, with a decline of 17 per cent in development applications lodged and an 11 per cent drop in development applications determined, all whilst the average time to assess an application has increased by eight days.

As the member for Leppington pointed out, Opposition members agree that housing affordability is a fundamental and important issue that both the Government and the Opposition should address appropriately. For that reason, in trying to be constructive about the issue, we have set out a number of things we would do differently. For example, we would work with communities to identify suitable locations for extra housing, with access to transport, schools, hospitals and essential services—like, for example, Mona Vale Road or the Beaches Link tunnel. We would stand up to Canberra and call for it to reduce Australia's record immigration, to reduce pressure on rents and improve housing affordability. We would remove the burden of stamp duty on young people by reintroducing the First Home Buyer Choice program. We would provide stamp duty exemptions for older people looking to downsize, to free up larger homes for families, and provide greater incentives to local councils to meet and beat their housing targets, through a \$2 billion community benefit fund.

We are already seeing a change of language by this Government in a number of important aspects of its work. We see a softening of the high rhetoric that existed in the lead-up to the election campaign and shortly thereafter, when Labor burst through the door with energy. Now, with Labor realising that it is difficult to govern, we are starting to see a walk back of commitments and promises all over the place. The last point I make is about the magic Rosehill Gardens Racecourse. Why on earth would the Premier and responsible Ministers announce earlier in the year a grand plan for Rosehill Gardens Racecourse, only for *The Sydney Morning Herald* to reveal recently that the whole project might fall over imminently? That is an example of announcing now, considering what they are going to do later and letting people down. It is important to have a covenant with the people of this State. If you work hard, you should be able to afford to purchase your own property.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (17:12): I thank the member for Leppington for introducing this important debate. In summary, he notes the housing crisis. That's a clear statement. Members opposite cannot oppose that one. No wonder they didn't amend that! The Labor Government has announced fairer housing targets, with incentives for councils to build better communities, and it is rebalancing housing growth across the State, with a focus on homes being located close to transport, jobs and infrastructure. All that seems logical. We heard from the member for Manly that infrastructure should come with houses et cetera.

Let us look at some of the data under the previous Government. Back in 2019 the Department of Planning and Environment put out its population targets, which can be seen as a proxy for our housing targets. The Northern Beaches population growth between 2016 and 2041 was going to consist of natural growth—which is births less deaths—of 31,700 and net migration of minus 500. I am not sure what the member for Manly wants to do. I know he advocates for reducing immigration intake, but the northern beaches will reduce it by 500 anyway. Unless you are born in the northern beaches, you are not welcome. Combining Mosman and North Sydney, the natural changes in those two council areas would be 19,300 and net migration would be minus 100. If you are not born in the area, get the hell out. Over 100 of them would be kicked out. So 4,800 people are going to move into Mosman and North Sydney per year.

In 2019 the member for North Shore spoke in this Chamber about the Government's grandiose commitment to education—\$7 billion across 200 schools over four years. Isn't that wonderful? Then she spoke about the upgrades in Mosman High School, North Sydney Demonstration School, Neutral Bay Public School, Mosman Public School, Beauty Point Public School, Middle Harbour Public School, North Sydney Girls High School and North Sydney Boys High School, and about the \$120 million Metro Renewal Program. What was built was 32 classrooms, three new administration blocks and staff facilities, a new library, a multipurpose gym and hall, two outdoor spaces, rooftop spaces, new canteen facilities, new theatres, a school hall, science labs, toilet blocks, hard-surfaced outdoor learning areas, kitchens, prep rooms and storerooms. All that was with 4,000 people per year moving in over the next 25 years.

Compare Blacktown City, where about 12,000 people per year move in. What did the electorate of Blacktown get for 12 years? Zip. Nada. Nothing. Not one school got an upgrade. What did Mount Druitt get? Zip. Nada. It got nothing from the Government over 12 years. It is no wonder the Riverstone electorate switched to Labor in the last election, with the wonderful Warren Kirby. When the former Government built Riverbank Public School and the Ponds High School, on day one they were already 2,000 students over capacity, in both the high school and the primary school.

Over 12 years, the Liberal Government spent \$113 million to improve the visitor experience at Taronga Zoo. It also spent \$95 million to improve the infrastructure at Taronga Zoo. That is \$200 million. That indicates to me that you are better off being an animal living in Taronga Zoo than a student in Blacktown, because not one single cent came to Blacktown or Mount Druitt. If the Liberal Government did build something there, it was under-resourced by 2,000 students from day one. Maybe we should all move to Taronga Zoo; the former Government spent \$200 million there. But Sydney Zoo, built in Doonside, only cost \$50 million and it has a better atmosphere.

This Labor Government has brought in new policies to support the population growth, including \$200 million for councils in grants for green space, parks and sporting fields; \$520 million for infrastructure changes through transit-oriented developments; \$1 billion over the forward estimates, and up to \$700 million per year beyond that, supporting schools, hospitals and infrastructure; and \$1 billion extra in contributions to local councils over the next 10 years. We are providing the infrastructure and finances to support the population.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (17:18): Housing definitely needs to be a priority. This entire Chamber can agree on that. We all agree on infrastructure. That is an important way of unlocking future housing and developing it into the future. Even those opposite must agree about the clumsy way in which this Government has rolled out its housing policy. It had ideas about transit-oriented developments; it had ideas about Rosehill. Out it goes with a fantastic idea: "Roll it all out—hang on!" We have not seen any consensus. We have not driven home any discussion or tried to listen to the community's concerns and consider all the options on the table.

It is a lazy, lazy way of governing and a very heavy-handed approach. I have come up with a few ideas and solutions. I often hear the discussion about east and west Sydney and the big fight between the two places. There is another part of this State called the regions. It is a great part of this State. A few of the members opposite should come up to have a look. There is a lot of opportunity in the regions to take on some of the additional housing. A huge demand has appeared since COVID. People have worked out that they can live in the regions, work on the internet and have a great old life. We have seen that happen. Vast numbers of people have come up to live in the regions. Unfortunately, as soon as this Government came into power, it cut all the regional infrastructure programs. Those cuts do not support future housing in regional areas. They do not support future growth.

My area of the Upper Hunter has a huge number of jobs and opportunities for people to live and work, with many jobs in the mines. We have more jobs than people. But the first program this Government cut was Resources for Regions, a fantastic program that focused on investing royalties back into communities. It was a terrible thing this Government did when it cut that program. Now we have no investment going back into our local communities. However, there are a lot of options in our local communities. If this Government was serious about developing housing across the State and finding the best solutions, it would look into some of the options in regional areas.

At the moment, in the area of Singleton, we cannot access funds for infrastructure because, according to the planning department numbers, population growth is stable. But we know that a huge number of people are moving to the area for jobs in the mines. We are trying to house them all. We want an investigation into a particular highway corner. The investigation would probably cost only \$1 million, and it could open up a whole new area for housing and subdivision. That is one option on the table. Scone has a huge amount of land available and is another big jobs area. But, of course, it has a sewerage capacity problem. We need to start working on that. If we did, we could open up hundreds of houses, just like that. That is another option for the Government.

Down in Denman, the water quality is awful. It is so salty. I have had some in my tank and it is terrible stuff. All we want is water. That will open up fantastic options for housing in Denman. The worst thing is that we are about to spend \$150 billion in New South Wales on a new energy system, but we are talking about building temporary housing and then ripping it all up at the end of the project. We need to get serious and build permanent housing in the regions and make it available for everyone in this State to live there and have a good old life. It is the best place to live.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (17:23): This debate has been very interesting. Members opposite have made a number of comments about housing, but they have not made it clear whether they support building more housing. They have not made it clear whether they support putting in targets to get young families and young people into houses. There is no clarity from members opposite. The Leader of the Opposition said he does not directly oppose the targets. He said a few other things. The member for Vacluse, "Sloane Ranger Kellie", complained because the Woollahra local government area has 1,900 houses.

Mr Adam Crouch: Point of order: Members should be referred to by their correct title. The member for Auburn has been here long enough to know that. Rather than making a cheap jibe, she should focus on doing what is right and refer to members by their correct title.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): My recollection is that the member for Auburn referred to the member for Vacluse and then there was some other commentary. There is no point of order.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: The member for Vacluse complained that 1,900 homes were going into Woollahra and 2,400 homes were going into the Waverley local government area. That is where the Opposition's clarity falls apart. It is not making it clear whether it wants housing for the young people who live in Ku-ring-gai, on the northern beaches, in central Sydney or on the eastern beaches. The Leader of the Opposition said, "The targets are unrealistic unless you make it financially feasible to build and include the supporting infrastructure. You can have all the targets and all the up-zonings in the world, but unless you make it financially feasible to build, new dwellings are not going to happen."

That is interesting. I wonder where the Leader of the Opposition was when the former Government moved 15,000 people into Carter Street on half a square kilometre of land when it was part of my electorate. The former Government built those houses but never delivered the school it promised during the planning process as part of that development. It was never delivered. It happened again in 2015 at Wentworth Point. Quite frankly, there is no place carrying more weight than Wentworth Point. The former Government promised it would build a park there. This Labor Government is now building that park. For more than a decade, residents waited for the peninsula park that was promised from the beginning of that housing development.

Opposition members cannot talk about the infrastructure that goes with housing when the former Government put in all that housing and completely neglected to build the supporting infrastructure, particularly in the greenfield suburbs such as Leppington, Camden and Wollondilly. Western Sydney has been carrying the heaviest burden. The current Government's targets start to rebalance that. We know that greenfield development has dropped to 18 per cent. We are focusing on transport oriented development [TOD]. I am getting two of those developments in my electorate: Lidcombe has been announced and Berala will come later.

I noticed that Opposition members whose electorates are getting developments are not talking about them in this Chamber. They know what we know—that putting housing targets in around transport oriented development is a good idea. This Government is providing the funds, including \$200 million for the pocket parks we need and \$1 billion for the infrastructure. This Government is providing the money to support the TODs that the former Government did not. That is the difference between the former Government and the current Government.

Under this Government, the wait time for development applications has dropped. Contrary to what the member for Manly said, the wait time has dropped from 112 days to 108 days. That is a four-day improvement, and there has been a 15 per cent increase in the number of development applications. If Opposition members want to get serious about housing, they should not use misleading data but state what is actually happening. More importantly, they should tell us where young families and future generations of nurses, teachers, doctors, firemen and policemen are going to live. Under the former Government's housing targets, there was no way they were living anywhere but in greenfield suburbs with no infrastructure.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (17:28): I thank the House for the opportunity to speak on this important public interest debate about the current housing crisis in this State. In my private member's statement later I will speak in more detail about a particular aspect of a government department that is directly impacting the ability of this Labor Government to deliver on its target for housing, particularly around transport oriented developments. There are some significant issues at play in government bureaucracy that are impeding the ability of councils to deliver on their housing targets.

It is clear that Labor, in government, is making the housing crisis significantly worse, with all the key indicators going in the wrong direction. Houses are less affordable and rents continue to skyrocket. Under the Minns Labor Government, housing approvals have gone backwards by 11 per cent and housing is more expensive with the introduction of a \$12,000 housing tax on every new home. The Coalition supports more housing—I support more housing—but it must be done correctly and in consultation with local communities and local councils. I want to ensure that the young people who I meet when I visit schools, mobile offices or shopping centres, will be able to buy their own homes.

The Minns Labor Government claims that it is making housing its top priority; the figures show that approvals continue to fall. People right across New South Wales are feeling the worsening pain of our State's housing crisis. The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics building approvals data shows that after a year of Labor in office dwelling approvals have dropped to 45,034, which is 5,609 fewer than last year's figure—a fall of 11 per cent. The latest NSW Planning Portal data shows that after a year of Labor in office there has been a 22 per cent fall in development applications lodged and a 26 per cent drop in development applications determined. In the past six months no progress has been made by the Minns Labor Government, with a decline of

17 per cent in development applications lodged and an 11 per cent drop in development applications determined, and the average time to assess an application has increased by eight days.

Almost every single metric has seen a steady decline since Labor came to office, which makes one wonder how Labor will deliver on its already broken promise to build 377,000 new homes over the next five years. When speaking with one of our local developers in the Nepean region—a significant developer—they said it is now financially unviable for them to even begin considering their next building project. Such is the cost under this Government of even building apartments before they sell them to potential buyers. Labor's new taxes are even worse. The Housing and Productivity Contribution and the Sydney Water development servicing plans are, according to the industry, rendering new housing projects economically unviable.

We are all in agreement that more needs to do more to ensure a greater supply of housing of all standards and options so that people can choose where they would like to live, but the situation must be looked at holistically. The increasing of housing supply must be done in consultation with the communities that will absorb the new developments. It must be done with consideration of services, transportation connections, employment, education, tourism and recreational opportunities. The Government cannot just say that a location is suitable for an apartment block and then have it built quickly. It must consider the other nuances associated with creating a place to live, not just somewhere to sleep at night. I support the amendment moved by the member for Manly.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (17:33): In reply: I thank the member for Blacktown and the member for Auburn for their wonderful contributions. I also thank the member for Manly, the member for the Upper Hunter and the member for Badgerys Creek for their contributions to this debate. We are all in agreement on one point: There is a housing crisis in New South Wales. I note the amendment of the member for Manly but, sadly, I will be breaking his heart. Labor will not be supporting his amendment for one reason—namely, paragraph (4) which states:

(4) Calls on the NSW Government to reintroduce the First Home Buyer Choice program.

The Opposition has acknowledged that we are in a housing crisis; its solution is to go back to the broken policy that caused the crisis in the first place. I quote my good friend Alf Stewart once again. If on being elected Labor said, "We can fix the housing crisis by using the same old broken policies," the New South Wales electorate would channel Alf Stewart and call us a bunch of drongos. They would say, "Stone the flaming crows," and call us a bunch of galahs. For that reason, we will not be supporting the amendment.

The member for Badgerys Creek said that we are all in agreement. Those who spoke in this debate are certainly in agreement but, unfortunately, those opposite are not all in agreement. I have, hot off the press, a media release from Paul Scully, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces—those opposite will be disappointed to hear this—which states that the Opposition's spokesman for planning, the Hon. Scott Farlow, has given notice of his intention to introduce a bill to abolish transport oriented development [TOD] locations. Shame! That is 170,000 new dwellings in Sydney to arrest what those opposite have acknowledged is a housing crisis. I am flabbergasted that the Hon. Scott Farlow would try that in the upper House while we were debating this important issue. I know who else is flabbergasted—his boss, Mr Mark Speakman, who acknowledges that more needs to be done.

The Young Liberals would probably also be flabbergasted despite the fact that they have never heard this word in their life. The Young Liberals have supported TODs. The Young Liberals council came out in support of the TODs. An article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 8 March 2024 states, "The Young Liberals are siding with the Minns Government over its plan to increase housing density around train stations, urging their parliamentary colleagues to help Labor achieve its targets." I do not often agree with the Young Liberals; I agree with them here. I also agree with Mr Mark Speakman but, sadly, they need to get the rest of the band on board, and that includes the Opposition spokesman, Mr Scott Farlow.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The member for Leppington has moved a motion, to which the member for Manly has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes36
Noes49
Majority..... 13

AYES

Amon, R
Anderson, K
Ayyad, T

James, T
Kean, M
Kemp, M

Singh, G (teller)
Sloane, K
Speakman, M

AYES

Clancy, J
Coure, M
Crouch, A (teller)
Dalton, H
Davies, T
Di Pasqua, S
Griffin, J
Henskens, A
Hodges, M

Lane, J
Layzell, D
Perrottet, D
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Provest, G
Regan, M
Roberts, A
Saunders, D

Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Ward, G
Williams, L
Williams, R
Williamson, R
Wilson, F

NOES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S
Butler, L
Car, P
Catley, Y
Chanthivong, A
Cotsis, S
Crakanthorp, T
Daley, M
Davis, D
Dib, J
Doyle, T
Finn, J
Greenwich, A
Hagarty, N (teller)
Hannan, J

Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Holland, M
Hornery, S
Kaliyanda, C
Kamper, S
Kirby, W
Leong, J
Li, J
McDermott, H
McGirr, J
McKeown, K
Mehan, D
O'Neill, M

Park, R
Piper, G
Quinnell, S
Saffin, J (teller)
Saliba, D
Scully, P
Shetty, K
Smith, T
Stuart, M
Tesch, L
Vo, T
Voltz, L
Warren, G
Washington, K
Whan, S
Wilkinson, K

PAIRS

Cooke, S
Cross, M

Watson, A
Minns, C

Amendment negatived.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

**LAW ENFORCEMENT (POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT (KNIFE CRIME) BILL 2024**

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:45): I am almost finished breaking down the amendments in the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. Item [2] of schedule 2 to the bill introduces a new offence in new section 11F (1A) of the Summary Offences Act 1988 to prohibit the sale of a knife to a child who is 16 or 17 years old without a reasonable excuse. Interpreting that offence, item [4] provides that a reasonable excuse includes the requirement for the knife for the lawful pursuit of the child's occupation, training or TAFE education, such as for apprentices, butchers, chefs and others in culinary training.

The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR] has identified an alarming trend in the rates of violent knife crimes in New South Wales. Young people are significantly over-represented in the figures. BOCSAR executive director Jackie Fitzgerald highlighted a stark figure: Young people are six times more likely to be charged than adults, and they are 50 per cent more likely to be charged for non-domestic assaults. Just last year, more than 600 people aged between 10 and 17 years were found with knives in their possession.

The *NSW Police Force 2022-23 Annual Report* showed that Operation Foil, which targeted knife crime, resulted in the seizure of 97 knives. A similar operation in May 2023 saw some 295 knives seized. Operation Foil was conducted again this year on 11 April, and this time police seized 51 knives. Our police are working hard to detect knives and keep our community safe. We must support them and equip them with the tools and authority to find and confiscate those dangerous weapons.

Knives are the weapon that everyone has access to; they sit on everyone's kitchen bench and are for sale in most supermarkets, but they are a lethal weapon. We must act to protect the safety of our community and reflect the seriousness and the gravity of harm caused by knife-related crime. The bill will equip our NSW Police Force with the means to deter possession and use of knives and to better protect our New South Wales community. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (17:48): I speak in debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. I acknowledge that the bill is a step in the right direction. I also acknowledge the Beasley family and thank them for the actions that they have taken not only to see that the law is introduced in New South Wales but also to see that it was introduced in Queensland 12 months ago. Violent knife crime attacks the social fabric of our communities. It is a scourge on our communities. We need our communities to feel safe and we need to ensure that we give our police the resources that they need to maintain law and order.

We cannot turn a blind eye to knife crime. There are individual stories of lives that have been cut short—stories of dreams that have been left unfulfilled and of loved ones who are dealing with unimaginable loss. Wandering powers allow random checks, which allow people to feel safe. They allow people to have security, which is a fundamental human right. Wandering is not about targeting specific groups. It is not about targeting people depending on their race, religion or background. It is about ensuring that everybody in our communities can feel safe.

I acknowledge that the Government introduced the bill but it fails to protect citizens or give police the full powers that they need to maintain law and order in this State. That is why the Opposition has foreshadowed that it will be moving a number of amendments. I acknowledge Labor's attempt to address this serious issue. I heard the Minister talking about the number of knives that have been collected through Operation Foil over the past 12 months. It is a big number: 3,855 knives have been seized across the State. I think people would be quite shocked to know that so many knives are out there on our streets—and those are only the ones that were detected.

Recent events have shown how serious violent knife crime is, and that it can have a lasting and devastating impact on our community. From random stabbings to targeted attacks, the use of knives as weapons has become distressingly common. Lives have been lost, families shattered and communities left in fear. It is a stark reality that demands an equally robust response. This legislation should be about giving greater powers to law enforcement. It should safeguard our communities against the rising tide of violent knife crime. It should take decisive action to ensure the safety and security of every individual, every family and every neighbourhood.

The bill before us falls short of protecting communities and law-abiding citizens from future attacks. It increases punitive measures but it does not contain prevention and proactive measures that will stop attacks like those that have already rocked our communities from happening again. Prior to the Bondi or Wakeley attacks, no offence was committed by a person armed with a knife or other weapon and no serious indictable offence involving violence against a person was committed in the past 12 months in those locations. Therefore, those places would not have met the threshold to be declared designated areas, even if someone had the foresight to predict what was to occur in a 12-hour time frame, as suggested by the bill.

In the days after the Bondi and Wakeley incidents, a further three knife attacks occurred with a lot less media attention. A woman was attacked at Bondi Beach, two people were stabbed in Doonside and a day later another stabbing occurred at a house party in south-west Sydney. If we applied the proposed adaptation of Jack's law to New South Wales, not one of those incidents would have been prevented. For many people, going to church or the local shopping centre has become something that they are afraid to do. The sense of safety for everyone living in New South Wales has been shattered. The legislation must go above and beyond to reinstate people's trust in the Government and law enforcement agencies. Twelve hours in one location is not enough to change the behaviour of society. It is not enough time to alter increasing knife crime statistics. Only an "anytime, anywhere" approach will incite real, tangible change and promote that no amount of knife crime will be tolerated in New South Wales.

We all know that the police do an amazing job. They do an amazing job to ensure that, as an authority, they are there to intervene, investigate and apprehend those who pose a threat to public safety when and wherever they see fit. They are the ones on the ground. They are the ones putting their own safety at risk every day. They are the first to sense danger and they are the first to respond. There is no time to seek permission from a senior

officer or the acting commissioner just so they can do their job properly. The right to live free from the threat of violence should take precedence over individual convenience. Wandering serves as a vital deterrent, dissuading would-be perpetrators from carrying knives and providing peace of mind to law-abiding citizens. It should be able to happen anywhere, at any time, to further deter potential offenders.

Further to that, wandering powers extend to more than just knife crime. During a metal scanner search, a police officer will have reasonable grounds to search the person in accordance with the ordinary search powers if they suspect the person is in possession of any type of dangerous article. Those random searches will protect the wider community from a variety of potential crimes and deter individuals from carrying any form of dangerous material and weapons. The cries of our mourning community have fallen on deaf ears if Labor thinks this bill is a proactive and preventative response to recent events.

These laws refer to designated areas—places like shopping centres. But only allowing certain places to be declared designated areas where there may be an increased risk of higher knife possession rates does nothing to reduce the actual risk. It only shifts the location of the risk; it does not eliminate it. Offenders will move from the shopping centre to the street out the front, from the public transport station to the neighbouring community centre, and wherever in between. Random knife attacks are just that: they are random. They can happen at any given moment at any location. It is not enough to pick out certain locations and guess at a 12-hour time frame of when an offender may strike.

Let us take the politics out of it. This is about people's lives. We are putting people forward. It is about strengthening the bill so that it will be effective in preventing further attacks and changing the narrative of knife crime in New South Wales. The police know what is best. Let the police do their job and let us give them the powers they need to do so effectively. The Opposition's foreshadowed amendments will enhance the bill so that it caters for the police taking proactive measures to address the issue anywhere, at any time.

Wandering is not new. If people are doing the right thing, they have nothing to worry about. Wandering takes place today at sporting events, the Sydney Royal Easter Show and at music festivals. Even at the latest Taylor Swift concert security guards were using wands. If people are complaining about wandering, what are they hiding? If someone is carrying a knife, they are there to cause significant harm to society. Bringing in knife laws but waiting for a problem to occur, or a violent knife crime, is ludicrous. It is ridiculous that the only designated areas are around public transport stations, shopping precincts, major sporting venues or other places where a relevant offence has occurred in the past 12 months. Designated areas weaken this bill. Twelve-hour time limits weaken this bill. The bill should cover anywhere, at any time. We should make it work for our police without restrictive or time-consuming guidelines. I support the Opposition's amendments.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (17:58): I make a brief contribution in support of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. The New South Wales Government is committed to addressing knife crime to keep our community safe. The reforms will send a strong message that knife crime is not tolerated. The Bondi Junction massacre, the attack at a Wakeley church and the fatal stabbing of an 18-year-old near a school in Doonside have triggered an urgency in introducing further legislation to address the issue. The reforms in the bill will help address knife-related crime, get knives off streets and keep the community safe.

The reforms build on responsible action taken by the New South Wales Government over the past year, including the doubling of maximum penalties for various knife-related offences in 2023; ongoing review by the NSW Sentencing Council into sentencing for firearms, knives and other weapons offences; and ongoing high-impact NSW Police Force operations such as Operation Foil, which is an ongoing targeted knife crime and antisocial behaviour operation that last ran from 11 April to 13 April 2024, resulting in 51 knives and weapons seized and 145 people charged with weapon-related offences. Almost 4,000 knives were seized in public places in the past year alone.

The bill will make amendments that target the possession of knives following the reforms that were announced by the New South Wales Government on 7 May 2024. In particular, the bill will focus on the possession of knives by young people, reducing knife crime and enhancing the safety of our community. The bill empowers police, with the correct authority, to stop and scan individuals without a warrant by using a handheld metal scanner in designated areas. A senior police officer of the rank of assistant commissioner or above will be permitted to declare a public transport station, shopping precincts, major sporting venues and other public places prescribed by the regulations as a designated area. For one of those public spaces to be considered a designated area, a relevant offence must have occurred at that place within the past 12 months. A designated area will be in force for 12 hours once it has been declared. During that time, a police officer will have the power to stop any person in the designated area and scan them with a handheld metal scanner.

In the event that the scanner detects there is metal present or there is likely to be metal present, the police officer has the power to require an individual to present the item that has made the scanner go off. It does not give the police officer the authority to search an individual without a warrant. However, if the police officer has reasonable grounds to suspect that an individual is carrying a weapon or dangerous object such as a knife, they may be able to search the person in accordance with ordinary search powers. Police officers will have the authority to confiscate a knife from a child who is found to be in possession of one in a public space without a reasonable excuse, as is permitted in the Young Offenders Act 1997. It is at the discretion of the police what they consider to be an appropriate punishment under the Act. That means that if police think it is suitable for a young offender to face court rather than be issued with a warning, they will face court. The scheme will sunset after three years, after which a statutory review will report to the Parliament on the policy and the impact of the scheme.

The bill will amend the prohibition of the sale of knives to children and increase the penalties associated with the sale of knives to children. The maximum penalty for selling a knife to a child under the age of 16 in New South Wales is currently 50 penalty units, which is the equivalent of \$5,500. The bill raises it to 100 penalty units, which is a fine of \$11,000, 12 months imprisonment or both. Further, the bill introduces a new offence into the Summary Offences Act 1988 to prohibit a person from selling knives to a child aged 16 or 17 without a reasonable excuse. If the person is satisfied that the child requires the knife for education, occupation or training purposes, that constitutes a reasonable excuse. It is vital that we work to keep our community safe. The inclusions in the bill aim to do just that. They will empower police, deter knife crime and restrict the selling of knives to children. In closing, I quote the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, who summed up why the laws are so important:

Giving police the ability to "wand" or "scan" for knives in designated areas is a proactive step toward ensuring community safety. By detecting and deterring knife possession, we're not just preventing potential crime, we're also safeguarding lives. The introduction of legislation inspired by Jack's Law isn't just about law enforcement. It's also about instilling confidence in our community, showing that we're actively working to keep them safe. These laws mark a crucial shift in our approach to combatting knife crime, especially among our youth. By introducing this legislation, we're sending a clear message that knife crime will not be tolerated in our community.

I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (18:05): I speak on behalf of The Greens in debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. The bill seeks to provide the NSW Police Force with new powers to stop and scan, or "wand", with a handheld metal detector any person in a designated area. It also seeks to limit the supply of knives to people under the age of 18 by creating a new offence for the sale of knives to 16- and 17-year-olds without a reasonable excuse and doubling the maximum penalty for the sale of knives to children under 16 years of age from \$5,500 to \$11,000, 12 months in prison or both.

The bill comes just weeks after the New South Wales Labor Government rushed through bail reforms that experts warn will see more children, particularly First Nations children, locked up. Bill after bill, we have seen a series of reactive, punitive law enforcement measures introduced by the Minns Labor Government. Bill after bill, we are seeing the damage that that approach will cause young people, First Nations people and already marginalised and victimised members of the community. Taking that approach—acting tough on law and order and handing more sweeping powers to the NSW Police Force to target and harass certain groups—and failing to address the underlying causes of violent and gender-based attacks will not make our community safer. It is for that reason that The Greens do not support the bill.

There is no denying that recent incidents involving violent knife crime have been tragic and devastating. Our hearts collectively go out to those victims, their loved ones and their communities. The incidents at Bondi and Wakeley have been shocking and traumatic for many in the community. We know that more supports for those with complex health needs—those with mental health needs, those facing homelessness and those who have survived or are affected by traumatic incidents like these—are desperately needed. The Greens absolutely back the expansion of vital support services for people who are otherwise falling through the cracks, including significant increases to mental health supports. On that note, I alert the House to the report handed down by my Greens colleague Dr Amanda Cohn. It makes a suite of 39 recommendations to better fund and resource mental health services, address unsafe workloads and reform emergency responses to mental health crises.

The Greens are deeply concerned that no case has been made as to how the bill, had it been in place before recent tragic incidents, would have made a difference in any of those specific circumstances. Furthermore, the passage of the bill will see many people who have not done anything wrong—who are not carrying a knife and who have no intention to commit a violent crime—being targeted, punished and potentially subjected to serious charges. As a result, there will be serious consequences for the human rights and civil liberties of many in the community. In New South Wales knife possession and knife-related incidents of violence have been on a downward trend for several years. The most recent data from the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics

and Research shows that knife crime is at a 20-year low with 1,518 violent knife incidents in 2023 compared to 4,258 in 2004. That is nearly a 65 per cent reduction over two decades.

Like so many of the tough-on-crime responses introduced by this Labor Government and, indeed, successive Labor governments before that, the measures proposed in this bill are a reaction that flies in the face of years of evidence, justified only by an inaccurate skewing and complete misrepresentation of the reality of knife crime and its threat to our community in New South Wales. That is not to say that each one of those individual violent knife crimes and the people who have suffered as a result of those and who have been impacted by that trauma are not deserving of our outgoing sympathy and respect, but I repeat that the Government has yet to provide any evidence or details on how the laws we are debating would have addressed or prevented any of those violent knife attacks.

Under this bill a police officer of any rank can stop and search any person in New South Wales without a warrant. The police officer may also detain a person for as long as they deem reasonably necessary to exercise their powers. Let us be clear: That person may have no knife on them and the police will have the powers to do that. The potential for this bill to erode civil and individual liberties that are the hallmark of any democracy and society cannot be overstated. First, the notion of reasonable suspicion is a fundamental part of our justice system. It is essential to ensuring that searches that are arbitrary or based on biases, generalisations or negative stereotypes are prevented; and that someone's ethnicity, their religion, their appearance or mannerisms are not grounds for a random search.

While we know that New South Wales police already take liberties with the reasonable suspicion provision—for example, through the use of sniffer drug dogs as an intimidatory tactic—all this bill does is afford the police even more power and discretion. To be clear, the police in New South Wales already have extensive search and seizure powers. This bill would only add to them at an alarming rate, and no police officer would be required to have reasonable suspicion in order to conduct a random search. This bill is said to be modelled on the Queensland law—a law that was introduced in response to the death of a young man in Surfers Paradise because of multiple stabbings. However, a review of the trial of the wandering powers afforded under this Act conducted by Griffith University exposed several fundamental flaws with wandering as an approach to address knife-related crimes. The Griffith University review found:

... in crowded ... [Safe Night Precincts] it is not practical to wand every individual, so the variation and inconsistency in who gets selected was considerable. Much of this seemed to lack any evidence base related to actual offending patterns among different groups at different places, and to vary across different groups of officers.

In other words, when faced with a large group of people, officers in the trial did not appear to decide who to search based on evidence, but rather on an individual and inconsistent basis. This finding should be cause for concern for anyone who values concerns about people's rights and liberties being breached and also opposes the idea of racial profiling, which should be everybody in this place. The review also found evidence of police using their wandering power as a way to detect other offences and collect information. As the New South Wales Bar Association wrote, "There is limited, if any, evidence-based research or findings that demonstrate that random scanning powers lead to reduced violent knife crime rates in any significant way." This begs the question: Knowing that the Queensland Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Act 2023 was applied inconsistently, targeted certain people based on an officer's own discretion, and was used for purposes other than searching for knives, why is this New South Wales Labor Government trying to follow suit by bringing forward its own flawed bill?

This bill does not protect our communities. Instead, it takes us another step closer to a draconian State that authorises mass warrantless searches and surveillance that will further entrench the NSW Police Force's ingrained culture of systemic racism and attacking and targeting marginalised communities in contact with the carceral systems. In a recent report on the stripsearching of children by New South Wales police, Redfern Legal Centre revealed that First Nations children made up almost 45 per cent of children stripsearched between 2016 and 2023, despite being only 6.2 per cent of the population aged between 10 and 17. [*Extension of time*]

We also saw the use by New South Wales police of the Suspect Targeting Management Plan resulting in the "overuse of overt and intrusive policing tactics ... resulting in unreasonable surveillance and monitoring of young people", and a "gross over-representation of young ... people selected for STMP targeting". In another example of police abuse of power, between 1 January 2013 and 30 June 2023 there were 94,535 general and strip searches prompted by sniffer drug dogs, and nearly 75 per cent of these searches found no illicit substances. I emphasise: 75 per cent found no illicit substances. These numbers are damning and unacceptable. The impact of this on people's lives no doubt will inflict immediate and intergenerational trauma that will only be increased by the passing of this bill. As the CEO of the NSW/ACT Aboriginal Legal Service, Karly Warner, said:

Too often we see Aboriginal people – often children – speak up against police targeting and end up with police charging them with a trifecta of offensive language, resist arrest, and assault police, without having done anything wrong in the first place.

It is a shame that we are yet again in this place debating a law that is not thought through and will not address or limit the tragedies that have occurred and that erodes fundamental individual liberties and rights and will cause unconscionable harm to marginalised communities. But while it is shameful, it is, sadly, not surprising. After all, we know that New South Wales Labor historically has had a commitment to introducing tough law and order reforms, but we have to remember that this Labor Government was also the same Government that promised drug law reform and protection of human rights in the State ahead of the last election.

Sadly, we have seen little movement in those spaces. This is the same Government that committed to youth diversion and reducing Indigenous incarceration, but whose actions and legislative agenda have so far done the opposite. I foreshadow that The Greens in the other place will move amendments that attempt to salvage this bad bill and curtail some of the harm it will undoubtedly cause against our communities. The amendments will include preventing entirely the use of wandering powers on any child under the age of 14 and limiting the use of wandering on a person who is under 18 to circumstances where their parent or guardian is present and the police officer is reasonably satisfied that wandering is necessary as a measure of last resort.

These amendments will also require a police officer to inform an individual that they may produce any metal object prior to being subjected to wandering powers and leave the area without being subject to wandering powers, or do both. The Greens amendments that will be moved in other place will also require the commissioner to keep records about the use of wandering powers conferred by this bill—including details of whether a knife or another weapon was found as a result of the scan and whether other police powers were exercised in conjunction with the scan—and include this information in an annual report of the NSW Police Force.

I urge the Opposition, the New South Wales Labor Government and the crossbench to carefully consider these amendments moved in the other place in detail and in good faith, and to support them with the intention of mitigating the significant harmful and unintended consequences that this bill will have. We know the solutions, and we have known the solutions for years. For decades experts have called on successive governments to invest in evidence-based, frontline youth services and community-led initiatives designed to address crime prevention and mental health issues, but those calls have, sadly, gone unanswered. It is long past the time that NSW Labor broke the cycle, finally listened and meaningfully responded to those calls. It is time to step up and stop pandering to the beck and call of the NSW Police Force.

The Greens call on the Government to heed the warnings of First Nation Elders, communities and legal experts, and civil liberties and human rights advocates on the damage that this bill will cause. We urge NSW Labor to listen to the overwhelming chorus of experts who say that more rigorous consultation is required to develop an evidence-based response that will not have grave, unintended consequences for the very communities we are trying to protect. The Greens cannot support this bill, which will hand more power to the NSW Police Force, will not make our community any safer and will, indeed, cause further harm.

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (18:20): I briefly speak in favour of the important Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. In June last year the Government amended the Crimes Act 1900 to increase the penalty for knife possession and knife use, passing legislation that doubled the maximum penalties for separate offences. At that time no-one could have predicted the string of violent knife crimes that we have recently experienced. In line with strong community expectation, the Government has introduced the further reforms in this bill to build on last year's reforms. Over a period of just four days, there were five unrelated stabbing attacks across Sydney, leaving seven people dead. Elsewhere in Sydney, another three stabbings passed with less attention, yet they were more indicative of the knife crime that occurs without more than a passing mention on any given week. The number of attacks over such a short period of time left our communities in shock and justifiably angry. The message was loud and clear: Enough is enough.

It is the role of responsible government to keep our communities safe, and this bill will go a long way towards that. The bill targets the possession of knives to reduce knife crime and boost community safety. The bill amends the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 to authorise police to stop and scan persons by using a handheld metal scanner in designated areas without a warrant. Reporting requirements and safeguards are built into the bill to protect people, to minimise any imposition on the person being scanned and to protect vulnerable people. The current bill is largely influenced by Queensland's Jack's law. Since Jack's law passed in Queensland in March 2023, 577 weapons have been seized. The weapons seized range from kitchen and butchers' knives to tomahawks, hammers, hunting knives, knuckledusters, screwdrivers and more. To put that in perspective, this potentially means that many acts of violence were disrupted by the removal of those weapons. The bill also amends section 11F of the Summary Offences Act 1988. It increases the maximum penalty for the offence of selling a knife to a child under the age of 16 and introduces a new offence prohibiting a person from selling a knife to a child aged 16 or 17 without a reasonable excuse.

While the crime statistics here in New South Wales show that violent knife crime has been trending downwards, we need, in fact, to analyse the numbers behind the statistics, where a more complicated picture

emerges. "Certainly, amongst some groups, especially young people, we are seeing the carrying and use of knives increasing," said University of Newcastle criminologist Dr Xanthé Mallett. "And that's particularly concerning, because we are talking about people as young as 12 carrying weapons." Unfortunately, young people are significantly over-represented when it comes to who is being charged with violent knife crimes. Robbery figures are particularly confronting, according to Jackie Fitzgerald, the executive director of the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR]. She said, "Taking into account the population, young people aged 10 to 17 are about six times more likely than adults to be charged in New South Wales. For non-domestic assault," she said, "the rates for young people are about 50 per cent higher." BOCSAR statistics reported more than 600 people aged 10 to 17 were found with knives in the past year.

The NSW Police Force undertakes regular operations to target knife crime. I note that in the 2022 annual report, the NSW Police Force said that the statewide Operation Foil had resulted in 966 charges and 97 knives being seized. A similar operation in May last year led to 172 people being charged with 565 offences and 294 knives being seized. According to the police commissioner last month, in the week before the Bondi Junction attack, another Operation Foil took place in which 51 knives were seized. I note the figures that Minister Catley quoted in her contribution earlier, that 3,855 knives were seized between April 2023 and April 2024. The problem, of course, is that knives are readily available and easily concealed. That is why we need measures such as those contained in this bill. These new laws demonstrate our Government's commitment. They are a major step towards reducing weapon accessibility among young people and advancing the fight against knife crime. I wholeheartedly agree with the Attorney General that we must do more to deter knife possession and reflect the seriousness and gravity of the potential harm caused. That is why I support the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (18:25): I speak on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. I put on record that I support the bill, particularly those aspects relating to the selling of knives to young people. However, I emphasise the shadow Attorney General's comments about the bill and its need for amendment. I start by putting on the record my deepest sympathies and condolences to those affected by the recent Bondi tragedy and also to Jack's parents, the Beasleys, and I note their advocacy achievements in attempting to make our community a safer place. I recently assisted a local family whose son was the victim of a knife-related robbery. He was required to attend court to give evidence as a victim against one of the offenders. I retell these events because knife crime has an everyday effect on all members of the community, not only those involved in high-profile cases.

The young person I talk about is a well-respected sporting and academic high achiever at one of my electorate's well-known quality schools. He comes from a respectful, decent family, just like many other families within the electorate of Winston Hills. On the day in question—and it is important to understand that it was a day—it was 5.00 p.m. on a summer afternoon in a busy, suburban shopping area. The young man had just walked his girlfriend from her part-time place of employment to the local railway. He said goodbye to her and turned to head home, when he was confronted by a number of teenagers. One of those teenagers produced a knife and demanded his wallet and phone, and the terrified young man handed both over. They then demanded his card and phone personal identification numbers. They took a photo of him and said, "If you dob on us, we will track you down and stab you."

We can imagine that horrifying event and the trauma the young person suffered, but it was not only him. It extended to his girlfriend, who was on the train heading home and could not understand why he was not returning the texts she had started to send as soon as she got on the train. That continued for her for some hours, completely unaware of what had happened to him. It extended to his mother, who was contacted by his girlfriend, saying that she could not contact him and did not know what had happened. The whole family was concerned for his welfare. The presence of knives at this crime completely changed the seriousness of the possible and actual consequences the victim suffered. As I said, it was broad daylight in our suburb. The possession of knives in public places is dangerous, as we see in high-profile cases but, importantly, from a community safety point of view, it is also potentially very dangerous, as was the situation for the young person in my electorate.

There is a deadly combination of mentally ill persons and knives, and there is a deadly combination of young people and knives. That combination in young people, particularly, is founded in a lack of understanding and awareness of the potential seriousness of their actions. Let us be frank: Knife crime is predominantly associated with young people, and that is sometimes founded in bravado derived from social media, movies and peer association. The potential consequences of carrying a "shiv", a "blade" or a "steel", as knives are known, are often lost on a young person due to their immaturity.

The taking of knives from young people during policing operations not only protects potential victims; importantly, it also protects young offenders who may end up committing very serious crimes and being incarcerated in circumstances where they did not have an understanding of the seriousness of what they were involved in. If it is accepted that knife crime and young people are associated, then wandering as a form of search

is an excellent response. What better way to be as unintrusive as possible than a quick scan with a wand, rather than a hands-on physical search of a young person? It is for these reasons that I support the wand legislation. However, as I said at the start of my contribution, this bill is a good idea but the implementation is poor.

The bill has been nobbled. Whether that is from a lack of deep consultation or for some other reason, I do not know. But there has been a lack of consultation, as The Greens have indicated. The New South Wales Bar Association was not consulted. I wonder, considering the implementation issues with the bill, how deeply the police association or, in fact, officers of the police force were consulted. One of the biggest impacts on police numbers and police effectiveness is paperwork and red tape. Cutting out just an hour a day of police paperwork over a week would get an extra officer a day on the street. In the current climate, where police numbers are critical, cutting paperwork and red tape so that police can do their operational job more effectively is valuable to society. This bill ties the police up in knots, it drowns them in paperwork, and it puts hurdles and hoops in front of them.

I now turn to the bill to indicate those hurdles and hoops that the police are facing. Firstly, I note that the bill provides for a trial of police powers. It is often said, "If you can't get a change through, put it through as a trial." One has to wonder why this legislation is being put before us as only a trial that runs out in three years, considering the seriousness of the Bondi Junction incident and situations such as the one Jack faced. For police to be able to use the trial power to carry out scans in a declared designated area requires the authorisation of an assistant commissioner. We are talking about knife crime in a public place. We have police officers out in public spaces every night and day—senior constables, sergeants, inspectors, superintendents and chief superintendents. But none of those operational police are able to make a declaration that a place is a designated area. They would have to move above the rank of assistant commissioner, into the top 1 per cent of the organisation, to have that power. This is the first hurdle faced by the police on the streets who are attempting to protect us.

If such a declaration is made, as the shadow Attorney General indicated, it is only for a period of 12 hours. However, prior to making that declaration, the senior police officer needs to, firstly, be certain that knife offences have happened at the place in the previous 12 months; secondly, consider that the use of handheld scanners will be an effective means of deterrence; and, thirdly, have considered the impact of the use of handheld scanners on lawful activity in the area and whether any past handheld scanners in the area have been effective. Apart from those determinations, new section 45H requires a declaration of a designated area to be published on the NSW Police Force website "as soon as practicable" after the declaration is made—that is, not after the wand has taken place and the operation is finished, or after 12 hours, but as soon as practicable once the declaration is made.

So if the police declare Central Railway Station to be a designated area, as soon as practicable, that declaration will appear on the NSW Police Force website, and I assume that the young people I referred to earlier will become aware of it and tell others through social media, "Don't go to Central station if you're carrying a knife." This publication requirement nobbles the bill's effectiveness. A further example of red tape in the bill is when the designated area includes a train station. A complex new section provides that authorised use of the scanner extends to two scheduled stops in either direction. This makes it more difficult for police: Has there been one stop, two stops or three stops? It indicates that when drafting the bill there was an attempt to make it as bureaucratic and as difficult to interpret as possible. [*Extension of time*]

Continuing in that vein, the bill provides that the police officer who is exercising the power must do so in the least invasive way practicable and, if practicable, the police officer must be of the same sex as the person being searched. Before exercising a power, the police officer must give the person evidence that the police officer is a police officer, unless they are in uniform; the name and place of duty of the police officer; and the reason for the exercise of the power. They must also give a warning to the person that the person is required by law to comply with the direction.

Those requirements set the tone of the implementation difficulties that police on the street will face. Not only do they have to seek the permission of a senior officer, not only does that senior officer have to go through a series of assessments involving whether crime has occurred at that scene before, but then the operational officers have to perform their duties in a particular way, complying with the Act with regard to producing evidence and providing warnings to people. And the red tape continues under new section 45P, which requires the police commissioner to maintain records about the use of the powers and to publish that information in the NSW Police Force's annual report under the Government Sector Finance Act. The Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism must then review the proposed Act after a period of two years and table a report on the outcome of the review in each House of Parliament. Basically, my submission is that this bill contains an excellent idea that has been nobbled in its implementation. If the Government is serious about this bill, it will remove the roadblocks and let the police get on with doing their job.

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (18:37): I speak on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. The bill addresses a critical issue that demands

immediate and comprehensive action. From the outset, I recognise the Government for its response to the horrific events at Bondi Junction on 13 April 2024. Like the member for Winston Hills, I express my sincere condolences to the families of the victims of that tragedy. I thank the Attorney General for bringing this bill to the House. This legislation is a necessary and urgent response to the tragic and horrifying Bondi Junction mass stabbing murders and the alarming increase in knife-related homicides across our State.

As someone who has dedicated over two decades of my life to policing in this State, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating consequences of knife crime, and my experience in law enforcement has provided me with a unique perspective on the challenges and dangers our police officers face around the clock each and every day. These challenges are not just about enforcing the law but also about ensuring the safety of the community. In recent years we have seen a disturbing pattern of knife-related violence. The statistics are not just numbers; they represent lives lost, families shattered and communities living in fear. The Bondi Junction tragedy was a stark reminder that knife crime can happen anywhere, at any time and to anyone. It is our duty to ensure that such atrocities are not repeated. This bill is a step in the right direction. It seeks to enhance the power and, therefore, the capabilities of our police, equipping them with the additional tools that they need to effectively combat and detect knife crime.

From experience, I can attest that one of the greatest challenges that police face is the unpredictability and lethal nature of knife attacks. Knives can be easily concealed and can be obtained without much difficulty. They are in almost every household kitchen and can be purchased from supermarkets. The amendments proposed in the bill include increased search and seizure powers in declared areas; stricter penalties for sale, possession and use of knives; and improved support for knife crime prevention programs. These measures are designed not only to deter potential offenders but also to empower our police officers to act swiftly and decisively in situations where a knife attack is imminent.

One of the key components of the bill is the extension of the search and seizure powers. It is critical that we remove weapons from the streets before they can be used to commit crimes. Current limitations often prevent police from conducting searches based on reasonable suspicion alone, hindering their ability to act pre-emptively. By granting authority to police in this area, we can significantly reduce the number of knives in circulation and prevent potential attacks. The bill also proposes tougher penalties for those found in possession of a knife without a lawful excuse. It is imperative that we send a strong message that carrying a knife without a lawful excuse will not be tolerated in our society. This legislative change will hopefully serve as a deterrent, making would-be offenders think twice before arming themselves and going out onto the streets.

Prevention is as important as enforcement. The bill includes provisions for increased funding and support for knife crime prevention programs, particularly for those targeting young people. As someone who has worked with youth during my policing career, I understand the importance of education and early intervention. By addressing the root causes of knife crime, such as social disadvantage and lack of opportunities, we can hopefully steer vulnerable individuals away from a path of crime and violence. It would be remiss of me not to discuss mental health, which is entirely relevant to the conversation. While the legislation is a welcome element of the Government's response, mental illness as a factor of knife-related and other violent crime also needs to be addressed with equal measure.

I note the announcement from the Government today on \$111 million in this year's budget being directed towards mental health, and I welcome that announcement. I urge the Government to explore realistic policy options and to act appropriately on this aspect for public safety. The safety of our communities and our police is paramount. The bill is not just about giving police more power; it is about creating a safer community for everyone. Enhanced resources for officers will ensure they are better prepared to handle knife-related incidents, reducing the risk to their own lives and to those of the public.

The Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024 is a vital piece of legislation. It addresses the urgent need to combat the rising threat of knife crime in our State and reflects a commitment to the safety and wellbeing of New South Wales residents. The bill is an approach that combines enhanced law enforcement capabilities with proactive prevention measures. That is why I support the bill. While it is no panacea, it is a positive step towards reducing knife crime and protecting lives. By passing this legislation, we honour the victims of the Bondi Junction tragedy and other knife crimes. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (18:43): I speak to the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. Members will recall the tragic events of 13 April where six people were killed and 12 injured at Bondi Junction Westfield. That was the catalyst for the Labor Government bringing this bill. But I also want to speak briefly about a tragedy that happened in my electorate of Coffs Harbour.

Just after 6.00 a.m. on 2 May, emergency services were called to Ocean Parade in Coffs Harbour, just outside the Coffs Harbour Surf Club, following reports that a man had been stabbed. A 21-year-old, Kye Schaefer, was treated at the scene by NSW Ambulance paramedics for chest and neck injuries before being taken to Coffs Harbour Base Hospital where he later died. Officers attached to the Coffs-Clarence Police District attended and established a crime scene before the matter was taken carriage of by the State Crime Command's Homicide Squad under Strike Force Koorngaroo. There has been a silver lining: Today the strike force detectives arrested a 36-year-old man at a Coffs Harbour correctional facility. He was taken to the police station where he has been charged with murder. I congratulate the NSW Police Force on its great work apprehending this alleged murderer. Today's arrest brings a degree of closure to the family and also reassures our community that an alleged murderer is behind bars.

The bill is being modelled off Jack's law in Queensland. In its first 12 months that law has been incredibly successful. It is an evidence-based approach. In the first seven months the Queensland Police Service seized 400 weapons, and in the last five months it seized about 20 knives per month—obviously word got out that the police had the power to search people. A total of 500 weapons were seized in the first 12 months. That activity was front-loaded in the first seven months of the law being in place. However, the Opposition does not believe that that this bill goes far enough. We will be proposing amendments that will give police the power to wand people anywhere and at any time. It is important for us to reiterate that there are legal reasons for people to have custody of knives in public places. Those reasons, which are covered in section 93IB of the Crimes Act, are:

- (3) A reasonable excuse includes the person having the knife in the person's custody—
 - (a) because it is reasonably necessary for—
 - (i) the lawful pursuit of the person's occupation, education or training, or
 - (ii) the preparation or consumption of food or drink, or
 - (iii) participation in a lawful entertainment, recreation or sport, or
 - (iv) the exhibition of knives for retail or other trade purposes, or
 - (v) an organised exhibition by knife collectors, or
 - (vi) the wearing of an official uniform, or
 - (vii) genuine religious purposes, or
 - (b) because it is reasonably necessary during travel to or from or incidental to an activity ... or
 - (c) in circumstances prescribed by the regulations.

There are still legal reasons for people to have knives with them. The bill does not seek to change that. The amendments proposed by the Opposition largely seek to remove the designated areas that are defined in the bill. The amendments will create a more effective deterrent for anyone wanting to unlawfully carry a knife. We want to send people the message that they can be wanded anywhere and at any time.

Wandering is a non-invasive search. It is already quite commonplace in places like airports, concerts and sporting venues. The NSW Police Force does an amazing job keeping our streets safe. We trust our police to do random breath testing. We know that random breath testing can happen on any street—a backstreet, a main street or on a highway. It can be on a Friday night, a Tuesday morning or a Wednesday afternoon. Every time a person hops into their car, there is a reasonable expectation there could be random breath testing on any street they drive down. That is a very effective deterrent for people not to drink and drive. The Opposition contends that wandering also needs to be anywhere and at any time. If somebody is walking down the street, illegally carrying a knife, there should be an expectation that any police officer can wand them. If somebody is breaking the law, the full force of the law and the penalties will apply.

The Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism said in her contribution earlier this evening that Jack's law in Queensland is a good law, but we know that Queensland is looking at strengthening its laws. It is even admitting that its laws do not go far enough. Being in government is not just copying the homework of a neighbouring State. It is about creating laws that are fit for purpose and fit for our current conditions in New South Wales. It is my belief and it is the Opposition's belief that this power should not be limited to shopping centres, transport and sporting venues. It should be available anywhere, any time. Police should have the power to wand someone, for instance, carrying a knife illegally down a residential street. Currently, the bill would not allow for that.

I note that The Greens will also move amendments to the bill. Very disappointingly, they are seemingly more concerned about a person's right to commit a crime than about keeping our families safe. Their amendments will greatly weaken the bill. Firstly, they will not apply to people under 14. Children will be free to carry knives, according to The Greens. The Greens will require somebody aged between 14 and 18 to have a parent with them before they are wanded. I do not know what planet The Greens are living on, but how many people between the

ages of 14 and 18, with criminal intent and illegally carrying a knife, are walking around with their parents? It beggars belief that The Greens would put forward amendments that would weaken the bill in this way.

One of The Greens' amendments is truly gobsmacking, and that is that the police can give a person, before wand, an opportunity to leave the area. Anyone carrying a knife illegally would have the option to say to the police, "That's fine. I won't consent to a search. I'll just leave." They would take their knife with them and potentially put people in another location in harm's way. I honestly sometimes think that *The Betoota Advocate* writes policies for The Greens. Certainly, it must have had a hand in writing the speech this evening!

Over the past few months it has become evident that crime is on the rise in our communities. They do not feel safe and many feel that the pendulum has swung too far away from protecting our citizens and towards protecting criminals. I say to those who are apologists for criminal behaviour that the community has had enough. They want their families to be safe. They want justice for crimes committed and they are demanding laws that hold criminals accountable for their behaviour. If somebody does not have a lawful reason for carrying a knife, our community expects them to be held accountable. While we can never eliminate the risk of horrible things happening, it is our duty in this place to reduce the risks as much as possible. I urge the Government and the crossbench to support the Opposition's amendments, strengthen the bill and give our hardworking police officers the tools they need to keep our community safe.

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (18:52): I contribute to the important debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. We have heard from members in the House about the four days and five unrelated stabbings across Sydney during April this year. Seven people tragically lost their lives. Six of those persons died at the hands of Joel Cauchi, the 40-year-old Queenslander who attacked mostly women in a Bondi Junction shopping centre. There was then the stabbing in Wakeley in Western Sydney, another stabbing in Bondi and a stabbing in Doonside. There may well have been more offences involving knives.

I put on record, like other members of the House, my deep condolences to the relatives of the victims of the recent knife crimes. I also extend my condolences and sympathy to the parents of Jack Beasley, Brett and Belinda Beasley. I thank Brett and Belinda for their commitment to changing the laws on carrying and using knives in our society. The Opposition is pleased that the Government has introduced the bill. However, for the reasons given earlier today by the shadow Attorney General, the member for Wahroonga, the bill does not provide sufficient powers to the police. I note that the shadow Attorney General will be proposing amendments to strengthen the powers of the police to combat knife crime. I fully support those amendments.

In this House, as legislators, we have a responsibility to enact legislation which will ensure that those who we represent in our communities can go about their business and their lives safely. We also have a responsibility to ensure that the community is free from intrusive actions by the police. We must balance civil liberties with the rights of community members to go about their business while being protected. The question of where the balance lies between crime reduction and community safety on the one hand and the interference with civil liberties on the other hand is not always simple. The debate on the bill before the House is really about whether the police should be given greater powers—namely, greater powers than those foreshadowed in the bill—to enhance their ability to protect society.

The Opposition will seek to amend the bill to allow the police to use metal detection wands at any time and place, without being in a designated area. I support that amendment. As a solicitor prior to being elected to this place, I saw the harmful effects of knife crimes. I appeared for persons who had been charged with committing knife crimes. I have been influenced by victims who have suffered at the hands of people committing knife crimes. Anyone who knows a victim or knows the family of a victim will more than surely agree with me that the powers given to police to use metal detecting wands should be far greater than those contained in the Government's bill.

I am aware of the New South Wales Bar Association's position on the bill. Today I read the Bar Association's submission. I note that the Bar Association was not consulted by the Government on the draft bill prior to the introduction of the bill into the House. Given the importance of the bill to the safety of our community on the one hand and the interference with the liberties of our community on the other hand, it is not clear to me why the Government did not consult with the Bar Association. I assume that the Government also failed to consult with the Law Society. Like the member for Winston Hills, as a former police officer, I have doubts that the Government obtained the advice of the NSW Police Force. I recognise that the Bar Association is concerned that the bill will have a profound impact on the civil liberties of people in New South Wales. There is, however, a need to take action to ensure that our community members can go about their lives safely. I note that there is a sunset clause contained within new section 45R, which has been set at three years.

I now consider provisions of the bill that limit handheld scanners to designated areas and the circumstances upon which a senior police officer may designate an area. New section 45F provides that a senior police officer,

which is the rank of assistant commissioner, may by written instrument declare certain areas to be designated areas. The areas are limited to public transport stations, shopping precincts, sporting venues or other places prescribed by the regulations. I appreciate that the bill is modelled on the Queensland legislation, but there does not appear to be any proper basis for limiting the designated area to the places mentioned. Rather than adding to the prescribed area by regulation, greater clarity to the police and to the community would be achieved if the designated area was not limited pursuant to section 45F. It would appear that the Government, as indicated by previous members, has merely stolen the homework of the Queensland Parliament. It has copied another State without really looking into the bill and making it fit for purpose for this State.

The circumstances in which a police officer, namely a senior police officer, may declare a place as a designated area are set out in section 45G. It is the Opposition's view that wandering should take place at any time. The requirement contained within new section 45G (a) that a relevant offence has occurred within the past 12 months undermines the preventative aims of the legislation. Furthermore, the requirement contained within new section 45G (b) that the senior police officer must conclude that the declaration of the area as a designated area is likely to be effective in detecting or deterring the commission of an offence involving a knife or other weapon does not make sense. The police officer will no doubt be challenged in court as to how they were able to form such a view.

As a solicitor who has practised in criminal law, I assure the House that there will be those who consistently challenge the views held by the senior police officer. We may see many assistant commissioners having to turn up and give evidence in court. The ability of a defendant who is charged as a result of this legislation to challenge the belief of a police officer completely undermines the legislation. For the declaration of an area as a "designated area" to have any meaningful deterrent effect, members of the community must know that the area has been so declared. It is worth examining how the provision would have any deterrent effect when the only form of publication is that which is set out in proposed section 45H, which provides that an instrument declaring a place to be a designated area must be published on the police website as soon as practicable after the declaration is made.

A proper reading of the bill means that the police could be exercising the power to wend a member of society before the declaration is published on the website. An Opposition amendment will seek to delete proposed new section 45H. Even if that amendment is not successful, I indicate to the Attorney General that, as a matter of evidence, it would be far more sensible that the declaration only come into effect when the declaration is published on the website. That would give certainty to the time and date of such declaration. The legitimacy of the police power depends upon society knowing, with certainty, that an area has been declared a designated area. Legitimacy of the power is enhanced when the legislation and the declaration are clear. Because of the way in which the legislation has been drafted, a member of society may not be able to see the published declaration on the police website, and the member of society may then want to challenge the ability of the police to exercise the power. Again, it would be far more sensible if the declaration only came into effect upon publication on the website.

Proposed new section 45I sets out a 12-hour limitation period. Whilst I again acknowledge that the Government has merely copied the Queensland legislation, which contains the 12-hour period, I stress to members of this House that there does not appear to be any research that suggests that the 12-hour period is the most sensible period to include in the legislation. It is the Opposition's position that the power of the police to use the metal detection wands should be available to the police at any time. As members of this House know, my career prior to being elected to this place was as a police officer, a police prosecutor and a lawyer. I have high respect for members of the NSW Police Force. By putting forward amendments to the bill, the Opposition also respects the views of police officers and wants to enable them to exercise their powers correctly and for the purpose of keeping our community safe.

The police should not be hamstrung by legislation that does not protect the community. I draw on my own experience as a police officer, and I wish to ensure that our police are given the powers to keep our community safe. Weapons are a threat to the safety of our community. By providing police with a broad-ranging power, they will proactively be able to protect the public. I appreciate that the Bar Association contends that the bill may result in unfair targeting of marginalised or Indigenous members of society. [*Extension of time*]

I note that the Bar Association's submission states, "The association is concerned that the powers to conduct handheld scanner searches are likely to disproportionately impact marginalised and vulnerable groups in New South Wales, including First Nations people." In answer to the Bar Association's concerns, I again refer to the need for a balance to be struck between protecting our society from harmful crimes such as knife crimes on the one hand and the interference with civil liberties on the other hand. The balance always causes concern when consideration is given to increasing police powers. The need to keep our community safe is paramount, in my view, and tilts the balance in favour of providing the police with greater powers. It is my view and the Opposition's view that the powers should be not limited, as set out in the bill, and should be exercisable anywhere and at any

time. The bill does not give the police broad enough powers. Therefore, I ask members to support the Opposition's amendments when presented to the House.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (19:04): I speak in debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024 and on the introduction of Jack's law in New South Wales. As we know, this law was named after a young man named Jack who lost his life due to a violent and unprovoked attack. Jack was fatally stabbed during a night out in Surfers Paradise in 2019. The tragedy saw Queensland police introduce Jack's law. The bill seeks to address knife crime by giving police wandering powers in New South Wales. The bill is essential in assuring the safety of our communities. However, in its current form, wandering powers are subject to geographical restrictions, meaning wandering is only allowed in designated areas and on board public transport vehicles that are within those designated areas. Those areas are limited to public transport stations, shopping precincts, sporting venues and other public places prescribed by the regulations, including places where there are special events or events in support of the night-time economy.

In the wake of tragedies like those that we have witnessed, I stand firm with my colleagues in proposing that amendments be made to the bill to give the NSW Police Force powers to wand in any public place at any time. As drafted, the laws would be technically and operationally fraught. They would be a defence lawyer's dream as they make the dismissal of an alleged offender's charges more likely. As the member for Winston Hills so beautifully detailed, the bill ties up our police in red tape. It is so convoluted that it unnecessarily restricts police in performing the very job we want them to do.

By amending the bill to include wandering powers, Jack's law in New South Wales would take a firm stance against perpetrators of violent crimes by sending a clear and resolute message that anyone who carries a knife in New South Wales with the intent to commit a serious crime will be caught and punished and that this behaviour will not be tolerated in our society. It would serve as a potent deterrent to potential offenders. New South Wales communities deserve to know that they are protected by the NSW Police Force from perpetrators of violent crime, no matter where they are located geographically.

Whilst in a dangerous situation, police should not have to analyse whether they are legally able to defuse the situation by utilising their search powers. They do not need to be hesitating or doubting the situation that they are in. If we want to protect our police so that they can protect us, we must allow them to use their powers in any area at any time. The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research advises that in 2023 the NSW Police Force proceeded against 795 persons for assault or robbery with a knife. One can only speculate about the number of knives being carried by perpetrators and going undetected due to our NSW Police Force not having the power to conduct wandering. We can do better than that.

I also call on the New South Wales Labor Government to provide a time line for the introduction of Jack's law in New South Wales. The immediate introduction of the amended law will provide a future where acts of violence have no place in our communities. It is imperative for all of us to support Jack's law and ardently advocate for its effective implementation. By raising awareness about the consequences of violent behaviour and fostering a culture of respect, nonviolence in our communities is achievable.

Let us provide the NSW Police Force the powers to conduct wandering searches at their discretion and in a manner that ensures our communities are protected from any further violent attacks. This is about proactive policing that prevents crimes and provides safer communities. Let us honour Jack's memory. Let us protect the community and protect the officers who protect us by giving them the tools to ensure that our communities are safe. If the police Minister were to say to police officers, "I want to give you the powers to wand at any time", I am absolutely certain they would say thank you.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:08): I speak in support of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation (Knife Crime) Bill 2024, which has been modelled on Jack's law and gives police powers to wand or scan people for knives, in designated areas, without a warrant. There are existing knife offences under the Summary Offences Act 1988 and the Crime Act 1900. The bill will add to powers given to the police to try to ensure community safety. I will say a bit about the existing prohibitions. In the Summary Offences Act it is an offence to have custody of an offensive implement in a public place or school without a reasonable excuse. An offensive implement refers to anything made or adapted for causing injury and anything that is intended by the person who has custody of the implement to injure or menace a person.

Section 11D provides that it is an offence for the parent of a child, where the child is below the age of 18 and commits an offence, to knowingly authorise the child to commit the offence. There are other provisions in both the Summary Offences Act and the Crimes Act for crimes to do with knives. Also, the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Knife Crimes) Act 2023, which commenced last year, doubled the penalties for the offences of possessing or wielding a knife in a public place. Those offences were moved from the Summary Offences Act

1988 to the Crimes Act. I recall I spoke on that at the time. This reform targets the possession of knives further to reduce knife crime and boost the community safety I mentioned.

The first reform in the bill is the introduction of part 4A into the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002. It permits police, with the proper authority, to stop and scan persons using a handheld metal scanner in designated areas without a warrant. It will also amend the Summary Offences Act to increase the maximum penalty for the offence of selling a knife to a child under the age of 16 from 50 penalty units to 100 penalty units or imprisonment for 12 months, or both. That is a significant jump to \$11,000. Through the amendments to the Summary Offences Act, it will also prohibit a person from selling a knife to a child aged 16 or 17 without a reasonable excuse. The lawful pursuit of the young person's or child's occupation, education or training falls into the category of a reasonable excuse. The bill will recognise that some people aged 16 or 17 may need a knife for legitimate purposes, particularly students and those in trades. There will be metal detectors and, as I said, it will be a wand or a scan.

It is modelled on Jack's law. The authority for the police will last for 12 hours with an option to extend. Importantly, that gives expression to the community's views. There are people in my community who have been talking about doing this for a while. It will mainly apply in shopping centres and other big, designated areas. As the Premier said at the time, his hope is that these commonsense reforms stop people from taking a knife into the community and prevent some of the devastating outcomes of knife-related violence we have seen in recent months, which members in previous contributions talked about and which gave rise to the bill. With those comments, I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (19:13): When Michael Krieg woke up in the middle of the night, he did not expect to find three young offenders breaking into his South West Rocks property. He also did not expect one to be armed with a large knife. But would you believe that that incident was not his first encounter? Regional New South Wales is on edge. It is being held at knifepoint. There are many incidents similar to Mr Krieg's. Offenders, young and old, are loitering on our streets in the dead of night, trespassing into homes and inciting fear in our community with knives, and worse—large machetes. I welcome the Minns Labor Government looking to introduce Jack's law into New South Wales legislation. But it is high time there is a proactive approach, not just a reactive, narrowly prescriptive approach to addressing crime. What is proposed in the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024 is fundamentally flawed. If we are serious about making meaningful change that will reduce the use of knives as weapons and increasingly high possession rates, then we need to stop skirting around the edges and draw a hard line in the sand.

The highly trained New South Wales police should be able to wave a non-invasive metal detection wand around an individual, anywhere and at any time. After all, who is out at 3.00 a.m. wearing full-length black clothing with a hood pulled down over their face for a good cause? In my area the residents are afraid in their homes, not in the shopping centre which, in a kneejerk response, has been included in the bill. It is in our streets and homes that we feel unsafe. If a police officer sees an individual out and about in the early hours, in a gang or in unexpected areas, our community demands the officer to take a stance. As a legislature, members in this place need to stand up and represent the wider community.

The bill permits our law enforcement officers to stop and scan with a wand a person in a designated area. Those designated areas include public transport stations, shopping precincts, major sporting venues and other public places in which a relevant offence has occurred in the past 12 months. We have become used to non-invasive scanning at football and other sporting venues, as well as airports and concerts. So what do we have to fear? Mr Krieg was not in a public transport station, shopping precinct or sporting facility when three young offenders wielded a knife. It was in his home, a space that is supposed to provide a sense of security and comfort.

It is tragic that we have witnessed high-profile knife attacks in Sydney. My sincerest sympathies remain with families and friends still impacted by those horrific events. But the New South Wales statistics speak loud and clear. In fact, the Attorney General stated the same: The number of prosecutions for violent knife crime is decreasing, but knife possession remains steadily high. If that is the case, why won't the Attorney General fight for our community and strengthen the laws? It is not enough to introduce Jack's law with the clause that only designated areas warrant a search, only if the commissioner or a delegate signs off on it and only for 12 hours. It is not okay.

In Oxley, knife crimes and knife possessions occur during the night in the homes of innocent people. In fact, since the regional crime inquiry started, I have been sent CCTV footage showing offenders lurking around homes, trying to break in using knives and other devices. I have seen people with balaclavas pulled over their heads or hoodies pulled down, and all too often I have seen CCTV footage of a knife or a machete. It is not okay. If a police patrol car is on duty throughout the evening and officers see someone somewhere they do not expect, they should be able to stop anyone walking along the street to conduct a scan, in any place. That could be one less house terrorised by armed break and enters, one less knife on the street and one less victim. Recently I attended

local community forums at South West Rocks and Nambucca Heads as part of a regional crime inquiry community meeting, which brought hundreds of my constituents to the table to discuss this crisis and gauge what is happening.

During that meeting I handed out a survey posing two questions: Have you been impacted by crime and what solutions do you want to see? It should come as no surprise that knife crime reared its ugly head. In response to the survey 27 per cent of South West Rocks residents mentioned they had been assaulted physically or verbally, which included incidents with knives. A large percentage of residents are calling for knife reforms, while 56 per cent are calling for legislative, policing and judicial reforms. We are presented with a unique opportunity to create change and guarantee our communities the safety they deserve. But we cannot selectively choose where is safe and where is not, especially because anywhere could be unsafe, including homes. My Coalition colleagues have indicated they will move an amendment to remove the restrictive designated area clause. Police need the ability to use metal detection wands in any place at any time.

Afflicted communities deserve assurance and peace of mind. It is no longer acceptable to put the civil liberties of the attacker, the criminal or the agitator before law-abiding citizens. I will never accept that it is okay to water down our laws to protect the assailant over the population. Chris Minns, Michael Daley and Yasmin Catley have the power to improve and strengthen these laws right now. They can do better for our community safety. It starts with giving police the power to do their job. Jack's law needs to be in place in New South Wales. It needs to allow police to search any member of the public for knives and metal weapons anywhere and anytime.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (19:21): I welcome the opportunity to speak in debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. Firstly, I acknowledge the victims of knife crimes of recent days and their families. I also acknowledge the advocacy of Brett and Belinda Beasley, who lost their 17-year-old son, Jack, on the Gold Coast in 2019. I thank the Attorney General and Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism for introducing this bill to the House. It is important for us to have this debate and to consider how to strengthen safety in our communities. I recognise that this bill is largely modelled on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2023, which was passed in the Queensland Parliament last year. Western Australia is introducing its own legislation, which will strengthen the Queensland model.

That is the crux of the debate. We all want safer communities. We are all looking at ways to strengthen safety in our communities. The model proposed by the New South Wales Government is very much a replication of the existing Queensland model. I am not for one moment going to debate the appropriateness or otherwise of the Queensland legislation, but we need to ensure that whatever legislation is passed in New South Wales is appropriate in the New South Wales context. In that sense I agree with some comments made by other members in this place. The member for Winston Hills said that this bill, in its current form, hobbles the intent. He spoke about some of the issues and challenges, including new section 45F, which deals with the declaration of designated areas. It states:

A senior police officer may, by written instrument, declare any of the following places to be a designated area—

- (a) public transport stations,
- (b) shopping precincts,
- (c) sporting venues,
- (d) other public places prescribed by the regulations ...

The member for Winston Hills also spoke about the challenges in new section 45G, which deals with the circumstances in which a place may be declared a designated area. It states:

A senior police officer may declare a place referred to in section 45F to be a designated area only if—

- (a) any of the following has occurred at the place in the previous 12 months—
 - (i) at least 1 offence committed by a person armed with a knife or other weapon,
 - (ii) at least 1 serious indictable offence involving violence against a person,
 - (iii) more than 1 offence of possessing a knife or prohibited weapon in a public place or school ...

The member for Winston Hills also spoke about new section 45I, which deals with the period during which a declaration of a designated area is in force. It states:

The declaration of a designated area remains in force for the period, not more than 12 hours, specified in the declaration.

As the member for Winston Hills said, those provisions all act as barriers to the intent of the legislation. The member for Oxley spoke of incidents and challenges in his electorate. There are limitations in the current bill. We can do better. I support the amendments that the shadow Attorney General has indicated he will move during the consideration in detail stage. I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Orange. As he said, at the end of

the day this legislation is one element of a whole-of-government approach. We need to look at education. We need to look at early intervention. We need to look at intersectionality with mental health. I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Castle Hill, who spoke of the need to strike the right balance between the protection of communities and civil liberties.

At the end of the day we all understand the importance of community safety when it comes to this issue. Many members have spoken about the need to strengthen community safety. As the member for Bathurst said, the bill as it stands does not remove the risk; it only shifts the location of the risk. It is important that we strengthen community safety. I welcome the bill, but I also acknowledge its shortcomings in its current form. I support the amendments foreshadowed by the shadow Attorney General.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (19:26): I support the amendments the shadow Attorney General indicated he will move to the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. Firstly, I will focus on police resourcing in the Tamworth electorate. Rising crime in the Tamworth electorate is a significant problem. Combatting crime and keeping our communities safe is of the utmost importance. Today five police officers were injured while pursuing a stolen vehicle. They ended up in hospital. There is a serious issue with the lack of police officers available to deal with the problem of rising crime in my area. Statistics clearly show that there has been an increase in crime in regional and rural areas not only in the Oxley police district but also across New South Wales. It is clear that police cannot arrest their way out of this problem. There needs to be a whole-of-government and community response.

Overall, there are fewer police officers in regional New South Wales than there are in metropolitan Sydney. That needs to be rectified as a matter of priority. The Country Mayors Association of NSW highlighted that we have significantly fewer police than our city cousins. As a whole, New South Wales has fewer police officers per head of population than Queensland, Victoria and South Australia. Our police officers are already facing an incredible workload, with only one police officer per 467 New South Wales residents. In a recent statement the chairman of the Country Mayors Association of NSW stated:

We knew crime was increasing, but we looked to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR] data to clarify the situation. We were shocked to learn that as well as the alarming incident counts in regional New South Wales, the rate of incidents per 100,000 people was, in some cases, horrifying when compared to metropolitan figures. Up to 90% of crimes including vehicle theft, breaking and entering, sexual assault and domestic assault are happening here, in our regional communities.

Knife crime is often associated with that. We need more police and they need the resources to do their job. At the moment, they are fighting crime with one hand behind their backs. Let us give them the resources they need to keep our community safe, while getting more police on the ground to help them do their work. That is why we support Jack's law, but not only in designated areas. It does not make sense. This is a non-invasive search.

We walk through a metal detector when we pass through airport security. How many times have we seen someone go through a metal detector at an airport and be pulled up and then searched because they might have a metal hip, a metal knee or something metal in their body? It is a non-invasive search. It is no different than a wand, which does the same job. The amendment that will be put forward by the Opposition is to remove the restrictive designated areas. Police need to move the metal-detecting wands at any place and at any time. Jack's law needs to be in place. We all agree on that. But police officers should be given the resources and powers they need to keep our community safe anywhere, at any time. I support the amendments foreshadowed by the shadow Attorney General.

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (19:31): I contribute to debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024 and sincerely thank the Attorney General and the police Minister for introducing it to the House. I, like the member for Tamworth and other members in this place, support Jack's law. But it does not offer the maximum protection my community in regional New South Wales deserves. I am here also to reflect on why this bill is before the Parliament, and I again offer my sincere condolences to those who have suffered because of the horrific actions of a few. The Parliament should always do everything possible to keep our community safe. There is no question about that. I believe we all stand by those principles. We should do everything possible to keep our people safe.

The bill does not go far enough, particularly in the bush. I will outline in a couple of minutes why I believe it does not go far enough. Firstly, members will understand that in regional New South Wales we simply do not have public transport stations—my electorate has two train stations—and we do not have any major sporting facilities, but we do have sports grounds and sports complexes. The crimes in my electorate are not happening in those locations; they are happening in the streets, in homes, at the front doors of homes and at night. Members of my community are putting up with the most difficult situation on a nightly basis. I recently held a meeting of crime victims in my electorate. One elderly lady in the town of Coraki has had her home invaded seven times, once by intruders with a knife. That is where these attacks are happening. Unfortunately, in my opinion, this legislation will not be enacted to cover her particular situation.

The designated areas are too fine. If we need maximum protection for our community, we need to ensure that wandering laws, Jack's law, operate anywhere at any time in all of New South Wales. Imagine us having a debate on random breath testing or drug testing being subject to the same restrictions and conditions. My community will accept the law anywhere at any time. I assume that these laws are fit for Queensland, but I want to make sure that they are also fit for all of New South Wales—in my electorate, in the cities, in the big towns and in regional communities. I fully support the NSW Police Force and what it does in my electorate and the magnificent work it is doing across New South Wales. It deserves our support and I believe it has our support. Again, I call on the Government to broaden the scope of these laws, to ensure that all of New South Wales and every single person in every single location is protected. I will end where I started. I believe that our community deserves the Government's maximum protection and I urge the Government to consider the recommendations and amendments to the law.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:36): I contribute to debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. We know that knife crime is insidious. We need to do everything we can to reduce knife-related crime across our State. This year alone we have experienced a number of horrific events involving violent knife crimes, notably the incident at Bondi Westfield. Knife crime has been a growing concern in many parts of our country and New South Wales is no exception. We have witnessed disturbing incidents involving knives, ranging from petty crimes to violent assaults. These occurrences have not only resulted in physical harm but also instilled a sense of fear and insecurity within our communities.

This bill follows similar legislation introduced in Queensland, commonly known as Jack's law. Statistics from Queensland showed that more than 500 weapons were seized during the first year of Jack's law being in operation, which is a staggering number. Whilst every knife on the street does not equate to a violent crime, the risk of violent crime and physical harm can be attributed to the potential use of those knives. The bill will permit police without a warrant to stop people in designated areas and scan them with metal-detecting wands. These designated areas must be public transport stations, shopping precincts, major sporting venues and other public spaces at which a relevant offence has occurred in the last 12 months.

To ensure the effective and ethical application of metal-detecting wandering, it is essential that our police officers receive comprehensive education and training. That includes not only technical training on the use of metal detectors but also extensive instruction on the legal frameworks governing searches, the importance of our civil liberties, and best practices for engaging with diverse communities. Continuous professional development and refresher courses should be mandated to keep officers updated on the latest protocols and technologies. Proper education will empower our police to carry out their duties with professionalism, sensitivity and a deep understanding of their responsibilities and the rights of the individuals they serve.

In considering and discussing the bill and noting the incredible importance of safety against knife crimes in our community, I raise the challenge in finding a balance between enhancing public safety and protecting civil liberties. The presence of metal-detecting wandering in public spaces can impact the freedom of movement of individuals. We need to ensure that issues such as privacy infringements are seriously considered when we cast legislation such as this. Wandering searches could make individuals feel that their personal space is being violated, especially in public places. This can also often lead to a sense of discomfort and distrust towards law enforcement, which is a state we do not want to occur in New South Wales.

People might avoid certain areas or events to evade potential searches, which could lead to a restriction in the ability of people to freely navigate public spaces. Those people are law-abiding individuals. I have no concerns about whether or not people who want to carry illegal knives or use illegal knives have their liberties impinged upon. My concern is for law-abiding individuals who feel that they cannot go freely about in public spaces. That can affect their quality of life and their participation in community activities, and that covers areas such as shopping centres. The basic need of individuals to access retail premises, whether that be for food or other necessary daily items, must be protected. The provisions of the bill must not prevent, prohibit or discourage people from going about their daily lives in public.

There is also a risk that operations at designated places could disproportionately affect certain demographic groups, so there is a need to ensure that searches are conducted equitably and without bias to prevent alienating specific communities who, in many instances, have historically felt targeted by police or who experience higher rates of police searches or incarceration. By establishing clear guidelines, ensuring transparency and accountability, engaging across the community, regularly reviewing and evaluating the laws and ensuring proportionality and necessity, a balance can be struck between enhancing public safety and protecting and preserving our civil liberties.

Across the globe there is concern about the balance between ensuring public safety and meeting the threats of risk and harm in our societies and ensuring that individuals rights are preserved and protected. Through the

measures we can achieve a future where individuals can live, work and thrive without the threat of knife-related violence while also maintaining their fundamental rights and freedoms. In supporting this legislation I ask the Government to ensure that it always maintains that balance throughout the operations of this legislation.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:41): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) and Other Legislation Amendment (Knife Crime) Bill 2024. From the outset I echo the words of almost all members in this Chamber and offer the deepest condolences of all the people across the Central Coast to those who have been affected by the unnerving and scary rise of knife crime across New South Wales. It is unacceptable in modern society that people believe that they can behave in that way and not be held accountable for their actions.

I commend the Government for reacting to the rise in knife crime and for introducing this bill. I have had the pleasure of working with the Attorney General on many things before and I know he takes all things into account. He would have been listening intently to the debate in this Chamber about this piece of legislation but, as so many of my other regional colleagues have highlighted, sadly the bill does not go far enough. It needs to enable the outstanding men and women of the NSW Police Force to have the unfettered ability to capture people who are going to commit knife crimes. One of the insidious things about knife crime is the random nature with which it occurs. The unexpected randomness of the events that have occurred in New South Wales is stark and confronting. It is difficult to put a net around all of the perpetrators. Being able to wand anywhere, anytime sends a clear message to potential perpetrators, wherever they may be in New South Wales, that that sort of activity will not be tolerated.

The men and women of the Police Force need to be unrestricted in the way in which they search individuals—in a non-invasive way. I have listened to almost all the speeches given in this Chamber with the exception of The Greens. All members realise that this is a non-invasive process where a wand is waved around an individual. As many members have said before me, it is a process that people have sadly had to accept as a natural part of life. Every time people travel internationally or nationally, they go through a scanning process which is no longer conducted with a wand; people have to stand in a booth and go through a complete scan.

When people go to major sporting events, whether in Sydney or regional areas, the level of safety at those events often requires security guards, who are nowhere near as qualified as the exceptionally well-trained men and women of the NSW Police Force, to conduct wand searches of people entering those grounds to ensure that everyone is safe. While I commend the Attorney General for bringing the legislation to the House, it needs to go further. Ample examples have been given by regional MPs and MPs who have been serving police officers. The member for Winston Hills, the member for Goulburn, the member for—

Mr Alister Henskens: Castle Hill.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: The member for Castle Hill is another example. There are quite a few. A number of former serving police officers have explained why the bill needs to go further to release the shackles and not hobble the NSW Police Force when it comes to doing necessary wand searches—a non-invasive search. Another issue is the bureaucratic red tape around getting approval to do wand searches. The member for Winston Hills highlighted the fact that only a senior police officer of the rank of assistant commissioner can give approval under the bill. Many of us have spent time with our police officers. I have had the privilege and pleasure of spending time with the police officers of the Brisbane Water and the Tuggerah Lakes police districts. They do a great job but the frontline police officers are the constables, the senior constables and the sergeants. It is a long way up the chain, through detective and detective inspector to the assistant commissioner to get approval for wandings.

The member for Winston Hills also pointed out that the wandering areas would be displayed on a website, which would literally highlight to potential perpetrators where wandering could occur. Young people are savvy when it comes to social media; they know where to look and where to find things. Realistically, people need to realise that if they carry a knife illegally, they could be stopped anywhere, anytime and be wanded. I recall another member saying that this discussion would not be happening if the topic was breathalysers or drug testing. It is broadcasted on radio and television that anywhere, anytime a person could be pulled over by a New South Wales police officer to do a breathalyser test or a drug test. The broadcasts do not say, "By the way, we will only be here, here and here between these times. We will advertise it on social media. It will be up on the website so we are giving people a forewarning not to do it in those areas." It defeats the purpose of the deterrent effect that wandering people would have. It is so important that those shackles are released so they do not hobble the NSW Police Force.

I commend the shadow Attorney General for these amendments because our police need to have every tool in their arsenal. A clear message needs to be sent to perpetrators or potential perpetrators that if they carry knives illegally in New South Wales, they face incredibly serious consequences and harsh penalties, and rightly so. The people of New South Wales say no to that type of behaviour. Having designated areas restricts the ability of the police to utilise the tools that they are being given. Before an area can be declared a designated area, there has to

be at least one offence committed by a person armed with a knife or other weapon within a 12-month period. It is the randomness of knife crime that makes it so insidious.

Random knife crimes do not happen over and over again in the same shopping centre or the same street. It is the street crime and people having their houses invaded and being held up at knife point. The provisions in the bill will not allow a police officer to randomly stop someone in the street in the evening and wand them. Those shackles need to be released. A place may be declared a designated area if there is at least one serious indictable offence involving violence against a person or there is more than one offence of possessing a knife or prohibited weapon in a public place or school. These shackles are preventing police officers from using wandering as a deterrent or, even more importantly, catching and prosecuting criminals who believe it is their right to carry a knife and commit a knife crime. Those areas need to be expanded. The bill provides:

A senior police officer—

who must be an assistant commissioner—

may, by written instrument, declare any of the following places to be a designated area—

- (a) public transport stations,
- (b) shopping precincts,
- (c) sporting venues,
- (d) other public places prescribed by the regulations, including, for example, places at which the following are being or to be held—
 - (i) special events,
 - (ii) events that are part of or support the night-time economy.

Nowhere does the bill talk about the rise in street crime that is occurring right across New South Wales. I say to the Attorney General that this good piece of legislation can be better. As legislators, we have the ability to improve it. Bills are brought into this place and amended on a regular basis, on advice. I do not want to see what I saw this evening from The Greens, who proposed to water down the bill and make it completely useless to the police when it comes to stopping the perpetrators of knife crime.

I congratulate the Attorney General on bringing the bill to the House. Many members from regional areas, especially on this side of the House, are seeing a rise in knife crime. We can now say to the excellent men and women of the NSW Police Force that we will give them the legislation and the tools so they can wand anywhere, any time. As I have said before, it sends a very clear message to would-be perpetrators—not on the watch of the NSW Police Force will they be allowed to do so.

I congratulate the outstanding police men and women of the Brisbane Water police and Tuggerah Lakes police, who do an exceptional job every day keeping the community of the Central Coast safe. They do a truly outstanding job. I have had the privilege and pleasure of spending a night out with them seeing firsthand what they do. We need to back them up and give them the legislation to enable them to use the tools to maximum effect. That is what our communities expect of us as legislators. The Attorney General now has the opportunity to support the proposed amendments and give the bill the teeth it needs to stop and prevent knife crime in New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House, with the proposed amendments.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (19:51): In reply: I begin by thanking the members who have taken part in the debate. I thank the member for Wahroonga, and shadow Attorney General; the member for Swansea, and police Minister; the member for Dubbo; and the member for Prospect, and Parliamentary Secretary. I also thank the members representing the electorates of Bathurst, Mount Druitt, Newtown, Penrith, Winston Hills, Orange, Coffs Harbour, Castle Hill, Goulburn, Lismore, Oxley, Albury, Clarence, North Shore and Terrigal.

The bill represents the next legislative instalment in the Government's quest to drive down knife crime in New South Wales, following on from the doubling of penalties for the possession of knives in public places and schools that we carried through the Parliament last year. The bill targets the public possession of knives and the clear risk they pose to the community. As I said in my second reading speech, knife possession is the necessary precursor to violent knife crime. While, fortunately, the number of prosecutions for violent knife crime is decreasing, knife possession charges remain steadily high and reoffending is common. We have all recently borne witness to the devastating outcomes of knife violence, and the measures in the bill are designed to tackle knife crime and to give police the powers they need in the places they need them most.

I address some issues raised in debate by members in the House. Regarding the expansion of police powers impeding on personal rights and liberties, the reforms will give police improved tools to quickly detect concealed knives and weapons, and to take action before a potential perpetrator has the chance to use them. In response to

the concerns raised by the members for Wairoonga, Dubbo and Goulburn about the limitations on the proposed wandering powers, the ability to exercise the metal detection powers in the bill has to be balanced against the impact on the freedoms of individuals in our community and in our society, including the impact on people who are engaging in completely lawful activities like catching a train home from work or taking their kids to the shops.

That is crucial, and the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 is founded on those considerations. The powers in the bill will allow police to stop any person in a designated area without a warrant, require them to submit to a scan and, when asked, require them to produce any item that might be setting a metal detection scanner off. The criteria for declaring an area as a designated area, the safeguards on the use of the powers in the bill and the statutory review provision with a three-year sunset clause strike the right balance between providing police with powers that will protect the community from knife crime and upholding fundamental common law rights and freedoms held by every individual.

The shadow Attorney General and member for Wairoonga raised questions about whether Government members trust the NSW Police Force. We do, and we listen to their advice. Perhaps the Opposition should as well. The bill was developed in close consultation with the NSW Police Force, which provided advice and guidance on all aspects of the bill, particularly on the places where metal detection powers should be available. The bill is about giving police the powers that they need in the places they need them. The people best placed to advise on that are the people within the NSW Police Force who will be using those powers. They have advised on the bill and their advice has guided its development.

I address the comments of the member for Newtown regarding the impact of the reforms on vulnerable communities, in particular First Nations children. To manage any potential risks, an implementation group jointly chaired by the Secretary of the Premier's Department and the Commissioner of Police has been established, with representatives from key government agencies and the Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations. The purpose of the group is to guide the development of operational procedures for the use of handheld metal scanners so it aligns with the Government's ongoing commitments under Closing the Gap.

In response to the comments of the member for North Shore relating to the correct implementation of the reforms, New South Wales police will also facilitate training arrangements to ensure handheld scanners and associated operational guidelines are ready for use once the reforms commence. I also note that the handheld metal scanner powers will be reviewed after two years and will sunset after three years. The review will consider all aspects of the new powers, including data on the use of the powers. That will assist in determining whether the powers have had a disproportionate impact on any parts of the community. I should not have to say this, but I will: Comments that attack our police, who work tirelessly to keep our community safe from harm, are not warranted.

Finally, I respond to an issue raised by the Legislation Review Committee. Schedule 1 to the bill introduces a new offence into section 11F of the Summary Offences Act 1988 that prohibits a person from selling a knife to a child who is 16 or 17 years of age without a reasonable excuse. The maximum penalty will be 100 penalty units—\$11,000—imprisonment for 12 months or both. Although a custodial penalty has been proposed for a strict liability offence, that is appropriate given the significant risk posed to the public by knife crime. The courts will still have discretion and the existing principles for sentencing when determining the sentence, which will be determined by the specific circumstances. The danger posed by the possession or use of knives is unacceptable. The community expects us to do more, and the bill does that in a sensible, practical and measured way. I commend the bill to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Alister Henskens.

Consideration in Detail

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): By leave: I will deal with the bill in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wairoonga) (19:59): By leave: I move Opposition amendments Nos 1 to 13 on sheet c2024-082B in globo:

No. 1 **Designated areas**

Page 3, Schedule 1, proposed Part 4A heading, lines 5 and 6. Omit "**in designated areas**".

No. 2 **Definitions**

Page 3, Schedule 1, proposed section 45D, line 8. Omit "**Definitions**". Insert instead "**Definition**".

No. 3 **Definitions**

Page 3, Schedule 1, proposed section 45D, lines 10–31. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 4 **Meaning of "public transport station"**

Pages 3 and 4, Schedule 1, proposed section 45E, line 34 on page 3 to line 14 on page 4. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 5 **Designated areas**

Pages 4 and 5, Schedule 1, proposed Division 2, line 15 on page 4 to line 10 on page 5. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 6 **Designated areas**

Page 5, Schedule 1, proposed Division 3, heading, line 11. Omit all words on the line. Insert instead—

Division 2 Power to scan persons

No. 7 **Power to scan anywhere**

Page 5, Schedule 1, proposed section 45K, heading, line 12. Omit "in designated areas".

No. 8 **Power to scan anywhere**

Page 5, Schedule 1, proposed section 45K, line 13. Omit "(1)".

No. 9 **Power to scan anywhere**

Page 5, Schedule 1, proposed section 45K(1), line 13. Omit "in a designated area".

No. 10 **Power to scan anywhere**

Page 5, Schedule 1, proposed section 45K(2) and note, lines 15–21. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 11 **Power to scan anywhere**

Page 5, Schedule 1, proposed section 45L, lines 22–38. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 12 **Power to scan anywhere**

Page 5, Schedule 1, proposed section 45M(1)(a), lines 41 and 42. Omit "in a designated area".

No. 13 **Power to scan anywhere**

Page 6, Schedule 1, proposed section 45M(2), note, lines 4 and 5. Omit all words on the lines.

I move these amendments in globo because they will essentially achieve a common outcome, which is to remove the geographical and time restrictions on the use of the wandering powers. If the amendments are agreed to, they will allow the Police Force to engage in these non-invasive searches at any time, anywhere, in any place. In the legislation that has been brought forward by the Attorney General, as members would be aware from the second reading debate, there are circumstances in which a place may be declared a designated area under section 45G—that is, offences of a particular kind have to have occurred in the previous 12 months. Under section 45F, there are designated places where wandering can take place. Under section 45I, once a designated area has been declared as a lawful place where wandering can take place, it can take place for only 12 hours under the declaration. There is a time limit on the wandering powers.

I was intrigued—and it is not often that I am intrigued—to hear the Attorney General say in his speech in reply that those restrictions were drafted in consultation with the police, as if that was a justification for them. Blow me down, I have a copy of the Queensland bill. It has all the same restrictions, modified for circumstances to do with New South Wales. It is almost identical to the bill that the Attorney General has brought forward, which means that somehow the police must have been channelling whoever drafted the Queensland legislation—according to the Attorney General—and just happened to give exactly the same advice.

The reality is that, as with random breath testing, there is in truth no reason to place those restrictions. The Attorney General said that the balancing of freedoms against the powers for the police meant that there were criteria, safeguards and statutory reviews. The Opposition does not seek to change any of the safeguards or the statutory reviews with these amendments. All the Opposition seeks is to change the criteria so that it is more like, for example, random breath testing, or more like what occurs out in the real world with security guards. If one wants to go to a play, or a sporting event, or the Sydney Royal Easter Show, or wants to board an aircraft, or wants to enter Parliament House—this very building—then one is screened. It happens every day.

I have been a lawyer for 37 years. For at least the past 25 years, every time a person goes into a courthouse, they go through a screening process. It is now becoming so commonplace that the kinds of restrictions that these amendments seek to remove—which no doubt were mandated by the left wing of the Queensland Labor Party when it introduced Jack's law—do not need to be part of the Attorney General's plagiarism of that bill. We can actually have a New South Wales bill. We do not need to plagiarise what goes on up in Queensland; we can have our own bill. We can have much freer powers for the NSW Police Force. Not one word has been said in the debate by anyone speaking on behalf of the Government as to why the Police Force should not be given the unlimited powers that these amendments would give them.

I encourage a sensible approach, in the public interest, for the benefit of the community, to giving unlimited powers to the police. It is entirely reasonable. If the legislation was for an invasive strip search, of course the Opposition would not be suggesting this, but it is actually a wand process that does not involve touching a person at all. It does not require a person to do anything other than present themselves and allow a wand to be put around them. It happens every day to people coming into this building. It happens every day in the community. We need to be sensible, in the public interest, and take away the restrictions. The police can be trusted to use these powers appropriately. They have all sorts of internal reviews. There is a standing royal commission into any improper exercise of police powers called the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, or the LECC, which was created after the Wood royal commission into the NSW Police Force. Let us get real. I encourage members of the House to support the amendments.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (20:05): With the greatest of respect to the shadow Attorney General, the Government opposes his amendment. I will refer to it as an amendment, singular, even though 13 amendments have been moved in globo. The effect of the amendment would be to allow police to exercise the metal detection powers inherent in the bill anywhere, at any time. The ability to exercise the metal detection powers has to be balanced, as I said in my speech in reply, against the freedoms of and impact on all individuals in our community. That includes the impact on people who are engaging in completely lawful activities—I will use the same example I gave just a minute ago—such as catching a train home from work or taking their kids to the shops.

The use of the powers should also be targeted at those areas where police consider they will be most effective in detecting and deterring knife crime, which is exactly what the Government's bill does. That is crucial, as the powers in the bill will allow police officers to stop any person in a designated area, require them to submit to a scan and, when asked, to produce any item that might be setting a metal detection scanner off. The bill then permits detaining the person for as long as is reasonably necessary to exercise the powers. That will all be done without a warrant.

The risk-based approach in the Government's bill strikes the right balance between providing police with powers that will protect the community from knife crime and upholding the fundamental commonweal rights and freedoms of citizens. Under the Government's bill, the areas that may be declared as designated areas are public transport stations, shopping precincts, sporting venues and other public places prescribed by the regulations. That includes, for example, places that host special events and events that are part of or support the night-time economy. Those places were chosen in close consultation with the NSW Police Force. Yes, they mirror Jack's law in Queensland. There is no conspiracy there. Someone can give advice that accords with advice that other legislatures have adopted. That is not exactly rocket science. The NSW Police Force is best placed to know where the powers will need to be exercised.

The purpose of the metal detection powers is to give the police an additional capability in the places they say they need them most. In order for a declaration to be made over one of those areas, certain criteria must be met, including that a relevant offence involving violence, a knife or other weapons was committed at that place in the past 12 months. A senior police officer also has to consider that the use of handheld scanners is likely to be effective in deterring or detecting the commission of an offence involving a knife or other weapon. They have to consider factors including the effect that the use of the handheld scanners may have on lawful activity in the area. Those are commonsense safeguards that target the use of the powers to where police think they will be effective. They also ensure that consideration is given to the imposition that the exercise of the powers may cause on the completely lawful activities of people going about their business in public places.

The bill also allows for additional places to be declared as designated areas by regulation, which is not provided for in Jack's law in Queensland. It means that further areas can become designated areas where metal detector powers can be used, with the important safeguard of the oversight of the Parliament. That flexibility is already built into the Government's bill. In practice, it enables the outcome sought by the Opposition amendments, with the important difference that there are practical and reasonable safeguards in place—including, importantly, the oversight of this place—regarding the addition of further places where metal detector powers can be exercised. The Government's bill is sensible, measured and targeted to ensure that police have the powers they need in the places they need them most. It would be inappropriate for those powers to be able to be exercised anywhere in the State at any time on anyone going about their lawful business, with no limit. The Government opposes the amendments.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (20:10): When I come into this building, I am going about my lawful business. When I am in my vehicle and I get pulled over for a random breath test, I am going about my lawful business. When I go into a stadium to watch a sporting event, I am going about my lawful business. We need to get real. The horse has completely bolted on the argument that a short search with an electronic device is somehow a great impediment when weighed against the important issue of the personal safety of the community.

The criteria within the bill is like shutting the gate after the horse has bolted. The fact that an event has already happened means that the prevention that the bill is supposed to provide is retrospective, rather than being proactive and trying to stop those unfortunate crimes from occurring.

Regrettably, I do not believe the Attorney General has said anything other than how he now wants to abolish all of the other circumstances in which people are searched or are required to submit to a random breath test when going about their lawful business. He cannot have one and then argue that another, which is what the amendments would provide, is a huge incursion upon personal liberty. Let us get real. Let us give the police the tools they need to do their job and prevent serious crime in the community.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (20:12): I make a very brief, hopefully final, contribution to the debate. The shadow Minister concluded by saying, "Let's get real and give the police the tools they need." If any independent witness to the debate thinks that there is real and live contention here, I say that there is not. The police have not asked for the powers that the Opposition is seeking in its amendments. The Government takes advice from the police, not the Opposition, in the formulation of these sorts of laws, and they have not asked for those powers.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for Wahroonga has moved Opposition amendments Nos 1 to 13 on sheet c2024-082B. The question is that the amendments be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes36
Noes48
Majority..... 12

AYES

Amon, R	Hodges, M	Singh, G (teller)
Anderson, K	James, T	Sloane, K
Ayyad, T	Kean, M	Speakman, M
Butler, R	Kemp, M	Taylor, M
Clancy, J	Lane, J	Thompson, T
Coure, M	Layzell, D	Toole, P
Crouch, A (teller)	Petinos, E	Tuckerman, W
Davies, T	Preston, R	Ward, G
Di Pasqua, S	Provest, G	Williams, L
Donato, P	Regan, M	Williams, R
Griffin, J	Roberts, A	Williamson, R
Henskens, A	Saunders, D	Wilson, F

NOES

Aitchison, J	Hagarty, N (teller)	O'Neill, M
Atalla, E	Hannan, J	Piper, G
Bali, S	Harris, D	Quinnell, S
Barr, C	Harrison, J	Saffin, J (teller)
Butler, L	Haylen, J	Saliba, D
Car, P	Hoenig, R	Scully, P
Catley, Y	Holland, M	Shetty, K
Chanthivong, A	Kaliyanda, C	Smith, T
Cotsis, S	Kamper, S	Stuart, M
Daley, M	Kirby, W	Tesch, L
Dalton, H	Leong, J	Vo, T
Davis, D	Li, J	Voltz, L
Dib, J	McDermott, H	Warren, G
Doyle, T	McGirr, J	Washington, K
Finn, J	McKeown, K	Whan, S
Greenwich, A	Mehan, D	Wilkinson, K

PAIRS

Cooke, S	Watson, A
Cross, M	Minns, C

PAIRS

Perrottet, D

Park, R

Amendments negatived.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 and 2 agreed to.**Third Reading**

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.**MUSEUMS OF HISTORY NSW AMENDMENT (CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER) BILL 2024****First Reading**

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

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a later time.

NATIONAL PARKS AND HERITAGE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024**Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from 15 May 2024.**

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (20:23): I am pleased to speak in support of the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. This bill makes amendments to the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 to revoke around 144 hectares of land from seven national parks and reserves in the national park system. The revocations will enable delivery of government infrastructure projects, together with some smaller scale sensible proposals to improve boundaries with park neighbours and local councils. The bill includes one re-categorisation of a nature reserve to an Aboriginal area under the National Parks and Wildlife Act in recognition of the reserve's Aboriginal cultural values. National parks are our most protected natural assets. They contain some of our most significant cultural places and protect our most precious natural assets.

Revoking land from our national parks system is therefore a decision we do not take lightly. Revocations are considered only as a last resort and when no other practical options are available. The fact that an Act of Parliament is required to alter the boundaries or revoke land that is reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act is an important part of the high level of protection they deserve. However, from time to time it is necessary and justified to revoke land from national parks and reserves to, first, address boundary errors or inadvertent encroachments; second, ensure the most appropriate management authority owns and manages community assets, such as utilities and roads; and third, to enable new priority public infrastructure projects to proceed. These are small areas of land and do not detract from the Government's commitment to increasing the proportion of New South Wales that is protected in the national parks system to protect biodiversity and cultural heritage and support local businesses.

This is particularly important in my electorate. The World Heritage-listed Blue Mountains National Park is iconic and attracts visitors from our own city, our own State, and from across the world. Our commitments in this regard are clear and unambiguous. They include: to create the Great Koala National Park; to establish a koala national park along the Georges River; and to complete the National Parks Establishment Plan to identify priority areas for addition to the national park estate, including under-reserved habitats and species and areas critical for connectivity. In addition, we continue to make significant investments in delivering new visitor infrastructure that supports access to and appreciation of the New South Wales environment and underpins the economic benefit national parks contribute to New South Wales.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is establishing a network of 13 Great Walks to deliver world-class multi-day walking experiences in some of the State's most spectacular landscapes. Seven of the 13 New South Wales Great Walks are operating and six are in development. Over 14 million Australians regularly participate in walking for exercise and 5.5 million people go walking or hiking. The recently launched Grand Cliff Top Walk is a shining example—19 kilometres, a two-day walk with a variety of off-park accommodation options. I encourage everyone to come up to the mountains and give the Grand Cliff Top Walk a try.

I now turn to the plans of management and the role of consultation. An important feature of the National Parks and Wildlife Act is the requirement that plans of management be prepared for all parks and reserves managed by the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service. Plans of management are important documents for park managers and the public. These plans set out the future management directions for a park over a five- to 10-year period and, once adopted by the Minister, the plan must be implemented by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Most importantly, the preparation of plans of management for our national parks and reserves includes a significant and important consultation component. The bill proposes amendments to the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 that will clarify some aspects of the preparation of park plans of management. The amendments do not change current process. The bill will amend the National Parks and Wildlife Act to make the process of developing a plan of management clearer. These changes will benefit everyone with an interest in the management of our national parks and reserves, including local communities and stakeholders.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service actively engages with local communities, stakeholders, the public, and the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council and regional advisory committees in the development of plans. This includes a requirement for a draft plan to be publicly exhibited. Seven draft plans of management have been publicly exhibited in the 2023-24 period so far. This community involvement during development of a plan of management makes it even more important that the process for developing plans is clear and consistent. The amendments proposed to the National Parks and Wildlife Act by this bill will do just that. They will make clear what matters are to be considered in preparing a plan, what content must be included in the plan, and under what circumstances and to whom the plan must be referred before its adoption. That is a small step in clarifying the requirements for plans of management and does not rule out any further improvements to the process for developing those plans.

The bill proposes amendments to clarify the process of developing a plan of management. Section 72AA of the National Parks and Wildlife Act sets out the matters to be considered during preparation of a plan of management. Amendments are proposed to section 72AA of the National Parks and Wildlife Act to separate out which matters must be considered in the development of the plan from the essential contents of the plan. That is a minor structural adjustment to section 72AA. No changes are proposed to the existing list of matters to be considered. The required contents of the plan will now be specified in a new section 72AB of the National Parks and Wildlife Act. That will specify that the plan of management must set out the objectives of the plan of management and operations proposed to be carried out on the land. The new section will identify that those objectives and operations must be consistent with existing reserve management principles and the purpose and objects of the National Parks and Wildlife Act. Those changes will ensure that plans of management reflect the purpose and intent of the National Parks and Wildlife Act and that future management of the park or reserve is clearly articulated so that the community and key stakeholders can provide meaningful input during the consultation process.

The bill also simplifies and clarifies the referral requirements for plans that cover lands that are within or drain into catchment areas and special areas of a water authority. The Act already requires plans of management to be referred to the relevant water authority. The bill will amend section 74 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act to remove a duplicating requirement to refer plans of management to the Secretary of what is now the New South Wales Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water if the relevant water authority is the Hunter Water Corporation. That simplifies the process, makes it more efficient and avoids any complications around machinery of government changes. The amendments will not change any existing requirements to consult with Hunter Water Corporation if the plan of management applies to lands in its area of interest or provisions requiring the Minister for the environment and the Minister administering the Hunter Water Act 1991 to jointly adopt certain plans of management.

Finally, the bill proposes amendments to clarify referral requirements for plans of management for parks in relation to fishing activities, aquatic threatened species and marine or aquatic reserves. It is important to note that the bill does not change the intent of the National Parks and Wildlife Act in relation to plans of management. Plans of management must continue to be consistent with the management principles that the National Parks and Wildlife Act sets out for each type of reserve and the purpose and objects of the National Parks and Wildlife Act. There is also no change to the comprehensive consultation process that is a crucial part of the development of every plan of management. It is important to stress that the bill does not change the requirement for a plan to be prepared for every park and does not lessen the opportunity for scrutiny of or input to the draft plan from the community, stakeholders or other government departments with an interest in a park.

The Government recognises that involving stakeholders and communities in the development of park plans of management makes for better plans and improved conservation outcomes. The bill reflects the Government's desire to continue that rigorous planning process and to continue to encourage public participation in planning for the future of our most precious places.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (20:33): I speak to the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill seeks to address a number of issues under one piece of legislation. It includes a combination of administrative tighten-ups as well as revocations of national parks. Those changes are largely managerial, and I note they are consistent with the practice of the previous Liberal-Nationals Government. The bill also seeks to change the reserve category of Serpentine Nature Reserve to an Aboriginal area, and it seeks to improve the safety of National Parks and Wildlife Service [NPWS] staff from increased aggressive and intimidating behaviour from the public while carrying out their duties. I will speak more on those two changes later. The bill will include minor legislative amendments necessary to support the activities and efficient operation of the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust. It will also make minor amendments to the National Parks and Wildlife Act to delete obsolete definitions related to wildlife regulation, which are now addressed under other legislation.

The bill will amend the provisions for the Heritage Conservation Fund [HCF] in the Heritage Act to ensure consistency with the objects of the Act. It will do that by introducing a legislated purpose and expanding and broadening the types of payments authorised to be made into and out of the HCF. Those changes are required to provide Heritage NSW and the Minister for Heritage with legal certainty around how monies in the fund may be spent. The bill will revoke about 144 hectares of land from seven parks reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act to enable the delivery of government infrastructure projects, together with some smaller-scale proposals to improve boundaries with park neighbours and local councils. Those include Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area, Lake Macquarie State Conservation Area, Lake Innes Nature Reserve, Jervis Bay National Park, Murrumbidgee National Park, Royal National Park and Sea Acres National Park.

As noted earlier, revocations such as those are consistent with the practice of the previous Liberal-Nationals Government. It is important that relevant parties and entities, including local communities and local members, continue to be consulted. Compensation for the revocation of land from national parks will be required as appropriate, consistent with the National Parks and Wildlife Service revocations, re-categorisation and road adjustment policy. Legislation stipulates that revoked lands cannot be transferred until the Minister is satisfied that appropriate compensation for the land has been provided. I trust that the Minister will ensure appropriate compensation is received.

The bill will change the category of Serpentine Nature Reserve to an Aboriginal area. Serpentine Nature Reserve was created in October 1979 and is of high cultural significance to local Aboriginal communities. The park is about 45 kilometres south-west of Dorrig in the New England bioregion. A beautiful area, it contains, among other features, the remains of an extensive stone arrangement that is significant to a number of Aboriginal communities. The proposed change of category from a nature reserve to an Aboriginal area is identified in the published 2014 statement of management intent for the reserve. That change was requested and is supported by Aboriginal community representatives. I note that there will be no change in public access.

Finally, the bill seeks to increase the protections for our National Parks and Wildlife Service staff as they carry out their duties. In recent years there has been an increase in aggressive and intimidating behaviour from some members of the public towards National Parks and Wildlife Service staff, and I note that this has been exacerbated by the use of social media and other digital platforms. Currently, National Parks and Wildlife Service staff are afforded protections under section 169 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act that make it an offence to impersonate, assault or threaten any National Parks and Wildlife Service officer who is exercising their duties.

Today that offence only applies when staff are operating under the National Parks and Wildlife Act, the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 or the Wilderness Act 1987. National Parks and Wildlife Service staff carry out functions and duties under a much wider range of legislation, including laws related to bushfire management, feral animal control and wild horse management. The bill therefore amends section 169 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act by extending those protections to apply in all circumstances when National Parks and Wildlife Service staff are carrying out their functions under the Act, the regulations or any other Act or law. It is a sensible change that our laws must adapt to reflect the responsibilities of those staff. I echo the words of the former environment Minister, James Griffin, who said that threats of violence towards NPWS staff have no place in our society. He said, "NPWS staff are public officials implementing the law, despite very challenging circumstances. Our NPWS team is dedicated and hardworking and no-one should ever be threatened just for doing their job." With those comments in mind, the Opposition supports the bill as it is proposed by the Government.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (20:39): I make a brief contribution in support of the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill addresses several legislative amendments to the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, including important amendments to support the safety of National Parks and Wildlife Service [NPWS] staff while undertaking their duties. NPWS staff, including rangers, field officers, visitor service officers and others, look after our national parks and welcome millions of visitors to our parks, visitor centres and campgrounds every year. Sadly, our frontline parks staff are increasingly at risk of abuse,

harassment, intimidation and assault from people they encounter while doing their job. The New South Wales Government is committed to keeping its frontline workers safe, and this bill expands provisions in the National Parks and Wildlife Act to ensure that NPWS staff are protected from assault and harassment while undertaking all of their statutory functions and duties.

NPWS staff primarily operate under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. However, they also work under other legislation, depending on the nature and location of the work they are carrying out. That includes legislation for bushfire management and feral animal control. Under section 169 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 it is an offence to impersonate, assault or threaten any NPWS officer who is in the course of exercising their duties. That offence currently carries a maximum penalty of \$22,000 or three months imprisonment, or both. This is an important protection for NPWS staff but currently only applies when staff are operating under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, the Wilderness Act 1987 or the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and does not apply to the full suite of legislation that underpins the range of work that NPWS staff undertake. For example, NPWS staff undertaking duties under the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018 are not covered by these protections. The bill will improve safety by extending these protections to ensure that NPWS staff are protected while exercising their duties under all relevant legislation.

As I mentioned, in recent years there has been an increase in aggressive and intimidatory behaviour from some members of the public towards NPWS staff. The intolerable behaviour happens in person and via social media and digital channels. Often the behaviour is connected to high profile and contentious park management issues. That is not acceptable. The New South Wales Government takes the safety of staff very seriously. Serious cases of this nature are referred to the New South Wales police, and these referrals have also been increasing in number. NPWS staff work closely with the NSW Police Force in dealing with these serious cases. In response to threats to staff safety, NPWS has reviewed safety arrangements for staff and implemented improved security measures at offices, depots, visitor centres and park entry stations. Information about these incidents is also recorded and tracked in the NPWS work health and safety reporting system. Such is the concern about the safety of these frontline workers that body-worn cameras are currently being rolled out for staff in locations that have been identified as higher risk.

Specific information about aggressive and intimidatory behaviour towards NPWS staff in Kosciuszko National Park was tabled in Parliament by the environment Minister on 1 August 2023. This included incidents such as anonymous phone calls saying NPWS staff should be shot, social media posts referring to staff as "needing a bullet in them", a written threat to firebomb the National Parks office in Jindabyne, sharing footage of staff undertaking their duties on social media with the aim of identifying them, and dumping the head of a horse at the entrance to the NPWS office and visitor centre in Jindabyne. Where appropriate, these incidents were reported to the police. During the development of the bill, relevant government agencies, including New South Wales police, were consulted. They are supportive of the bill. The proposal will extend protections to police officers acting in their role as ex officio rangers under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.

The National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council and other key stakeholders have been briefed about the proposed amendment. NPWS staff are charged with the care and protection of parks and reserves amounting to around 10 per cent of the State of New South Wales. So often we ask them to deal with difficult tasks and, increasingly so, with difficult people in challenging circumstances. This is particularly acute when undertaking compliance and law enforcement duties and managing contentious issues. NPWS staff are indeed the thin green line that stands up to protect our most precious places, and they must be supported to undertake their duties and go home safely, free of abuse and harassment just for doing their job. This bill includes an important amendment that will ensure that no matter what duties they are undertaking, abuse and harassment of NPWS staff will be an offence under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and appropriate penalties will apply to those who behave in a reprehensible manner. I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (20:46): I support the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. It is wonderful to hear from both sides of the House about the positive outcomes of this bill. People may or may not know that my electorate covers Yerranderie, a very small, remote village surrounded by the Blue Mountains National Park. The land of Yerranderie was gifted to the government by Val Lhuede about 12 years ago. Val is still alive. She celebrated her 100th birthday last year and, even though it is very late, I am sure she is watching this evening. What excites me most about the bill is that we will have plans of management, because that is something Val asked for when she donated the land and I believe it has not been done for that particular area.

As the person who stands here with the major job of looking after my electorate, I do have some concerns about the bill. I flag that I will be moving an amendment to the bill. It specifically relates to my community and some impacts that are going to be felt by them. Until I move the amendment, that is all I want to say on the bill.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (20:48): I make a brief contribution on two aspects of the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. First, it is great to see the amendment to create the operational fund for the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust, which is a terrific initiative that will enable people and businesses across New South Wales to fundraise and donate to support the good work of the New South Wales national parks agency. The creation of an operational fund will enable them to do great work right across the State. Second, and perhaps more importantly, in my time as environment and heritage Minister I came to fully appreciate the professionalism, generosity, kindness and often the courage of our New South Wales "parkies", as they are called.

Anything that strengthens the support and protections available to them is a good thing. They are the most wonderful people, situated throughout New South Wales. They do fantastic work. If we were to ask people in New South Wales what the most trusted brand or logo was, I think the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service one would be right up there. For that reason, I support the bill and legislation to improve protections for the New South Wales national parks staff. They are great people and deserve support in the work they do.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (20:49): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I flag that we support the bill. Like all members in this House, I love our national parks. One of the two elements of the bill is to change the statutory process relating to plans of management for protected areas. In my electorate I know how protracted some of those processes can be for national parks, nature reserves and other areas gazetted under the National Parks and Wildlife Act. The bill also proposes to re-categorise a nature reserve into an Aboriginal area, another reserve category under the Act. Amendments to protected area legislation are relatively infrequent and the National Parks Association of NSW, or the NPA, is concerned that the proposed amendments are narrow and miss the opportunity for important improvements to existing process.

I flag that our portfolio holder for the environment, Ms Sue Higginson, MLC, will move amendments in the other place. The National Parks Association of NSW is the pre-eminent conservation organisation advocating for the establishment and professional management of national parks and other protected areas. It was established in 1957 to advocate for the passing of an integrated piece of protected area legislation—the National Parks and Wildlife Act—and what an incredible legacy that is. We are all so grateful for its work. Under its watch, the National Parks and Wildlife Service was created to undertake the day-to-day management of those reserves. I share what others have said. My experience with staff across my national parks and nature reserves is that they are extraordinary people. As a member of The Greens, it does not get better than protecting our biodiversity day in, day out.

Beginning with the first National Parks and Wildlife Act in 1967, the NPA has participated on the National Parks and Wildlife Service regional advisory committees and the statewide National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council. Those bodies have a statutory role in the review of plans of management, and over the last 67 years NPA has developed unrivalled standing and expertise in park management planning. I am sure that is not a contested statement. Plans of management are an extremely important element of protected area conservation management. They should describe the environmental, heritage, recreational and social characteristics that led to the gazettal of the lands as a protected area under the Act; identify threats or risks to the values of the protected areas and measures to remove or mitigate threats; describe recreational and others activities that are and are not consistent with the values of the protected area; and contain a detailed schedule of conservation, maintenance, restoration and enforcement activities to be undertaken by the responsible land manager, the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

A key feature of the plans of management is that they describe and assess values of large-scale environmental attributes such as ecosystem processes, habitat connectivity, landscape integrity and the presence of the full range of biodiversity, including non-threatened species and ecological communities. Such ecological attributes are largely ignored by the planning system—that is an understatement—when assessing individual development sites. Conversely, the large-scale environmental attributes that are considered by plans of management are fundamental reasons why states and nations establish networks of protected areas. They are precious to all of us.

Australia is signatory to international agreements and treaties that commit nation states to the establishment of protected area networks. One of those is the 2023 Global Biodiversity Framework, which sets ambitious targets for the creation of new protected areas in all jurisdictions, including New South Wales. The plan of management largely replaces the range of environmental planning instruments that regulate the use and development of all other tenures across the State. One consequence is that, provided that a protected area is managed in accordance with the relevant plan, development approvals are not required from local government. In short, plans of management play a unique and essential role in ensuring that the State of New South Wales administers its protected areas in accordance with international commitments and standards.

The NPA has reviewed the proposed amendments of the bill to the key plan of management provisions in section 72 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act. The Greens' view is that, rather than clarifying and simplifying the current provisions, the proposed changes unnecessarily narrow the scope of plans of management. In the worst-case scenario, plans of management could become little more than a statement of objectives and operations. I am sure—hearing from the good member for Blue Mountains—that is not the intention. There is no doubt that the current legislative processes for plans of management can and should be improved. We would not want to see critical infrastructure somehow kiboshing protected areas. The proposed modifications to the bill are designed to improve transparency of the Government's intentions in relation to each individual protected area and to enhance opportunities for community and stakeholders to engage in the preparation of plans of management to international best practice. We support that.

The bill proposes the reclassification of an existing nature reserve as an Aboriginal area. Both are reserve categories under the National Parks and Wildlife Act. The change is consistent with the wishes of the local Aboriginal communities and traditional owners, and with the characteristics of the area. The NPA supports the proposal, and we support that. The only issue is that that is far from the only example of existing protected areas that warrant urgent reclassification. Outstanding examples of such reserves are the Murrah Flora Reserves in southern New South Wales. Four Murrah Flora Reserves are already managed on a day-to-day basis by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Their retention as flora reserves under the New South Wales Forestry Act was a political decision of the former Government. Those reserves contain the last significant koala populations on the New South Wales South Coast and fully deserve the heightened protection of nature reserve status. We encourage the Labor Government to look at that reclassification.

The Greens will propose amendments in the other place that relate to defining the purpose of a plan of management. We are concerned—and so is the NPA—that the bill exacerbates the failure of the Act to clearly state the purpose of a plan of management. The reference to ecologically sustainable development is to ensure that park facilities and infrastructure fully abide by statutory ESD principles, but we have moved beyond ESD principles. That is a long debate, but in terms of sustainability that is the status quo. On a warming planet with an extinction crisis, "nature first" is the lens that we want to see across all areas of planning and certainly for our national parks.

There need to be clear directions on the matters to be documented in the scheme of operations. We also have concerns about the potential for biodiversity offsets, particularly the flora reserves. Specifically, we will move an amendment to insert a new section 15—after part 6, section 14—called "Murrah Flora Reserves re-categorisation", to list the following reserves: Mumbulla, Tanja, Murrah and Bermagui nature reserves. Those flora reserves are already administered and managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. They have exceptional conservation values for their floristic and fauna values, protecting the last remnant population of koalas on the New South Wales Far South Coast, as I said. They fully meet the statutory requirements for nature reserves and warrant the enhanced protections—especially from mining—that that category offers, beyond their existing status as flora reserves. The reserves form the best opportunity for koala refuge and recovery on the South Coast and are highly vulnerable to any further disturbances.

I conclude by saying that The Greens support the bill. We will move those amendments in the other place. I would particularly like the Government to support the flora reserves on the South Coast. We absolutely cannot wait until it is too late for that precious and now classified endangered species: our koalas. I once again thank all the National Parks and Wildlife Service workers in my electorate for all they do on a daily basis.

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (20:59): I support the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I comment on the provisions that extend the protections in section 169 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 to other areas of staff activity. Section 169 of the Act currently makes it an offence to assault, threaten or otherwise hinder or obstruct National Parks and Wildlife Service staff when they are exercising their duties and functions under the National Parks and Wildlife Act, the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and the Wilderness Act 1987. However, National Parks and Wildlife Service staff have duties, powers and functions under a much broader range of legislation, including the Rural Fires Act 1997, the Biosecurity Act 2015 and the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018. The proposed amendment in the bill will extend the existing protections of section 169 of the Act to ensure that staff are protected from assault and harassment while undertaking all their statutory duties and functions.

It is appropriate that staff are protected. Over the past few years there has been an increase in incidents of National Parks and Wildlife Service staff being verbally and sometimes physically threatened or abused while undertaking their work. That has occurred in person, via email and phone calls, and on social media. This abuse is often connected to high-profile and contentious park management issues, such as wild horse management in the Kosciuszko National Park. However, there are incidents beyond that. Staff are trained in how to deal with aggressive members of the public and serious incidents are reported to the police. Tonight we heard about the

proposal to introduce body-worn cameras. Examples of some of the threats are quite disturbing. In May 2024 there was a social media post of a picture of a National Parks and Wildlife Service helicopter that said, "Somebody shoot the helicopter down." That was followed by a comment that said, "I just hope those maggots crash that thing and they suffer before they die." That was followed by, "Let them see us standing there watching it burn."

There was a previous threat to firebomb officers in Jindabyne and the head of a horse was dumped at the entrance of the National Parks and Wildlife Service office and visitor centre in Jindabyne. During a routine patrol in the Central Coast area, a ranger was coward-punched in the face by an illegal motorbike rider. Another ranger was assaulted by a member of the public and threatened with having his skull crushed with a large rock while the offender was standing over him. His keys and phone were also stolen. National Parks and Wildlife Service firefighters in the north of the State were abused and threatened by a member of the public during fire operations. National Parks and Wildlife Service firefighters were threatened in the Blue Mountains area by a local property owner who stated that the National Parks and Wildlife Service badge made a good target. A ranger was threatened by a rural neighbour who stated that if a certain ranger ever returned to the property, he would be leaving in a box. Perhaps most concerning has been threats on social media to the children of workers.

There is no doubt that National Parks and Wildlife Service staff have been subjected to intimidatory and threatening behaviour for simply undertaking their work as directed by the government of the day. The threats are alarming and unacceptable. That is why I support the extensions to the protections for them. I acknowledge and thank the National Parks and Wildlife Service staff for their work and for continuing to undertake their duties in what can be a harrowing environment. I also thank the staff of my office, who have had to put up with aggressive behaviours from a small number of constituents and others on this and a number of other issues recently. I thank the staff of all electoral offices, who often have to deal with members of the public who are aggressive and intimidating. It is unfair, given that those staff members are not the ones making the decisions. I acknowledge the staff of my office and all other electoral offices.

I particularly thank the staff of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. I have met with them on a number of occasions and believe they always approach their jobs with professional integrity and scientific acumen. I have sought briefings from them on a number of issues. They have been humble and modest about what they do, but they have been guided by the science. They have a real passion for their work and protecting a treasure in our nation. Given the recent controversy around the wild horse management plan, I also thank the many members of the public—the majority of people—who have engaged with me on this issue in a fair and constructive manner. Obviously, we have not always been able to agree. But even when we do not agree, the majority of people have brought forward their concerns in a professional manner. I have appreciated the opportunity to follow up on their areas of genuine concern.

These discussions are important to keep the Government and Parliament accountable. I know the issue arouses deep passions. It is not an easy issue to resolve; it does involve difficult decisions. But we need to be prepared to make those difficult decisions. It is important to have difficult discussions so we make the right decisions. However, difficult discussions should involve respectful dialogue, not disrespectful threats and intimidation. I thank the people who have engaged with me in good faith on these issues. I once again sincerely thank the staff of National Parks and Wildlife Service for the work they have done over many years in a particularly challenging environment. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (21:06): I contribute to debate on the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. New South Wales has an appalling record of biodiversity loss and the outlook for the future is dire. Extreme weather events, including heat, drought, flood and fire from climate change, and habitat loss are putting severe pressure on our native flora and fauna. The *NSW biodiversity outlook report 2024* predicts that without significant intervention, only half of the more than 1,000 species listed as threatened in this State will survive the next century. National parks are the cornerstone of biodiversity conservation and provide our best line of defence against extinction in the face of significant and growing threats. National parks provide essential habitat to threatened species and increase their survival chances. They provide carbon sinks that help to reduce climate change and its impacts on biodiversity.

Only 11.2 percent of the State's land is permanently protected through national park reservation, leaving threatened species across the State highly vulnerable to extinction from deforestation. Deforestation rates have been escalating, not declining, in the past decade, including from agricultural clearing and forestry. Protected areas are becoming increasingly fragmented and lack the bushland corridors that threatened species need to travel through in order to survive adversities such as fire. By 2030 we need to protect 30 percent of the State as national park to meet international obligations and avert mass biodiversity loss.

I welcome the Government's commitment to establish the Great Koala National Park—which I, along with many other members, advocated for over many years. I look forward to this vital koala and greater glider habitat being protected soon. Other regions in the State need urgent attention, particularly on the South Coast, where

forests and the flora and fauna they support were severely smashed by the Black Summer fires. Last year I visited a number of State forests on the South Coast and saw firsthand the devastation caused by the timber industry logging any trees left after fires at a time when those trees are vital to regenerating the forests. We need to reverse the long-term decline of the koala populations on the far South Coast, which are rapidly heading towards extinction.

A first step would be to upgrade the Murrah Flora Reserves under the national parks estate. The reserves are significant to the Yuin People, support the last significant koala population on the South Coast, and are already managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, even though they are technically State forest. I understand The Greens will move an amendment to the bill to this effect in the other place and I place on the record my support for the change. The National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill is largely a miscellaneous bill that includes routine revocations to ensure that national park boundaries accurately reflect actual protected areas; new provisions to protect staff safety, as explained by the member for Wagga Wagga; and some technical amendments around plans of management.

I support the bill, but I am concerned that the proposed changes to plans of management do not lift the standard of plans at a time when they have increasingly been declining. Plans of management are the chief tool for establishing the future management of a park to ensure biodiversity conservation. Unfortunately, over the past decade, these plans have increasingly focused on facilitating development. There are concerns that the bill will exacerbate this trend by reducing plans of management to narrow statements of objectives and operations. Plans of management should clearly define a park's conservation values and identify how these values will be enhanced and threats mitigated. Plans of management should be aspirational documents aimed at producing the best conservation outcomes possible.

I thank the Minister for the Environment and her ministerial and departmental staff for discussing these concerns with me and the National Parks Association. I acknowledge that the Government understands these concerns and is committed to improving plans of management. We need to move fast on expanding the national park estate, before it is too late, with large and well-connected nature reserves that cover all native species and are protected in perpetuity. I hope that the support for national parks expressed in the House from all sides of politics means that, going forward, we can achieve a multi-partisan approach to creating new national parks in the future.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (21:10): In reply: I thank all of the members who contributed to today's debate and acknowledge there was a foreshadowing of an amendment. One thing that has become clear is that people love national parks and know the value of national parks and of communities and what national parks can do. We need to make sure that we protect people as much as possible, especially those who are trying to do the right thing. As I said in the second reading speech, this bill will make a number of minor amendments to make life better and tidy up some different areas that need some tidying up. It also proffers protection and support to National Parks and Wildlife Service [NPWS] officers.

The shadow Minister for Environment, the Parliamentary Secretary and the member for Blue Mountains made passionate contributions. Somebody who is incredibly passionate about national parks, the member for Mount Druitt, also contributed to debate on this bill, as did the member for Sydney, the member for Wagga Wagga and the member for Wollondilly, who will be moving an amendment, which I will talk about later. I appreciate her contribution, and there is a bit more to discuss there. As I have already pointed out, the proposals in the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 are sensible initiatives that will lead to good outcomes for the environment and people of New South Wales. I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Ballina about the importance of plans of management and thank her for foreshadowing that The Greens' spokesperson for the environment will move amendments in the other place.

I note the contribution from the member for Sydney, who highlighted that we could make improvements to the process for plans of management. The Government agrees that plans of management are important documents for park managers and the public. These plans set out the future management directions for a park over a five- to 10-year period. Once adopted by the Minister, the plan must be implemented by the NPWS. For this reason, the Government is committed to ensuring that the process for developing plans of management is the best it can be. That was raised in a number of the contributions from members across the aisle.

The members raised a number of important issues, and I assure them that the Government will take their suggestions on board. The National Parks and Wildlife Service will work with key stakeholders, including the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council—which is appointed by the Minister—the National Parks Association and recreational groups to review the current process and design improvements to how we develop plans of management. The Government therefore intends to proceed with the minor amendments to plans of management as set out in the existing tabled bill and to continue a separate, already committed discussion with stakeholders about a broader set of improvements for park plans of management.

The member for Ballina and the member for Sydney raised the issue of the Murrah Flora Reserves, which are reserved under the Forestry Act 2012 and are currently managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Flora reserves are State forest lands permanently reserved to conserve native plants, forest ecosystems and threatened species and habitats. They may also protect Aboriginal cultural and archaeological values. These lands have permanent protection under the Forestry Act. While we appreciate the points both members made in their contributions, we believe that any such changes would pre-empt wider stakeholder and community consultation about the potential benefits and implications of doing so. In particular, there are a number of key Aboriginal stakeholders who have a significant interest in any future management arrangements for these flora reserves. On available information, it appears the amendments have not been canvassed with those groups in any meaningful way. Any amendments related to flora reserves under the Forestry Act 2012 would need to be discussed with key stakeholders, which the Government will do as part of the broader work it is undertaking in addressing the future of the forestry industry.

The revocations set out in this bill will improve land management efficiencies, support delivery of priority State infrastructure and ensure appropriate management of local infrastructure. The revocations will not compromise the natural values or the integrity of the national park system. Compensation is required for many of the revocations, and revoked land will not be transferred unless the Minister for the Environment is satisfied appropriate compensation for the land has been provided. I think that point was raised also by the shadow Minister. The minor technical amendment to section 149 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act will clarify that, once land has been revoked by an Act of Parliament, it may subsequently be disposed of or otherwise dealt with by the relevant Minister. This will avoid any doubt that revoked lands are able to be transferred to another entity for the purposes for which they were revoked in the first place. The proposal to re-categorise Serpentine Nature Reserve as an Aboriginal area reflects this significance and will ensure cultural values are managed in accordance with the principles for Aboriginal areas under the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

The miscellaneous legislative amendments to the National Parks and Wildlife Act around NPWS staff, the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust and park plans of management will provide clarity to the public and ensure that the Act remains robust and fit for purpose. The proposed changes to the Heritage Act will ensure that the Government is more clearly able to allocate money from the Heritage Conservation Fund towards initiatives that celebrate, commemorate and conserve heritage, leading to better heritage outcomes across the State. I commend the bill to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mrs Judy Hannan.

Consideration in Detail

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): By leave: I will deal with the bill in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (21:18): I move my amendment No. 1 on sheet c2024-066C:

No. 1 **Revocation of certain regional park and national park land in Wollondilly Shire**

Page 9, Schedule 1. Insert after line 41—

65 Revocation of part of Yerranderie Regional Park and Blue Mountains National Park

- (1) This clause applies to approximately 0.68ha of land in the Yerranderie Regional Park and Blue Mountains National Park, identified as "land to be revoked" on a map published by the Minister in the Gazette for the purposes of this clause on 1 August 2024.
- (2) On 1 August 2024, the reservation under this Act of the land as a regional park or national park is revoked.
- (3) On the revocation of the land as a regional park or national park, the land is vested in Wollondilly Shire Council for an estate in fee simple, freed and discharged from all trusts, obligations, estates, interests, rights of way or other easements.

We have just heard some wonderful speeches about the protection of flora and fauna in our national parks and about the protection of the people who work for the National Parks and Wildlife Service. What we have not heard about is the protection of the community of Yerranderie. About 50 people live in Yerranderie. For me to get there, as part of my electorate, takes 4½ hours because it is literally encircled by a national park. The reason it is encircled is that a lady called Val Lhuede, who turned 100 just last year, donated her land, her private property, to the national park. It was a gift. But the town of Yerranderie is totally surrounded by national parks.

It has an airstrip that falls under both council and National Parks land. It has a tiny section of land—0.68 hectares—that belongs to National Parks that encroaches upon the airstrip. The residents of Yerranderie have always had access to their town but it has not always been easy. The road has been closed due to weather. It has had trees downed, potholes and various other things over the years. It has suffered fires and floods, and often the only way in and out for those residents is via a small aircraft. I am told that rescue these days can be done by helicopter but that will impede upon other services and rely on others to deliver food to those who are caught in the town. Some of them have their own small aircrafts, which is what they have been using up until now to get in and out.

Having the airstrip under a single ownership and management would fix the issue that National Parks has with using airstrips. I have looked at that issue but only one national park has let people come in on those airstrips. It is a simple change. It will not cost anything but it may one day save the life of somebody in Yerranderie that needs medical services. There is a church and an historic graveyard. As I said, people live there. For me, it is really worth the effort to stand in this Chamber even though I know I will probably not get much support from the Government or the Opposition. One of the great things about being an Independent is that I can work for my community. Whether they are towns of thousands of people or whether they're a town with 50 people, it is important to me that they get the access to their town that they deserve.

It is worth the effort for me to stand in this Chamber even though I will only be brief. I challenge all members to go to Yerranderie. Unless they are in a four-wheel drive, I bet that most members will not get there. I want members to remember that they are cursing those people to no access for many periods of the year, through fire and flood. I am not sure how supplies will get there. I hope that I get some support, but I do not believe it will happen. I have looked at revocation and tidying up of small areas. It was an opportunity to make the people of Yerranderie safe and protected in the future.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (21:21): I thank the member for Wollondilly for moving this amendment to the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I also thank her for her passionate contribution. Unfortunately, the Government does not support the amendment, which proposes to revoke parts of the Yerranderie Regional Park and the Blue Mountains National Park. The proposed revocation is understood to be requested to enable private and commercial use of an historical airstrip. The proposal is not consistent with existing policy or legislation. As my colleagues mentioned during the debate, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service manages revocations under the revocation, re-categorisation and road adjustment policy, which is publicly available. The policy, usually referred to as the revocations policy, states that lands in a park will generally only be revoked as a last resort when no other practical options are available and when the revocation would deliver an overall public good outcome. The Government does not believe that the proposal would meet the requirements of the policy, particularly given that there has not been appropriate consultation on the proposal with other residents, community groups, traditional owners, statutory advisory bodies or council.

Furthermore, I understand that the proposal is to enable access to a private property. However, use of land for private aircraft landings is not necessary because vehicle access already exists via a public road for the very small number of private residences in Yerranderie. All emergency aircraft access to Yerranderie has been by helicopters, which do not require an airstrip. There has never been use of the airstrip by light planes for fire- or flood-related emergency purposes and there is no need to do so. Yerranderie and the airstrip are in the Warragamba special catchment lands. The WaterNSW regulations prohibit the landing of aircraft in that area. Use of the land for an airstrip is not permitted under the Wollondilly local environmental plan. For those reasons, the proposed amendment to the bill is not supported by the Government.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (21:24): I make a short contribution on the amendment to the National Parks and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 proposed by the member for Wollondilly. What a lovely place Yerranderie is and what unique circumstances it has. In the short space of time that members have had to consider the amendment, the Opposition is not able to support it. However, I challenge the Government to work with the member for Wollondilly. I do not accept that this is not a last-resort situation. For many of the residents, if confronted by floods or bushfires, it is the last resort. There is one road coming into the area from the west through Oberon. It is a long drive to get in. At the moment that road is inaccessible in many areas due to the impacts of floods. In a bushfire, the residents are trapped.

A landing strip there was built by a lovely woman, who is now 100 years old, who gave that land to the Minister for the Environment in 2011. She handed it over to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. It is clearly a shambles that deserves a solution. If the current proposal of the member for Wollondilly is not the solution, I challenge the Government to work with the member to find a solution because people, be they a group of 20 or a group of 200, deserve the service of this Government. While the Opposition is unable to support the present

amendment, I challenge the Government to support the people in this unique, beautiful and historic area, which deserves the Parliament's attention.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (21:25): With all due respect to the shadow Minister, it is pretty rich for her to preface her contribution by saying, "We will not support the amendment but this is everything the Government should be doing." I am disappointed to have heard that because it is all well and good to say, "We will not support it, but this is what you should do." I made it clear in my response to the second reading debate that the Government would be willing to work with people. I think I said that about three times. A number of others who made contributions also said that. This Government has been willing to work with all members. The Government will work with members across the aisle, whether they be Independents, Liberals or Nationals or The Greens. The Government will work with whomever it can to try to do that.

I refer to one particular example. Lismore and the Northern Rivers have been through some extraordinary things. The Government is working with all local members and communities, including the Central West, to try to find solutions that work specifically for those communities. In this instance the Government made it clear that there was not enough time for consultation. I also share responsibility for the Reconstruction Authority with the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. The Parliamentary Secretary for Disaster Recovery, the outstanding member for Lismore, is also assisting us.

Our plans—in particular our State Disaster Mitigation Plan, the first of its type in Australia—focus specifically on what the Government can do with communities. The Government has given that commitment and I will continue that commitment to work with the member for Wollondilly. We hope that there is not an emergency but we are working with communities as well as we possibly can. The challenge is always to find solutions and we will work on finding solutions. The Reconstruction Authority is only 1½ years old, but the work that it has done and the way that it is transforming how the State handles disasters has the community at heart. It is making sure that the voice of the local community is heard. Every place has its own special needs. We will work with those places. In this instance, however, the Government cannot support the amendment. It will continue working in whatever way it can. There is other access. I am disappointed that the Opposition would say, "We do not support the amendment but these are all the things that the Government is doing wrong."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that amendment No. 1 of the member for Wollondilly on sheet c2024-066A be agreed to.

Amendment negatived.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

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

Third Reading

Mr JIHAD DIB: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY AMENDMENT (LAND CLASSIFICATION) BILL 2024

First Reading

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

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a later time.

EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY INSURANCE MONITOR BILL 2024

First Reading

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

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a later time.

*Community Recognition Statements***THE SHEPHERD CENTRE**

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (21:31): On 15 April I was delighted to visit the Shepherd Centre at its new Oran Park facility. The Shepherd Centre is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to helping children with hearing loss to learn to listen and speak. Established in 1970, it provides early-intervention programs and specialised support services to over 500 families each year. With a focus on integrating advanced hearing technologies and tailored education plans, the centre aims to empower children with hearing loss to achieve their full potential in mainstream schools and communities. It was a privilege to join a Kidscape therapy session—a specialised playgroup for families of children with hearing loss, offering activities to enhance listening, spoken language and social skills while parents participate in educational workshops. Big thanks to Dr Aleisha Davis and the entire team for their warm welcome and dedication to families facing childhood hearing loss.

JACK HUDSON

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (21:32): In the wake of tragedy, Wauchope's Jack Hudson is going the extra mile to give others a fighting chance in this world. I recognise Jack and his momentous achievement of running 50 kilometres to raise funds for Cure Cancer Australia. Jack embarked on that mammoth journey to honour his father, Brent Hudson, who tragically passed away from bladder cancer two weeks ago, as well as his cousin who died following a car accident. The family rallied together and turned to fitness to keep their spirits and motivation alive. Jack ran his first half-marathon as part of Port Macquarie's 2024 running festival, as part of his training to tackle the mighty 50-kilometre mark. His early fundraising endeavours successfully raised \$7,800 and he raised a further \$2,500 during the run. Jack is the embodiment of human spirit, tenacity and positivity, even in grim circumstances. I congratulate Jack on his accomplishments and applaud his efforts to help others experiencing the same hardship. He is an inspiration for our community, and we look forward to following his running future.

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (21:33): On 18 May 2024 I had the pleasure of attending Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, thoughtfully organised by Sinilia Radivojevic and Cancer Council NSW at Cabra-Vale Diggers Club. It was heartening to see the community come together for such a crucial cause. Tragically, statistics reveal that about one in two Australian men and women will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85. It is imperative that we continue to prioritise research, early detection and accessible treatment options to improve outcomes for individuals affected by cancer. Events like Australia's Biggest Morning Tea serve to promote public awareness and as vital fundraising opportunities, enabling Cancer Council NSW to continue its relentless efforts towards a future free of cancer. I commend Sinilia Radivojevic, Cancer Council NSW and all the attendees for their dedication and commitment to that important cause. Together we can make a tangible difference in the fight against cancer and bring hope to countless individuals and families affected by the disease.

STREPHON BILLINGHURST

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (21:34): I acknowledge the service of Strephon Billinghamurst as chief executive officer at Hawkesbury hospital, currently operated by St John of God Health Care. At the end of June the hospital will transfer to NSW Health, and Mr Billinghamurst's tenure as CEO will come to an end after more than eight years of dedicated service. I recognise his unwavering commitment and effectiveness leading Hawkesbury hospital through some of its most challenging periods, including the Black Summer bushfires, seven major floods in the past four years and the COVID-19 pandemic. Strephon can be proud of his leadership in improving clinical excellence, strong fiscal management, natural disaster response and the complex task of transferring Hawkesbury hospital to the public health system. I wish Strephon Billinghamurst the best for the next stages of his career, and I am certain he will continue to make an exceptional contribution in a leadership role.

CORE COMMUNITY SERVICES

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (21:35): CORE Community Services is an organisation from humble beginnings, embedded in south-western Sydney for over 40 years. It is now one of the largest settlement service providers in the Fairfield local government area, which takes in the largest proportion of humanitarian arrivals in New South Wales. The organisation makes a real difference. In the fiscal year ending 30 June 2023, the dedicated staff of CORE Community Services supported more than 10,300 clients and delivered over 155,300 hours of support across aged and disability care, youth services, children's services, settlement services and community outreach. Countless staff and volunteers have shaped the organisation into what it is today. I thank the CEO, Ms Juana Reinoso, the executive management team and the passionate and dedicated staff for all their work in servicing the Fairfield community.

KNITTING NANNAS

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (21:36): I acknowledge the remarkable efforts of the Knitting Nannas on the northern beaches. It is wonderful to welcome them to Parliament House this week. Bound by a common cause, the group works tirelessly to ensure that our precious land, air and water are preserved for future generations. Our local Knitting Nannas gather to knit, converse and stand in solidarity against destructive practices that threaten our environment and divide our communities. Their presence at protests and meetings underscores their unwavering commitment to environmental justice and community solidarity. Importantly, the Knitting Nannas recognise the enduring stewardship of our First Peoples over this land. They honour the care and respect shown to country over tens of thousands of years. The nannas pledge to walk alongside Indigenous communities in the ongoing fight against those who seek to exploit our environment for short-term gains. I thank the Knitting Nannas; their dedication and activism inspire us all. To learn more, hop on their website to read their Nannafesto.

STRATHFIELD ROTARY CLUB YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (21:37): Strathfield Rotary Club has been recognising the contributions and successes of local young people since 2003. This year I congratulate plaque winners Fiona Feng, who took out the Art and Culture Award; Andreas Blatsos, who won the Environment Award; Mahek Jain, who won the Science and Technology Award; Penny Haddad, who won the President's Award; Claudia Meaker and Jennifer McPartland, who won the Junior Sports Award; the Meriden nationals tennis team, who won the Team Sports Award; and cross-code talent Mitchell Woods, who took out the Young Sportsperson of the Year Award. Aditi Kamath and Michael Ong-Schofield won the Community Service Award, with the Interact Club at Homebush Boys High School supporting community projects and charities. I am proud of them and the many young people across Strathfield who excel at what they love and look out for others.

PENNY BECCHIO, OAM

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (21:38): I was excited that my very good friend and long-time Hornsby resident Penny Becchio was recognised in the 2024 Australia Day honours with an Order of Australia medal for her service to the community through a range of organisations. Penny has held a range of support roles with the Scouting movement, including serving as state commissioner for Scouts NSW since 2017. She has also been involved with the Hornsby Gang Show in various capacities over the past four decades, including as general manager for 10 seasons. With Penny's extensive and unique knowledge of the Hornsby Gang Show, she recently compiled an impressive book detailing the colourful 50-year history of that popular annual production. Penny Becchio is a long-time justice of the peace. She has served on various local school committees and has been a member of Hornsby council's Hornsby Art Prize committee since 2010. It is my pleasure to congratulate Penny Becchio on being awarded an Order of Australia medal. That amazing lady is highly deserving of her award. In fact, she is one of the best people I know. She has contributed to the local Hornsby community with significant service over many decades. Our community and our country are better places because of Penny Becchio.

SCULPTURES AT SCRATCHLEY

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (21:39): Following the success of its inaugural exhibition last year, Sculptures at Scratchley returned for a second year to showcase over 150 sculptures at the historic Fort Scratchley. For two weeks in May, residents and visitors were able to see an amazing exhibition curated by founders Grahame and Bec Wilson, who have realised their dream of bringing art to Newcastle. Sculptures at Scratchley brings together a truly unique experience combining art, history and landscape. This year's People's Choice Award went to Samuel Troyer's *Open Hands*. The Peer Award went to Jonathon Pryor's *Humpback Whale*, and the Octopus Garden Design Small Sculpture Award went to Tony Wong Hee's *free to fly*. I congratulate Grahame and Bec, their fellow organisers, volunteers and artists on their tremendous efforts in once again putting together Sculptures at Scratchley.

GREEN POINT RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (21:40): I congratulate the Green Point Rural Fire Brigade on its fiftieth anniversary. This achievement reflects the hard work of the brigade's members, past and present, who have volunteered in our community for five decades. Since its establishment in 1974, the Green Point brigade has grown into an important part of our local emergency response network. The brigade's efforts in preparing for and responding to fire threats have been critical in protecting our community, as was evident during the 2019-20 Black Summer fires. The brigade's involvement goes further than bush and grass fires, including motor vehicle accidents, hazard reduction burns and even out-of-area incidents. The service of our RFS volunteers is greatly valued. These selfless volunteers are ready to respond to emergencies 24 hours a day. I thank the Green Point

Rural Fire Brigade for its 50 years of service. It was lovely to celebrate with the brigade members and their family and friends last month.

DANNY VUKOVIC

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (21:41): Tonight I celebrate Danny Vukovic, the captain of the Central Coast Mariners, for his exceptional leadership and dedication both on and off the field. On top of that, Danny magically helped the Mariners rewrite the region's sport history by completing a fairytale treble victory. Starting from his A-League debut for the Mariners in 2005, Danny has exemplified the values of resilience, determination and sportsmanship. He has never failed to inspire fans and teammates alike through the 193 appearances he has made in competitions for the Central Coast. His tireless commitment to excellence has propelled the Mariners to success, and he has served as a beacon of inspiration within the wider community. Last week Danny announced his retirement as a professional footballer. To our excitement, Danny is joining the Mariners' coaching staff. I applaud Danny for his outstanding achievements and leadership both on and off the pitch. I am truly proud to celebrate his contributions to the Central Coast Mariners and our community as a whole. Go the Mariners!

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): I am not surprised by the member's contribution tonight. I also congratulate Danny.

MARGARET HEATH

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (21:42): Tonight I recognise Margaret Heath, a long-time resident of Griffith, for her outstanding dedication to her community. Margaret has spent countless hours helping others. She volunteered for many years at the Griffith Adult Learning Association, now known as the Western Riverina Community College. Margaret is on the Meals on Wheels honour roll for her long service. Beelbangara Public School is fortunate to have Margaret volunteering to help students with their reading. Her commitment has significantly benefited the students. One of Margaret's most generous contributions is her weekly service at the PCYC drop-in centre. Ten years ago, Margaret applied to become a volunteer to help disadvantaged and at-risk teenagers. She has developed a strong connection with those teenagers, encouraging them to stay engaged in activities and complete their work. Her skills in teaching reading have been invaluable and have made a significant difference in their lives. At an age when many would be slowing down, Margaret continues to be a valued volunteer. I congratulate her on her unwavering care and dedication to her community.

CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT GROUP

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (21:43): Mental health is such a big issue in New South Wales, so I was pleased to hear that one of my constituents, Eddie Warner, is benefiting by joining a men's mental health initiative in my electorate. The group, which is a partnership between Bankstown Canterbury Community Transport and the City of Canterbury Bankstown, meets once a month at the Padstow Senior Citizen Centre and offers a variety of activities and social outings for members. Eddie Warner has been attending and benefiting from the stimulating environment provided by the group while he navigates the challenges of dementia. His wife, Enid, said the group had allowed Eddie to continue to reconnect with his true self and continue his love of art. At a recent meeting, Eddie sketched staff and other group members, showcasing his talents. I was so pleased to hear about the group and the mental health benefits it brings to East Hills locals like Eddie. I also congratulate Bankstown Canterbury Community Transport and the City of Canterbury Bankstown on setting up this important initiative.

WESTPAC ST GEORGE CO-LOCATION BRANCH

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (21:44): I recognise the milestone opening of Westpac's 100th co-located branch in Menai Marketplace on 12 April 2024. As bank branches become scarcer, this new branch brings together Westpac and St George teams under one roof and enables members of the community to get face-to-face assistance across a suite of banking offerings, including everyday banking, home ownership and business banking. I am pleased that Westpac has invested \$1.4 million into this co-location and has recognised that the 2234 area is growing, with increasing demand for banking services from young families and small businesses through the branch. Since its opening, the branch has been servicing more than 800 members of our community each week. I acknowledge the leadership of Westpac's Chief Customer Engagement Officer, Ross Miller; State General Manager, Dom Papaluca; the incredible Menai Branch Manager, Jenny Langelaar; and the dedicated local team including Sue Kougiass, Josephine Fofanah, Carmen Bell, Renata Hatchman and Kim Cartiedge. I thank them for supporting the banking needs of our community members. I congratulate Westpac on opening this 100th co-location. I look forward to seeing how the branch assists people in the 2234 area.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT "BOB" EVERITT

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (21:45): I acknowledge the recent passing of Robert "Bob" Everitt. Bob was a member of the Australian Labor Party and a proud supporter of the Labor cause, particularly public education. He was a well-known and highly respected member of the community. Bob was the first deputy principal of Figtree High School when the school opened in 1969, serving in that role until 1973. From there, he went on to be principal of Kanahooka High School for 11 years, before returning to Figtree High to take up the role of school principal from 1985 to 1997. Bob was the principal of Figtree High School when I started at the school. I reconnected with him many years later as a branch member. Upon Bob's passing, there have been many tributes from former students and teachers. The resounding commentary is that he is remembered for being fair, just and well-respected. That is exactly how I remember him. Bob influenced people and changed lives—a proud legacy for any educator and one his family can be proud of. I appreciated his support and encouragement, and I join with many other former students and teachers at Figtree High School to express my condolences to his family, particularly his children, Jim, Louise, Belinda and Mandy, and their partners, as well as his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

GARRY WALTERS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (21:46): I acknowledge Garry Walters as he retires at the age of 80 from the voluntary position of Crown land manager, a position he held for 50 years. Garry has been managing two Crown land reserves in the village of Elong Elong. He began managing the recreation reserve in 1973 and the community hall from 1974. In taking on the role, Garry was actually continuing a family legacy. His father, Arthur, had served as the Crown land manager for 30 years before him. Under Garry's tenure, the facilities have been extremely well taken care of. New bathrooms and floorboards were installed at the community hall, and a new fence was built to improve safety and amenity at the recreation reserve. That, along with the ongoing high standard of regular maintenance that he carried out, ensured the facilities were always available to be utilised for community events. One such event was the successful "Back to Elong" school reunion in 1998, held in the community hall, which Garry organised. Not only were over 500 people there, but they also raised over \$17,000. I thank Garry for his work, passion and dedication to the community. I wish him all the best in his retirement.

CANTERBURY-BANKSTOWN FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL HUB AND RESOURCE CENTRE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (21:47): I am honoured to celebrate the news that the Bankstown Senior Citizens' Centre has been selected as the new cultural space for bringing together First Nations and non-Indigenous communities. The Canterbury-Bankstown First Nations Cultural Hub and Resource Centre, the Eora Matta, will operate a two-year trial period of regular programs, cultural awareness training, Aboriginal art lessons, drop-in sessions and local support services for the community. It is inspiring to witness local Indigenous groups make incredible efforts to unite Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities through empowerment and reconciliation. I am proud of our local Indigenous community for creating a "people's meeting place" to celebrate the rich Aboriginal culture, whilst also providing cultural awareness training and educational resources for the wider community. The new cultural space signifies a significant step towards fostering inclusivity and understanding between First Nations and non-Indigenous communities. This endeavour not only provides a platform for celebrating the vibrant Aboriginal culture but also serves as a catalyst for meaningful dialogue and collaboration. I congratulate all the stakeholders. I am confident it will serve as an outstanding Indigenous cultural and resource asset within our community, enhancing diversity, respect and appreciation.

ISABELLE FIELDING

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (21:49): Tonight the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges Isabelle Fielding, a year 7 student from Nowra Anglican College and the winner of the Shoalhaven Eisteddfod shield for public speaking. It is an award that I am pleased to sponsor. Titled "I know where I am going", I inspire members with an excerpt from her speech. I quote:

Where would you go if you could go anywhere? I wonder the wonder-some places you would go? How would you help if you could make a difference? I wonder the wonderful things you would choose?

I could travel the world and see people and places and learn how life can be different from another person's perspective. I would learn to be humble, respectful and quiet and how to be thankful and count all of my blessings. I will listen to the stories of those with experience and leave each place better, or just how I found it.

I congratulate the Shoalhaven Eisteddfod, which is celebrating 40 years, and Nowra Anglican College student Isabelle Fielding.

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION CAMPBELLTOWN BRANCH

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (21:50): I am delighted to acknowledge the seventieth anniversary of the Campbelltown branch of the Country Women's Association, which was established after World War II. I particularly acknowledge Judith, Maxine and the entire board. They continue to provide prosperity for women around Campbelltown. It must be acknowledged that the association does not just make jam or do good things around Campbelltown; it has stuck together and provided support for veterans since World War II. The Campbelltown branch has a proud history. Campbelltown lost many people during World War II. The women of the Country Women's Association were there for other widows, war widows and families, and that continues today. I am delighted to support the Country Women's Association. I thank those women for everything they have given over many years. Happy seventieth anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO BOB ROGERS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (21:51): It is with sadness that I acknowledge the passing of Mosman local Bob Rogers at the age of 97. Bob, affectionately known as "Balmoral Bob", was Australia's longest serving radio announcer. His impressive career spanned nearly 80 years, with humble beginnings as a panel operator in Melbourne in 1942. Bob was the first Aussie DJ to play Slim Dusty's *A Pub with No Beer*. In 1958 he launched the first top 40 countdown. Bob also accompanied The Beatles on their tour through Europe, Asia and Australia in 1964, earning him the honorary title of "the Fifth Beatle". Bob's colourful and wildly successful radio career ended in 2020, when he retired at the age of 93. Now, Bob is remembered by his friends and family as a fantastic man with a keen sense of humour, known for his kindness and charisma. The Australian public remembers him as a radio legend. For many years, Bob was the Aussie voice of radio, a household name and beloved Mosman local. He will be missed. I extend my condolences to his family and friends. Vale, Bob Rogers.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (21:52): On 23 May I attended a candlelight vigil led by the Parramatta Cumberland Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Committee. I thank the Parramatta and Cumberland frontline family and domestic violence services for their vital work in this difficult space. We lit candles in remembrance and stood in solidarity with survivors of domestic abuse. We reflected and reaffirmed our dedication to ending that violence. Around 150 people, including the member for Granville and officers from the Parramatta Police Area Command, took part in a powerful ceremony. Thirty-five pairs of shoes were laid out in rows across Parramatta Square—one for each woman who has been killed across Australia this year due to gender-based violence. The statistics are shocking: One in four women will experience some sort of violence committed by an intimate partner or family member since the age of 15. Family and domestic violence is a complex issue. I welcome the opportunity to support our local services with the injection of emergency domestic violence prevention funding in conjunction with forthcoming legislative changes.

SHIRLEY ROLPH

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (21:53): Today my aunty Shirley Rolph turns 95. She was of an era where women were homebodies, cooking up storms for fetes and sewing aprons. I remember the thrill of watching her pour the liquid golden sugar that was to set as honeycomb and hearing the warning to not put my fingers anywhere near it. I remember the excitement of the pencil-like wooden sticks that pierced the fresh apples to then be dunked in ruby red toffee. She fundraised for the school fetes of not only her own children but also the children of her nephews and nieces. The Rolphs had their home in Regents Park. Later in life they owned Regents Park Hardware, where I had my first job learning about larry hoes and screw sizes. When my own mother was dying, Aunty Shirley took over care so that my sisters and I were able to continue caring for our families. Aunty Shirley wrote a book about my family history called *I Was Born Lucky*. In 1851 my great-grandfather purchased Charleville in Mulgoa. He then left nearly 2,000 acres of Mulgoa forest and Bents Basin to his descendants. The book allows me to feel the history of my family right where I live now. With an aunty like that, I was indeed the one who was born lucky.

CHELSEA ROBERTS

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (21:54): I congratulate Chelsea Roberts from Riverstone Athletics, who has achieved great success in race walking over the past six years. Chelsea is a passionate athlete of Riverstone Athletics and has been selected by the Australian team to compete in the opens 10,000-metre race walk in Suva, Fiji, in June, as well as the under-20s 10,000-metre race walk in Lima, Peru, at the junior championships in August 2024. Seeing her journey from local talent to international competitor, achieving great results in race walking, serves as an inspiration to aspiring athletes of all ages. Chelsea's success shows how physical fitness not only promotes a healthy and happy lifestyle but also strengthens bonds in our communities, encouraging a brighter future for all of us. I congratulate Chelsea on her remarkable dedication to her chosen sport and her incredible

achievements. She symbolises the spirit of determination and excellence that defines Riverstone Athletics as a sporting community. Good luck, Chelsea. I am keen to see where the future takes you.

SYDNEY KINGSFORD SMITH AIRPORT

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (21:55): I recently had the opportunity to visit Sydney Kingsford Smith Airport and check out some of the fantastic work that is being done there. It was a privilege to meet with the hardworking men and women who keep Sydney's aviation sector moving. I had the opportunity to tour the facility and get up close to some of the aircraft. One never truly understands how big the newest and latest jets are until one is standing underneath them. Around 1,300 of my constituents work at Sydney airport, contributing to an essential part of New South Wales' transportation and infrastructure network. From baggage handlers to retail assistants and CEOs, everyone plays an important role. Not only does Sydney airport contribute to the local economy; it also generates over \$42 billion in economic activity per year for New South Wales and Australia. Perhaps most importantly, Sydney airport helps to connect members of my community with their family and friends living interstate or overseas. It truly brings people together. I thank the entire team at Sydney airport for being such welcoming hosts, and I look forward to visiting again soon.

CENTRAL COAST MARINERS

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (21:56): I congratulate the Central Coast Mariners on their victory in the A-League 2023-24 men's grand final against Melbourne Victory. On Saturday 25 May Industree Group Stadium saw a sellout crowd of 21,379 in what was a sea of predominantly blue and yellow. I was honoured to be invited and be part of history. The game was a nailbiting one. It certainly had everyone on their feet at the ninety-first minute, when Ryan Edmondson's goal sent the game into extra time. At that point, it was the Mariners' time to shine—and shine, they did. There was no stopping them. The team stepped up, fought to the very end and showed that they were truly champions. I congratulate coach Mark Jackson and team captain Danny Vukovic, who has announced his retirement. I am sure the whole of the Central Coast is delighted to know that he will be joining the team's coaching squad. On behalf of the Central Coast community, I congratulate the mighty Mariners on a historic season. We sing for yellow.

NORTHERN BEACHES COMPUTER PALS FOR SENIORS

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (21:57): I acknowledge the amazing Northern Beaches Computer Pals for Seniors, which works tirelessly to support local seniors to improve their tech skills. The Northern Beaches Computer Pals for Seniors offers a range of courses for people of all tech literacy levels. Its work is essential in helping older members of the community remain independent, avoid online scams and stay connected, reducing social isolation. Running the computer pals takes a village. Currently led by President Irith Gouiric, I thank the many amazing volunteer trainers, including Alan Taylor, Allan Burrowes, Anne Matthews, Bill Meischke, Brian Mackie, Cameron Phillips, Caroline Francis, Caroline Hamilton-Smith, Christine Smith, David O'Hara, Ian White, Ida Greenway, John Chambers, John Steward, Juan Carlos Kovacic, Lilia Hutchinson, Michele Breen, Peter Cooke, Peter Moule, Selina Jackson, Thea Hall and many more. Many of those trainers have been with computer pals for five to 20 years. I thank them all for their commitment to helping so many in our community.

SAM SMITH

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (21:58): I recognise Sam Smith of Nowra, who has been ranked among Australia's top four chefs. Sam grew up in Callala Bay on the South Coast where his cooking career began at the Bomaderry Bowling Club. Sam quickly progressed to the Pilu restaurant located in Freshwater where Sam secured a scholarship to the world-renowned Alma International School of Cuisine in Italy. After travelling the world, Sam returned to the Shoalhaven last year. Now, as the head chef at the award-winning Ponte Bar and Dining in Nowra, Sam's passion for traditional French cuisine continues to delight diners with Italian-inspired menus using French techniques and ingredients. Foodservice Australia's Chef of the Year Award is the most prestigious chef competition in Australia. Of the 500 entries, Sam placed fourth and scored the highest marks during the eight heats before moving to the grand final. This was Sam's first time entering the competition. I congratulate Sam and wish him continued success. I look forward to dining with him at Ponte very soon.

PORT MACQUARIE MARINE RESCUE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (21:59): Today I congratulate Anderson Cameron-Brown and Peter Kowalik from Marine Rescue Port Macquarie on receiving five-year service awards at a special ceremony held in May. The heroes of our waterways were recognised recently at an event attended by the zone duty operations manager, Rodney Page, to mark five years of dedicated and committed service to Marine Rescue Port Macquarie. Anderson Cameron-Brown joined Marine Rescue at the young age of 16 and has served diligently and passionately over the past five years, all the while upholding the values and integrity of the unit. Likewise, Peter Kowalik was presented with his five-year service award acknowledging his invaluable contribution to the

unit which has ensured the safety of others enjoying our marine environments. Marine Rescue volunteers live by the mission of 24 hours a day, every day. Described as one of the busiest seasons on record, Marine Rescue Port Macquarie has successfully returned 61 stranded vessels from danger and distress. This is only achievable through volunteers like Anderson and Peter, who donate their time to this vital organisation in Port Macquarie. I thank Anderson and Peter for all their commitment as Marine Rescue volunteers.

WESTS SPORTS AWARDS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (22:00): I am delighted tonight to recognise the winners of the Wests Sports Volunteer of the Year Awards 2024. Over 100 nominations were received. I acknowledge Elizabeth Dyet from Wests hockey club, who has been a member of the club since she was five years old. Elizabeth has been an assistant coach and then head coach of the under-6s and under-8s. She also is one of the first people to volunteer for club fundraisers. I also acknowledge the many other recipients of awards who have achieved so many things. Elizabeth Blowes has been a volunteer with the Campbelltown District Netball Association for 25 years and has held roles as an umpire, coach and committee member. I acknowledge all the volunteers, the parents and the players, who are contributing so much during the winter competition.

DR JEFFREY FREEMAN

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (22:01): Penrose Community Association members are a highly motivated and active group who take great pride in the village of Penrose. They assist with many projects to meet the needs of their community. The need for a new community hall was identified many years ago. Through a successful grant application to the Australian and New South Wales Governments' Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund and with support from the council's Community Assistance Scheme, the new hall was built. Dr Jeff Freeman has been instrumental in leading this initiative, overseeing the entire process from design and approval to funding applications and construction on behalf of the Penrose community. His outstanding contribution was recently recognised with a New South Wales Government Community Service Award. Presented with the Premier's Award by the New South Wales Premier, Dr Freeman stood among only six recipients statewide to receive this prestigious accolade. As I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Dr Freeman, I express sincere gratitude to all the volunteers whose dedication contributed to the new Penrose Hall, particularly the support provided by Dr Freeman's wife, Janet Toms, and President Alison Duthie.

Private Members' Statements

KENSINGTON POST OFFICE CLOSURE

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (22:03): I share my disappointment at the news that Australia Post will be closing the indispensable post office on Anzac Parade, Kensington. Like many in the Kensington community, I found this decision to be nothing short of disgraceful. I know that this post office has been a cornerstone of the community and that my residents use it for much more than just postal services. Many small businesses and residents alike rely on this location to bank, pay their bills, renew their passports, organise insurance or police checks, transfer or exchange money, and to send or receive letters and parcels.

Apart from a piece of paper taped to the shop's front door for the last few weeks, the community in general was not notified by Australia Post that the store would be closing. Only the post office lessees were given the courtesy of being informed that they would need to take their business elsewhere. I find the manner in which this closure was embarked upon to be almost as disappointing as the decision itself. This is not the first time that Kensington Post Office was flagged for closure. In 2011 a petition to the House of Representatives was circulated in response to community fears that the post office would be closing. This caused the then Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Senator Conroy, to respond to our community. In his response, the Minister advised that Australia Post had been in discussions with relevant stakeholders about the decline in customer numbers at the Kensington Post Office. As part of this, he alluded to the challenges that Australia Post was already experiencing in operating the post office, having mentioned that the organisation would be exploring ways to improve the financial position of the outlet.

Despite these challenges, both Australia Post and the communications Minister of the day understood the importance of the humble post office. They renewed the store's lease for the site because they knew that the only response that would be acceptable to the community was to affirm that there would be no plans to close the outlet. In a fast-paced urban landscape, these post offices play an indispensable role in enhancing connectivity and convenience for residents and businesses alike. That is why, as soon as I heard of the closure of the Kensington store, I wrote to the local Federal member of Parliament, the Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite, MP, member for Kingsford Smith, to communicate my disappointment at the change and ask that he lobby those with power over Australia Post to rethink their plans. Being the great local member that he is, Mr Thistlethwaite made representations to the

CEO of Australia Post, only to be told that the driving factor behind their decision was a lack of revenue from that location.

To know that the customers were being told that our treasured post office at Kensington had to close because their lease had ended was one thing. To learn that the reason "For Lease" signs haunt the store's frontage today comes down to sales is even more unpalatable. That is because post offices are an essential Federal Government service. It is not acceptable nor fair for public organisations like Australia Post to shut down much-needed community services like Kensington Post Office to prioritise profit over people. What our community needs more than bland consolation prizes—like having a few parcel lockers retained for a period—is a fully functional post office.

In response to mail I circulated in the Kensington community and social media, I instantly received a call from the CEO of Australia Post, wanting to discuss the matter with me. Suddenly it was urgent that the CEO see me in Parliament in relation to this question. I say that unless the CEO is coming to me with an olive branch—that he will retain those postal services in my electorate—I do not know what the urgent request for an appointment is. For centuries, postal services have not been a profit-making service but a service provided by government for the benefit of the community. I truly hope that Australia Post catches on to community sentiment and finds another, perhaps more affordable, location to provide this much-needed service to the Kensington community.

SYDNEY METRO

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (22:08): I wish to speak about the Sydney Metro project, which is coming soon to stations in my local community. We all know that Sydney Metro is Australia's largest public transport project. Building, operating and maintaining a network of four metro lines, 46 stations and 113 kilometres of new metro rail, this project is revolutionising how Australia's biggest city travels by connecting Sydney's north-west, west, south-west and greater west to fast, reliable and turn-up-and-go metro services with fully accessible stations. City-shaping projects, such as the Sydney Metro, are delivered only by governments with vision.

I was proud to be part of the Liberal Government that envisioned, funded and worked to deliver Sydney Metro. I particularly thank two of our former transport Ministers for their incredible work: Gladys Berejiklian and Andrew Constance. One, a former neighbour who nurtured and brought this project to life, is a particular favourite of mine. Without their clear vision and passion for this project, it would never have gotten off the ground. I thank them for their tireless work. I also note that they are both former Treasurers, and the work that it takes to fund, finance and deliver these projects is significant. The asset recycling projects under Mike Baird's leadership and through Gladys Berejiklian's Treasury and onwards formed the cornerstone of delivering these city-shaping infrastructure projects.

In my community, we will soon be able to hop on board at Crows Nest station and at Victoria Cross station in North Sydney. After years of major construction work and state-of-the-art station fit-outs, Sydney Metro services are expected to begin midyear. We are very excited. We are looking forward to cutting the ribbon with our friends on the opposite side of the Chamber and joining together to celebrate the delivery of the service. This world-class turn-up-and-go service will cut the daily commute from Crows Nest to Martin Place down to just seven minutes. It will take just five minutes to reach Martin Place from Victoria Cross. That connectivity is not just about North Sydney CBD and the Sydney CBD; it is about connecting us to all of the communities across Sydney and the seamless interconnection of public transport to make sure that people who live in communities like mine have more access to areas like the inner west, the north-west and, over time, the greater west.

Many in our local community already rely on public transport to travel to and from work and to do all of the things they love. The service will connect two of Sydney's most important central business districts, greatly reducing the burden of private transport on our infrastructure and environment. I loved joining with so many from our local community for a preview at both Victoria Cross station and Crows Nest station of the game-changing infrastructure being brought to our community. Just the other weekend, Crows Nest had over 7,000 people come through the doors. That was the biggest community open day of any Sydney Metro station so far. The new station at Crows Nest is set 25 metres below ground level, with two entrances on the Pacific Highway and Clarke Street, and it creates a new transport focus for Crows Nest. We can already see the investment and revitalisation that the metro has catalysed in North Sydney, in particular. Victoria Cross station includes a northern entrance that opens up at Miller and McLaren streets near the schools and North Sydney Oval, and a southern entrance with pedestrian access to Miller and Denison streets.

This is all connected to a thriving, revitalised metropolis in North Sydney, with effort being put into the partial pedestrianisation of Miller Street—while endeavouring to move towards a fully pedestrianised Miller Street—to reclaim more public space for the community in North Sydney. Victoria Cross station is set a staggering 31 metres underground. A profound atmosphere is felt when entering that Victoria Cross station

cavern. It will include a commercial building, which is quite far progressed, above the southern entrance. It will provide a sustainable retail, food and hospitality hub in the heart of North Sydney, and it is leading a renaissance for our CBD. I welcome anyone to come to North Sydney to check out the lifestyle, food and beverage, and hospitality, because it is really transforming. That is what really great place-based transport oriented development does.

The excitement in my local community for this project is palpable. We are all looking forward to getting on board the metro at either Crows Nest or Victoria Cross station. But I reiterate that projects like this do not happen by themselves; they can only be delivered by governments with a vision and with strong economic management to make that vision happen. We are going to love joining members opposite to cut the ribbons on projects that we started, funded and had under construction well before they were elected. These city-shaping projects take multiple generations to deliver but will have profound impacts for the next hundred years or so. But we will remember, as will the community, whose vision initiated and ensured we achieved this project.

MACQUARIE FIELDS ELECTORATE ORGANISATIONS

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) (22:13): The late, great Rose Kennedy once famously said, "Life isn't a matter of milestones but of moments." That is true. The irony being, of course, that today I will speak about some significant milestones in my local community. Those milestones, worthy as they are, are made up of a series of memorable and wonderful moments—moments that bring people together, moments that reflect our community's resilience and resourcefulness, and moments that honour our community volunteers and their generous gift of time. The culmination of those moments leads to significant community milestones, and I am honoured to highlight some of them in the House tonight.

In July, 1st Ingleburn Scout Group will celebrate 100 years of, for the most part, continuous operation. Scouting in general was placed in recess during World War II. However, Scout members of that time still met and organised activities, albeit unofficially. The Scouts assisted in the war effort by volunteering as messengers for the air raid wardens and delivering messages on their bicycles to the Ingleburn Army Camp. It is a remarkable history, and now 1st Ingleburn Scout Group celebrates a remarkable milestone. The group's longevity is testament to my community's resilience and, of course, to the dedication of this band of volunteers.

In 1962 the Scout hall was extended after the original building moved from Stanley Street, Ingleburn, to its present home at Westland Memorial Park. In late 1985 the hall was extensively damaged by fire. Subsequently, it was rebuilt and reopened in 1986 with the support of the local community and the Australian Army Corps. One of the highlights of the group's esteemed history is that in 1926, 1st Ingleburn Scout Group guarded Sir Kingsford Smith's plane while he visited Springmead, a local property in what is now known as Denham Court. Today the group participates in many community activities, including tree planting, Clean Up Australia Day, catering for park and recreation openings with Landcom, Anzac Day services and citizenship ceremonies in my electorate.

Next year 1st Ingleburn Scout Group will have one of the largest Scout contingents in recent years heading to the twenty-fifth Australian Jamboree in Maryborough, Queensland. Whether attending a jamboree, going on adventures in the State's nature reserves or making new friends, Scouts equips young people with skills for life. The group has had only five group leaders in its 100-year history, which is a remarkable achievement. I had the honour of visiting 1st Ingleburn Scout Group's clubhouse earlier this year and met with some of its committed volunteers. The group received \$50,000 in New South Wales government grant funding to refurbish its hall and upgrade its amenities. The group is thrilled with the refurbishment, as it has given the clubhouse a new lease of life just in time for its 100-year milestone celebrations next month—more special moments to be treasured by all involved.

Another group marking a special milestone this year is Softball Campbelltown, which celebrates a remarkable 45 years. Based at Milton Park in the Macquarie Fields electorate, that special milestone is the culmination of many incredible moments. Ms Melanie Roche, considered one of the best pitchers in the world, started at Campbelltown Softball and has played in every Olympic softball competition, winning bronze in Atlanta in 1996, in Sydney in 2000 and in Beijing in 2008, and winning silver in Athens in 2004. Campbelltown Softball's home ground is Milton Park, and after recently visiting the club I can say it is one of the best-looking grounds around. Over the years, Campbelltown Softball has been the proud host venue of State, national and world championships. It is a thriving community association, fostering athleticism and camaraderie. As a proud patron of the club, I commend the association's success and applaud everyone involved in helping achieve this remarkable milestone.

Last year Macquarie Fields Swimming Club celebrated 50 years in the community. The club has 75 members of varying abilities, with ages ranging from six to late seventies. So many organisations with a long

history in my community are doing such wonderful work. I commend each and every one of them for their valuable contributions to my community and countless hours of dedication and volunteerism. I trust there will be more memorable moments and special milestones ahead for my local community organisations.

SCONE HORSE FESTIVAL

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (22:18): Tonight I update the House on the 2024 Scone Horse Festival, and what a festival it was! From the Scone Cup to the parade to the annual awards, the festival is Australia's horse capital at its finest. I recognise and thank some of the great people of the region, including legends Jim Callinan, Mike Pritchard and Bill Howey; community stars Julee Gilmore and Paige Baxter; the amazing vets, such as Dr Cameron Collins and Dr Catherine Chicken, who provided such a fantastic service to the horses; and the many great horse people who work in the industry. Let me go into a few of the details of this great festival. I thank the State's leading trainers, jockeys and owners for coming to Scone to join our Hunter Valley trainers, jockeys and connections to ensure the highest quality racing in country New South Wales.

This year's festival theme was "Let the Games Begin", to celebrate the 2024 Olympic Games. The opening weekend proved this festival is alive and well. St Mary's Primary School introduced a new event to the first night: the Boots, Bling and Bowties Ball at Scone Bowling Club. On Saturday 11 May, the Scone CBD was the stage for the renowned Scone Equine Hospital Horse Festival Parade, in which horses, equestrians and equine-themed floats shared the limelight. Another feature of the opening weekend was the prestigious Scone Horse Festival VIP Awards, showcasing the finest achievements of the Upper Hunter's equine industry and honouring those who have made remarkable contributions to the region's rich equestrian heritage. The festival committee president, Andrew Cooper, stated:

The Scone Horse Festival VIP Awards celebrate the unwavering dedication, passion, and talent that define our vibrant equine community ... we honor individuals and horses whose achievements inspire us all and whose contributions enrich the fabric of our region's equestrian heritage.

Julee Gilmore was the VIP of the Year, honoured for exemplifying the spirit of dedication and service within the equine community. Julee is a founding member of the Upper Hunter Dressage Club and a stalwart of the Scone Pony Club. A rising star within the equestrian community, Paige Baxter, was awarded the Young Achiever of the Year. Paige participates across various equestrian disciplines, from eventing and showjumping to dressage and campdrafting. Her numerous accolades include victories at the Off The Track Equimillion and the Tamworth Junior Reining Championship. The Horse of the Year is Dalswinton Charlotte, owned by Tony and Pam Parry of Denman. Brett Jones and Steven Wicks were recognised with the Outstanding Service Award for their unwavering dedication and service. The award organisers told Brett and Steve, "Your hard work does not go unnoticed."

Lifetime membership was bestowed on Jim Callinan, Mike Pritchard and Bill Howey. This is Jim Callinan's second accolade of 2024 after being celebrated as the Upper Hunter Shire Citizen of the Year on Australia Day for his contribution to the community as a local event broadcaster and supporter of local charities. Mike Pritchard's contribution to the Upper Hunter as a journalist and broadcaster, including more than 30 years with the ABC, is in a class of its own. Bill Howey's contributions have been professional and the product of his personal passions. He is a veterinarian, a published author, a member of the local council and now a Scone Horse Festival VIP. That is just a small snapshot of the Bill Howey story.

The Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association [HTBA] was a significant participant in the festival. The breeders held stud tours to Arrowfield, Darley, Woodlands and Coolmore, and this year the association held its thirty-third annual awards night. Dr Cameron Collins was inducted as a lifetime member to the HTBA. Dr Catherine Chicken of Scone Equine Hospital received the President's Award. The Murray Bain Award was presented to Tony Scott of Emirates Park. Jackson Beirs of Newgate Farm received the Leadership Award. Emma Parkinson of Vinery Stud was presented with the Administration Award, and Matt Lawler was honoured with the Horsemanship Award. Congratulations also go to Arthur and Harry Mitchell at Yarraman Park Stud on I Am Invincible being named Champion Sire. Godolphin Darley Kelvinside was rewarded with the Champion First Season Sire title for Too Darn Hot. Plenty more awards went out in recognition of fantastic horses, making the Upper Hunter the strongest horse breeding region in the world.

STRATHFIELD DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE ROUND TABLE

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (22:23): Late last month Sally Sitou, the Federal member for Reid, and I convened some 30 representatives from 23 local organisations in Strathfield's first domestic and family violence and women's safety round table. The crisis of domestic, family and sexual violence in Australia is staggering. More than 2.3 million women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner since the age of 15—that is one in four women. When we thought about this issue and what distinctive contribution our community could make, one of the things that occurred to us is just how diverse our community is: 30 per cent of

our community is of Chinese background, 20 per cent is of Indian background, and a range of other cultures are represented.

It occurred to us that diverse communities face a particular and unique set of challenges in addressing the scourge of domestic and family violence and coercive control. This is a deeply intersectional issue where gender is layered upon culture, which is layered upon language difficulties, which is layered upon poverty, which is layered upon age, which is layered upon visa status. All of these exacerbate the complexity of the issue and the barriers to victims seeking help. People from multicultural communities also face unique threats including visa abuse, female genital mutilation, reproductive coercion, modern slavery and dowry abuse. One would think that given all of these additional risks, there would be a greater amount of research and resourcing to address those issues, but sadly that is not the case.

A study by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety identified a lack of policy frameworks and a deficiency of specialised support services addressing cultural factors in violence against women. However, we are seeing some recent momentum. Last month the New South Wales Government and Settlement Services International opened the Multicultural Centre for Women's Safety in south-western Sydney, and late last year the Department of Communities and Justice awarded some \$2 million in grant funding to multicultural groups across New South Wales to tackle domestic and family violence. Last month the New South Wales Government announced a \$230 million package to tackle domestic, family and sexual violence and to roll out a campaign to raise awareness of coercive control amongst culturally and linguistically diverse [CALD] communities, with new legislation targeting coercive control starting on 1 July this year.

We are also witnessing non-government organisations step up with programs for CALD communities and settings, but a lot more is still needed. At the Strathfield round table, we heard about migrant women facing abuse at the hands of their partners with their migration status, or the severing of links to their culture, friends and family being used as threats or means of coercion. We heard community leaders and local police call for information on domestic, family and sexual violence to be made more available in different community languages. Ideally, this should include things like directories and up-to-date links to services, help and safe places. We heard of a shortage of bilingual domestic and family violence workers. We heard about a widespread fear of engaging with authorities and an over-reliance on the justice system. We also heard extensively from our own subcontinental community about the growing incidence of dowry abuse.

That brings me to my final reflection from our Strathfield round table: the need for more data and research on domestic, family and sexual violence challenges facing culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The first national study of migrant and refugee women's experiences of sexual harassment in the workplace only occurred in 2021. Worryingly, it found that 46 per cent of women in the study experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the workplace in the last five years, with men in senior positions most likely to engage in harassing or problematic behaviour. As a society and a nation, we face a monumental task in tackling the domestic, family and sexual violence crisis. It is clear that governments, legal and health systems, communities and community organisations will need to work closely together to legislate, educate and make meaningful change, particularly for those in our diverse society. The Strathfield community is determined to make our own small and hopefully distinctive contribution in this area.

BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (22:28): When children get a good start in their education, they are better set up for a good life. Research shows that children who have access to early education have much better educational outcomes, which translates into more opportunities and a better quality of life. The more we can do for our children, the better they will be and the better society will be when they become adults. In the words of American social reformer and statesman Frederick Douglass, "It is easier to build strong children than repair broken men," and the same can be said for women. When the Government committed to building 100 new preschools across New South Wales in its work towards the goal of universal access to preschool across the State, there was wide support, especially given that the schools would be built in areas with the greatest need.

That need was supposed to be determined using child development and socio-economic data, projected demand for preschool, an infrastructure analysis and valuable insights gained through local feedback during the decision-making process. Barwon has some of the highest levels of disadvantage in the State, particularly when it comes to early education, so there was no question that some communities in my electorate would benefit from the scheme. We welcome any investment in Barwon. Investment in early childhood education in western New South Wales is greatly needed. Bourke was announced as one of the beneficiaries, but something seems to have gone wrong with the selection process. In an attempt to do something good for a disadvantaged community, the Government may have ended up inadvertently doing harm.

An important part of giving a community what it wants and needs is to listen to that community before implementing anything. But in this case there was a lack of valuable insights gained through local feedback. Bourke was not well consulted on the decision and the result could impact existing services. Some key stakeholders were not consulted at all, notably the Bourke Tribal Council and Bourke Shire Council, and feedback given by others in the community appears to have been ignored. Among those who voiced concerns were the staff and supporters of the Bourke and District Children's Services or BDCS. That early childcare and educational provider is well regarded by the local community and has full support. BDCS is doing an extraordinary job. Originally established as an Aboriginal preschool in 1969, in 2007 it merged with Bourke's other early childhood services, becoming something far more than a provider of child care and education.

Bourke used to be a deeply divided community. I have worked with Bourke over the past 20 years, for three government agencies and as a local member. I can attest to that. Twenty years ago there were groups that should have been speaking and would not speak. One of the ways they have been brought together and made to collaborate is through Bourke and District Children's Services, because it is an education and childcare provider where all the children from the community come together. That is really important. If we create a new preschool, the risk is that we will segregate different cohorts of the community into those two preschools, as opposed to keeping them altogether in one place. It is a case where we probably should support the existing provider and make sure it can grow and continue to provide services and maybe expand its services, as opposed to creating a separate, standalone education facility to which people will be lost.

The board of BDCS is made up of approximately 50 per cent people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The centre works with the Bourke Tribal Council as well as the Maranguka Early Childhood and Parenting Working Group, with a focus on the Maranguka guiding principles, which include a strategy of growing up our kids safe, smart and strong. The principles were developed with the agreement of the New South Wales board of secretaries as best practice. There is also a focus on student health, with BDCS coordinating screening and assessment of children through a range of agencies and health professionals, including Royal Far West, Hearing Australia, the Royal Flying Doctor Service and Bourke Aboriginal Corporation Health Service.

Of the 74 children enrolled at the school, 59 per cent identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The centre has a dedicated team of amazing people, with extra teachers to help with the students' unique cultural and other needs. The school's board is made up entirely of volunteers. The BDCS has plans to expand. The proposed Yanmali project would see the creation of a purpose-built learning centre with state-of-the-art classrooms, sensory areas, a community hub and beautifully landscaped gardens. It has the potential to become the centrepiece of the community. The project has the full support of the Bourke community along with Bourke Shire Council.

BDCS was awarded \$4.8 million by the previous Government, but that relies on a co-contribution from the Federal Government. It cannot unlock the \$4.8 million without the contribution of additional funds from the Federal Government, so that is a real problem. The community is concerned that the imposition of another preschool in Bourke may lead to funding for the Yanmali project being reduced or taken away in favour of the new school. There are also fears the new school will divide the community. As I said, after 20 years of harmony we could see the new school splitting the community. Essentially, I ask the Government to listen to the community and do what it wants.

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR LYNDALL RYAN, AM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (22:33): On 30 April Emeritus Professor Lyndall Ryan, AM, passed away, aged 81. Australia lost one of its most prolific historians. Newcastle lost a valued community member, and our local branches lost a clever, engaged comrade and a friend to us all. Lyndall was born in Sydney in 1943 with Labor values running in her blood. Her mother, Edna Ryan, was a prominent party member and a fierce feminist whose legacy lives on today in the Edna Ryan Awards, which recognise women who fight to improve the lives of women and girls. Lyndall's academic career began in 1961, when she commenced a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney under a Commonwealth scholarship. After a short stint as a school teacher, Lyndall returned to university in 1966, completing a Master of Arts at the Australian National University in 1969, following in her mother's footsteps and focusing on Australian women's history.

One of my local branch members recently shared a story with me that around this time, Lyndall and her then roommate Anne Summers—another fantastic Australian feminist—found a woman climbing their fence, escaping her violent husband. Lyndall and Anne took this woman in and, with that, founded the first women's refuge in New South Wales. She was also one of the 10 women shortlisted by former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam to become Australia's first women's adviser, a position that was ultimately filled by the incredible Elizabeth Reid. In the meantime, Lyndall pursued a PhD at Macquarie University. She completed her studies in 1975, looking into Aboriginal history in Tasmania. Her 1981 book *The Aboriginal Tasmanians* reshaped Australian history as we knew it. Her research disputed the commonly held belief at the time that Aboriginal Tasmanians were extinct and uncovered new information on their culture, traditions and lives. Lyndall's work

came around the same time as an Aboriginal rights movement spread through Tasmania. It helped to empower this group to gain recognition of First Nations in Tasmania and their fight for land rights.

In the years that followed her PhD, her academic career took her around the country, from Griffith University in Brisbane to Flinders University in Adelaide, before she eventually settled at the University of Newcastle in 1998, although at that time she was based at our Central Coast campus. She was a key player in the Australian "history wars" of the early 2000s, as sparring historians challenged each other on what is true in Australian history in relation to colonisation and the oppression of our Indigenous peoples.

Lyndall's pursuit of truth-telling guided her research into the massacres of Aboriginal people. She shone a light on the hidden truth. She revealed that there was not just a handful of killings scattered throughout our history, but hundreds of massacres across our country where our Indigenous populations were brutally killed. Lyndall and her team at the University of Newcastle developed the Colonial Frontier Massacres, 1788-1930, a digital map familiarly known as the "Massacre Map". The map pinpoints the location of every massacre, the date, the number of victims who lost their lives, the number of attackers who lost their lives and the language group of the people involved. Lyndall's Massacre Map has become an important resource for all Australian historians and will continue to be used well into the future.

Lyndall's legacy lives on not only in her contributions to Australian history, but also in the lives she touched. I did not know Lyndall personally, but I knew her well as a branch member. I could always rely on her to have a worthy and constructive contribution at meetings and events, and her values of social justice and equity never faltered. While I may not have been particularly close with Lyndall, I know many who were, including my Federal colleague Ms Sharon Claydon, the other member for Newcastle, who I know is devastated by this loss. When the news of Lyndall's passing spread through the Newcastle Labor branches, so did a deep sadness. It took many people by surprise. While she had won her first battle against cancer, the next one came swiftly. I pay my sincerest condolences to the family and friends who survive her. She was a truly wonderful person, and she will be missed by all. Vale, Lyndall.

LANE COVE ELECTORATE WOMEN'S REFUGES

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove) (22:38): It was close to a year ago that I had the pleasure of meeting with Mandy Ambler, the senior pastor of C3 Church Lane Cove, and Gabrielle Morrissey Hansen, the chief executive officer of Women and Children First. It was a privilege to gain an insight into the remarkable work Gabrielle's organisation is doing in the domestic violence support space and the difference they make in lives each and every day. Gabrielle and Mandy shared with me their vision for addressing the hardships women face when leaving violent and abusive relationships, in particular, preventing victims from becoming homeless when they make that brave step forward and leave their abusive relationships. As such, I must commend the Government for the \$230 million of funding it has dedicated to the Staying Home Leaving Violence program, which will make such a significant impact in addressing this issue.

Within Lane Cove we have several refuges for women and children escaping violence, facilities which will be greatly assisted by the aforementioned funding but remain heavily reliant on the generosity of our community and dedicated volunteers. Luckily, it is not a challenge that Lane Cove will shy away from. This year, my staff and I have been delighted to spend more of our time with one of these refuges in particular. Earlier this year, Jacky Barker from *In the Cove* called us up, wondering whether we could spare some time to put together some flatpack furniture for the refuge, which is a tall order, as any parent would know.

Of course we obliged, and during the course of our time there we discovered a network of passionate and selfless individuals, both the staff and the volunteers. Darren from Multistyle Painting and Decorating had been in just the day before, giving the room a fresh coat of paint, free of charge. I should disclose that my office has been back since to do a bit of painting. I would not want people confusing our work with Darren's, as it may hurt his business. Dee from A Sound Life is often there, running free yoga sessions for the residents. Uni and Jenny, who manage the refuge, could not be more dedicated to their roles, which are often challenging. They deserve our immense thanks.

These refuges are in constant need of support. Tradies or handymen with some spare time or community members keen to volunteer in some capacity should reach out to my office to see where their time could make a monumental difference to the lives of local women and children. As a community, we are obliged to eradicate this ugly scar on society. In order to do so, we must provide as much support as can be mustered. Domestic violence is not limited by wealth or suburb boundaries or to specific communities; it is a disease found in places one might least expect. That women's refuges need to exist to help women escape domestic and family violence is a devastating reality. But it is a reality that no-one is willing to accept. I again thank Jacky, Darren, Dee, Uni, Jenny and everyone else who has given their time in support of these refuges so that one day soon, hopefully, these refuges may no longer be needed.

SUE HELLIER

KELLY HANSEN

MARCIA CHAPMAN

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (22:42): When it comes to the struggle to prevent domestic and family violence and our efforts to support victim-survivors, there is no overstating the importance of frontline workers. I have had the privilege of meeting many extraordinary people working in this space, who put in tireless efforts to raise awareness, build networks and provide support to those who need it most. It is a difficult job and often a thankless one. The people who do this work do it not for power or glory but because they care, because they want to help, because they want to make a difference for victim-survivors.

I take this opportunity to recognise and thank everyone who works or volunteers in this space for their contributions, and I highlight the work of three amazing women whose work in the prevention of domestic and family violence has made such an enormous difference to the lives of so many victim-survivors in the Charlestown electorate, the Hunter region and beyond: Sue Hellier of Family Support Newcastle, Kelly Hansen of Nova for Women and Children, and Marcia Chapman of Jenny's Place. These three women have recently announced their retirements. Though their departure from the space represents a great loss, their individual and collective legacies are assured. Between them, these three women represent decades of experience and tens of thousands of hours of work and advocacy, both paid and unpaid, and they have each had an impact that is impossible to measure.

Sue Hellier has served as the CEO of Newcastle Family Support since 2018, as well as serving as secretary on the board of Nova for Women and Children. Her passion for the work she does is undeniable. Before taking up the position of chief executive officer, she had years of experience leading other non-government organisations through change and completing a master's in human services management. Sue's passion for the safety and wellbeing of children underpins her practice and the focus of her work, which she has demonstrated throughout her career. She has also shown a commitment to supporting women to understand and break free from oppression in all its forms. In her time with Family Support Newcastle and Nova, she has worked to ensure that victim-survivors have space to grow, recover and build a life free from violence and oppression.

Kelly Hansen has played a critical role in the development of Nova for Women and Children over her 23 years of service to that extraordinary organisation. Nova's chairperson, Rozyta Englert, told *The Newcastle Herald* recently that Kelly is a "passionate advocate for social justice, in particular gender inequality and gender poverty, especially for older women" and that the organisation will "miss her passion, knowledge and dedicated leadership". Kelly herself has called her retirement at the end of June bittersweet. While she is right that there is so much work left to do in this space, Nova in particular and the sector more broadly are stronger for her work.

Marcia Chapman's well-earned retirement from the position of executive manager at Jenny's Place comes after helping countless victim-survivors over the past 37 years. Jenny's Place has been a frontline provider of support for domestic and family violence victim-survivors and those experiencing homelessness in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie since 1977. Since 1987 Marcia has been a guiding light at Jenny's Place. Her passion and dedication is clear to everyone who meets her. Her work has helped Jenny's Place grow from a five-bedroom refuge to the incredible organisation it is today. I thank these three women for their years of hard work and dedication. I thank them for everything they have done—for building organisations which can be carried forward into the future and for always speaking out about the scourge of domestic and family violence. They have always been beacons of hope and light for people in the darkest periods of their lives. I wish them all the best as they embark on their next chapters.

ALAN SELMAN, AFSM

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (22:47): I take this opportunity to recognise a remarkable individual, Mr Alan Selman, AFSM, for his dedication to the NSW Rural Fire Service. Alan's journey with the NSW Rural Fire Service began in 1977 when he joined the Mount Victoria brigade. Demonstrating his commitment and leadership early on, he served as deputy captain for five years before relocating to Mudgee in 1985, where he became a member of Mudgee HQ Fire Brigade. In true Alan form, he has held various key positions within the Mudgee HQ brigade, including that of captain, president and training officer, before being elected to the position of group captain in 2004.

In recognition of his distinguished service, Alan received the NSW Rural Fire Service Medal as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 2014. That prestigious award highlighted his exemplary fireground leadership and skills, which have been demonstrated during major incidents at Glen Innes, Coffs Harbour and Kempsey, the 1994 Blue Mountains fires, and the Nyngan floods. His direct leadership in those critical situations potentially saved countless lives and properties.

Alan's contributions extend beyond firefighting. He is a founding member of the Cudgegong Rural Fire Service Heritage Committee—that is where I first had the privilege of meeting him when I was elected in 2019. The committee had become the custodian of one of the largest collections of historically significant vehicles and equipment used by the RFS and its predecessors. The collection includes bushfire tankers, support vehicles, firefighting water pumps, chainsaws, hand tools, fire extinguishers, radios, clothing, knapsacks, promotional posters and training documents. Since May 2018, under Alan's leadership, the committee has been working with NSW Public Works Advisory, NSW Rural Fire Service and the Mid-Western Regional Council towards the planning and construction of the Cudgegong Community Education Centre and Fire Control Centre.

The committee had been relying heavily on the goodwill of members, friends and the support of the Cudgegong Rural Fire Service to store the ever-growing collection, ensuring that items of significant historical value were protected from deterioration. The purpose-built, co-located fire control and emergency operations centre is home to the NSW Rural Fire Service's day-to-day operations in the region, as well as multi-agency operations when disaster strikes. It also provides our local Rural Fire Service volunteers and staff with the very best facilities for year-round operations and ample room for additional personnel to be deployed to assist when major events occur. The centre ensures that members like Alan and those from all 26 brigades in the Cudgegong district have access to the latest technology and equipment to support emergency events, increase the level of safety and keep community informed.

In 2022 I had the honour of attending the sod-turning ceremony on land donated by Mid-Western Regional Council at the Mudgee Airport. That marked the beginning of the construction of the \$12.2 million co-located Cudgegong fire control centre and emergency operations centre, which now houses the community education and heritage centre. I was really pleased to have played a part in making that incredible project a reality, and last Sunday I had the pleasure of attending the official opening of the centre, along with Commissioner Rob Rogers, the Minister for Emergency Services and our local RFS commander, Troy Porter. It really is a fantastic facility. It will be available to support the community in a number of ways. Police have already used it and there is an expectation that it will be used to coordinate emergency operations of all kinds into the future. It truly will be a community asset. The RFS is very proud of it, and rightly so.

There were a couple of things that made the event on Sunday truly special. First, it was the pride and happiness that I saw and heard from all the local RFS about the facility. That was great. Second, it was witnessing the vision and hard work of the Rural Fire Service's heritage committee, led by Alan, coming to fruition. After the official ceremony and medal presentation, where Alan was recognised for his 45 years of diligent service with a National Medal third clasp, he guided us through the community education and heritage centre. His pride and passion were evident as he explained the history and significance of each item displayed in the state-of-the-art facility. There is a bit of extra funding required to add some of the final digital touches to the displays to ensure that it really hits its mark, but I have been assured that that will happen. Alan and his committee should be extremely proud—I know they are. I thank Alan and congratulate him on his persistence, patience and massive contribution.

CENTRAL COAST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (22:52): I recognise the Central Coast Domestic Violence Committee for its fabulous recent annual gala night, which was a thought-provoking and insightful evening featuring the amazing Jess Hill. The Central Coast Domestic Violence Committee plays such a vital role in coordinating efforts to address domestic violence, provide support to victims and work towards creating a safer and more supportive community for us all. I thank the committee members for all that they do. The Central Coast is so privileged to have a world-leading committee shaping discourse and support in our community. It is with great joy that I speak of the hope that came from sitting in a room full of our amazing community members and joining together to share their truth, power and endless wisdom.

I especially thank host Moo Baulch, OAM, chair of Our Watch, a national leader in the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia. Moo's knowledge, insights and entertainment were invaluable. I thank, as always, the powerful Jess Hill, investigative journalist, author of *See What You Made Me Do*—ouch!—and an absolute champion advocate on gendered violence, who left everyone who attended with thoughts for a long time to come. She moved us. Jess is a poet and a wordsmith with determination and expertise, who leaves no stone unturned and no truth untold. We thank her for her passion and determination to save women's lives. I also thank the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Jodie Harrison, who came to Newcastle to join us on her night off. Her dedication to protecting the vulnerable and changing the landscape of domestic and family violence is unending, and we sincerely thank her for her initiative, support, passion, determination and vigour to make changes.

In that space of bountiful knowledge, we spoke of wise practice, not best practice. Wise practice integrates traditional knowledge and cultural values with contemporary challenges, emphasising holistic and sustainable

solutions drawing on the deep knowledge of our Indigenous ancestors and Elders. We know we can do better, and we will. I thank the Central Coast Domestic Violence Committee: Nicole Harvey, Sharon Walsh, Theresa Mason, Kath Peninton and Adelle Laing. Their work in advocacy, policy development and the fight for change to improve the lives of women in our community is always seen and deeply appreciated.

Part of the next step is to see coercive control become a criminal offence from 1 July this year. Coercive control is when a person uses abusive behaviours towards a current or former intimate partner with the intention to coerce or control them. It includes repeated patterns of physical or non-physical abuse used to hurt, scare, intimidate, threaten or control someone. It includes monitoring or stalking, threats, physical violence, social isolation, controlling choices and financial control. I am proud to be part of a Parliament that will see that offence introduced next month.

I thank our Central Coast Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service team. They do an amazing job in our court system, supporting women escaping domestic violence and working to make the changes in their lives that they need to move forward. I apologise for the fact that our court system takes as long as it does, but we thank those women, who really wrap around survivors to help them move on with their lives. Gosford also has an amazing new Survivor Hub. Similar to the Sydney Survivor Hub, the Gosford Survivor Hub started in August last year. Tragically, it is so popular that there is a wait time to join. Meet-ups are held on the second Monday of each month from 6.00 p.m. until 7.30 p.m. at the Foundry Cowork in Gosford. They are peer-led groups and safe spaces where survivors of sexual assault can connect, share and support each other based on their lived experiences.

I thank Renee Marie Simpson, who is the author of the amazing book *I Want to Go Home: Reclaiming Power After Sexual Assault*. It is a very interesting story about Renee's travels after being raped. She is really brash and is a role model to other women. I also thank April Brophy. April and Renee support all survivors aged 16 and over at the Survivor Hub on the Central Coast. I thank Women's Community Shelters for the amazing work they do alongside our Central Coast providers at Allawah House, where they wrap around a group of 16 women at a time who are survivors stepping into a new section of their lives.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (22:57): I speak about the \$12 million misinformation campaign that the Federal Government is perpetrating and that the New South Wales Government must denounce. Anyone who has walked past a TV or radio, or who has listened to a podcast or seen a movie, will know that currently the Federal Government is running a multimillion-dollar propaganda operation. The Feds are misusing \$12 million of taxpayer dollars in order to deliberately spread what I call "river lies". The Feds are knowingly lying to the Australian people about the Murray-Darling Basin and about the Federal Government's plans to take productive water away from the rural communities in order to fill up South Australia's lower lakes temporarily before letting all that water wash out to sea.

Governments can do stupid things; we see it all too often. But this Federal Government buyback scheme represents a whole new level of stupidity. The plan is so bad that the Federal Government is now worried there will be a voter backlash. People think the Federal Government has lost the plot. The smart thing would be for the Federal Government to drop its stupid buyback plan, but the Feds are so stupid that they are not smart enough to do the smart thing. Instead the Feds have decided to lie, and they are using the taxpayers' own money to pay for those lies to taxpayers. Can you believe it? I say \$12 million because that is the figure the Federal Government has so far admitted to. But looking at the amount of advertising we are all being subjected to, I think the \$12 million figure is just a small part of what is actually being spent. By the time this is over we will know how much has really been spent. But for now, let's stick with \$12 million.

If the Feds really cared for the Murray-Darling Basin, that \$12 million could be used to achieve a lot more than river lies. For example, that money could be used to buy much needed fish ladders. That being said, I reckon the Federal Minister for the Environment and Water, Tanya Plibersek, would not even know what a fish ladder was. She probably thinks a fish ladder is what you get when you get a ladder in a pair of fish-net stockings—that is how urban she is. But in the real rural world, we know \$12 million of fish ladders would significantly improve the health of the rivers.

That \$12 million could be used to repair the countless riverbanks that have been destroyed by the mismanagement of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority. The destruction of riverbanks has decimated platypus numbers in the Murray-Darling. That \$12 million could be used to save the platypus. That \$12 million dollars could also have been used to help address the thermal pollution that is ruining the rivers. That money could be used to eradicate carp or fight blue-green algae, which we believe causes motor neuron disease. That \$12 million could be used to help improve water quality throughout the basin. But no, we do not get any real help. Instead, we get \$12 million of Federal Government river lies.

Now, we have established the Feds are incredibly dumb when it comes to water, but I do not believe the New South Wales Government is dumb. Premier Chris Minns is actually one of the smartest men I know, and I know that he will understand that this propaganda campaign is a shocking abuse of taxpayers' money. I call on our Premier to denounce this disgraceful waste of taxpayers' money by the Federal Government. He could even phone Tanya and tell her he thinks that she should stop these river lies. If he does not have her mobile number, I am sure I can get it for him. But, let's face it, they both are Labor, and I am sure they know how to call each other. What I can report from rural New South Wales is that the propaganda is not working. Voters out my way see this for what it is: wasteful propaganda that we are being forced to pay for. Put simply, Tanya is not fooling anyone; she is just making herself look even more foolish. She needs to stop. If she is going to spend our hardworking taxpayers' money, then please spend that money to help the rivers, not to lie about them.

SHEPHERD OF EGYPT FOUNDATION

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (23:02): On 25 May 2024 I was honoured to attend a charity event organised by Shepherd of Egypt Australia. The event was held at Sydney CBD and was well attended by several hundred, including the Consul General of Egypt, His Excellency Mr Mohammed Khalil, as well as the founding member of the Shepherd of Egypt foundation, His Honour High Court Judge Mr Amir Ramzy, who came from Egypt for the event.

The Shepherd of Egypt is a foundation established in Egypt with a mission committed to fighting poverty and transforming communities. The foundation empowers individuals and families by providing access to education, health care and other vital resources. The Shepherd of Egypt has a goal to create a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. The Australian arm of the foundation has done amazing work in fundraising to help those who are living below the poverty line. To date, the Australian foundation has helped millions of people in Egypt who struggle to meet their basic needs every year.

Shepherd of Egypt Australia is dedicated to working with the most vulnerable communities by providing specialised programs that will change the lives of those most in need. Funds raised by the generosity of the Australian people over the past 12 months has resulted in the following achievements: the operation of eight mobile clinics with over one million patients treated and 189 surgeries performed, over 55,779 families clothed and fed, 347 houses being built and 1,646 educational support programs.

In January this year, I had the privilege to go to Egypt with my family and visit a village in Upper Egypt, which is an extremely poor area where families are living below the poverty line. I was asked to share my experience by saying a few words at the charity event. Our visit, organised by Shepherd of Egypt, was to see firsthand the living conditions of the families before any assistance was given and then on to visit some families whom Shepherd of Egypt has aided. Our first visit was to a family with a young baby. This visit was a cultural shock to me. Hearing the stories of those living in poverty is never the same as seeing them. The family we visited lived in a makeshift home. The floor is just natural, uneven dirt. The roof does not exist. The home provides little protection from the elements. There is an old mattress on the floor where mum and the baby would sleep, without a roof above their head. It was very difficult for me to comprehend. I could not cope with what I had seen. I was overwhelmed with emotions.

During that first visit, I had to walk out to hide my emotions from those who were with us. Despite the hard conditions that these families endure, they still have so much pride and dignity. When asked what assistance the foundation could give them to make their lives a bit better, their pride is so strong that they usually say they are fine and thank god for everything they have—when they have nothing. When the foundation insisted on doing something to make their life a bit better, the family said, "It would be nice to have a roof above where we sleep. It is just too difficult when it rains." Shepherd of Egypt Australia is doing a fantastic job in raising awareness about those who are living in very tough conditions. I thank Shepherd of Egypt for this life experience visit. I recommend any member wishing to visit Egypt to contact Shepherd of Egypt and allow for a couple of days to visit a province affected by poverty and see how Australia's contributions are changing lives.

LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (23:07): Today I discuss the positive vision that Liverpool City Council has for its residents. In the 2024-25 operational plan, better known as the budget, Liverpool council is investing a record \$177.7 million on capital works and has brought the operational budget back into surplus after years of reckless spending during the last term of council. The council is also budgeting for staff growth, increasing by 175 full-time equivalent positions, despite claims from the Labor Party's mates in the United Services Union that there would be 150 job cuts. Whilst the council's finances are finally returning to the black, the council was also bestowed the Premier's 2024 Business Excellence award for the Experience the World program—a series of seven major cultural events that celebrate Liverpool's diversity. The award was presented by the New South Wales Government at this year's Harmony Dinner.

Whilst Liverpool is getting back on track under the Liberal-led council, I reflect on the failures of the last council term led by Labor. Liverpool council's debt is at a record high because of the Civic Place project. That is the result of the Labor-led council, of which the member for Leppington and the member for Liverpool were councillors, approving a blowout in the cost of the Civic Place project from \$87 million to more than \$195 million. To this day, the current council is trying to fill the building, which is not yet leased. Because of Labor's recklessness on council, the residents of Liverpool are suffering. The current council has to deal with the acute impacts of the generational debt that has been brought upon by the former Labor councillors.

During my time on council, when I served with the member for Leppington and the member for Liverpool, I proudly stood up against their support for a revised scope of the Civic Place project, which has turned into the most expensive council building in the country. I also proudly advocated for many years for the building of a new pool in Hammondville and voted in support of the master plan of the Hammondville Leisure Precinct, which includes an aquatic centre. I note that the member for Leppington moved the motion and received bipartisan support. The United Services Union and its Labor mates are revising history and using the line "the mayor wants to build a pool in his wife's seat", yet they conveniently forget the history of the proposal. They also conveniently forget that the mayor advocated for funding through the WestInvest program run by the former Coalition Government.

Liverpool City Council was the recipient of record funding, including \$53.4 million for an aquatic centre in Carnes Hill, right in the heart of the member for Leppington's electorate. Imagine what the excess \$108 million from the Civic Place project could have been spent on. Whilst the Michael Wenden Aquatic Leisure Centre in Miller, in the middle of the member for Liverpool's electorate, remains dilapidated and tired, Labor members wanted an ivory tower for themselves. Whilst residents in Austral wait for the upgrade of Edmondson Avenue, they should know that the member for Leppington voted instead to spend \$195 million on an ivory tower for himself. He also previously requested the title of Lord Mayor, should he have won the mayoralty in 2021.

The \$200 million black hole caused by those opposite is just the start. Their clear financial mismanagement of the organisation pales in comparison to the actions of the current Labor councillors. At the last council meeting, the Labor councillors, including the member for Liverpool, voted against the 2024-25 operational plan. What was their alternative? The mismanagement does not stop there. Only today the Minister for Transport in this place claimed that the Labor Government is "delivering for the fast-growing communities of Western Sydney". The member for Leppington made a promise to upgrade Fifteenth Avenue in a major announcement prior to the last election. However, all we have seen since is money diverted from that upgrade into another project. What we have not seen is the member for Leppington fronting his electorate to fess up to the brutal lies he sold to win votes.

The member for Leppington also needs to fess up about the current campaign he is mounting on council with regards to the upgrade of Edmondson Avenue. He sat back for seven years as a councillor and did nothing, yet now it is everybody else's fault. The residents of Liverpool deserve better. They finally have a council that puts their needs first, that manages their finances responsibly and that delivers on its promises, despite the negative pontifications from Labor.

ANTISEMITISM

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (23:12): I address a matter of profound concern in my community: the alarming rise of antisemitism, not only in my electorate in the eastern suburbs, but also all across New South Wales and Australia. This resurgence of hate and intolerance is a threat to not just the Jewish community, but also the very fabric of our society. Antisemitism, in its various forms, has been a scourge on humanity for centuries. It has led to some of the darkest chapters in human history, including the atrocities of the Holocaust. Sadly, we are witnessing a significant resurgence of this age-old prejudice manifesting in increased verbal abuse, vandalism and even physical violence against Jewish individuals and institutions.

My community is home to a number of synagogues and Jewish schools and has one of the largest Jewish communities in Sydney. Students in their school uniforms have had swastikas thrown at them. Students were told, while walking down the street, that their families should have been murdered in the Holocaust. Those are just a few of the things that have happened. In New South Wales, we pride ourselves on our multiculturalism and the rich tapestry of cultures, religions and ethnicities that coexist together. The rise in antisemitic incidents is a direct affront to those values. It undermines the sense of security and belonging that every citizen, regardless of their background, deserves to feel.

The implications of the rise in antisemitism are far-reaching. It creates a climate of fear and suspicion that can rip apart the social cohesion we have worked so hard to build. Antisemitism affects not only those who are directly targeted but also the broader community, fostering an environment where intolerance, division and more far-reaching hate can take root. History has taught us that what might start with antisemitism and hate against Jews very rarely ends there. That is why hate in all forms must be condemned. With an over 700 per cent increase

in reports of antisemitic incidents, it is critical that we do more to ensure that Jews, many of whom started their lives in Australia seeking refuge after World War II and the horrors of the Holocaust, can feel safe, protected and accepted within our society.

That is why I welcome our Government's review into the effectiveness of section 93Z of the Crimes Act 1900. Section 93Z makes it an offence to publicly threaten or incite violence on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex or HIV/AIDS status. There is no place for hate speech or incitement to violence in New South Wales. We live in a multicultural society and it is vital that we have laws that protect people who come from communities all around the world and call New South Wales home. The review will be conducted by one of the State's most respected legal minds, Mr Bathurst, the chairperson of the NSW Law Reform Commission. I trust that it will be considered and thorough and will provide all communities with the confidence that our laws are operating effectively. It is an important step in ensuring that we are strengthening our legal frameworks and working to promote social cohesion. We must ensure that all communities are able to live peacefully without fear of violence or threats of violence. "Never again" is now.

COFFS HARBOUR ELECTORATE VOLUNTEERS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (23:16): Every day across the Coffs Coast, volunteers are doing outstanding work for the community they love. They donate their time and their expertise to help make a positive difference to the lives of others. Those community champions put their heart and soul into making the Coffs Coast an even better place to live and work, and they deserve our heartfelt gratitude. Among them are two local women who have been named on the prestigious New South Wales Hidden Treasures Honour Roll for their vital volunteer work. Long-time Lion Rosemary Hansen and Red Cross emergency services stalwart Judy Jackson were among 91 Hidden Treasures named across New South Wales. They join more than 1,200 women who have been honoured since 2010 for their valuable contributions to regional communities.

Rosemary Hansen has been a member of the Lions Club of Coffs Harbour, where she has played an instrumental role organising their many activities, since 2020. She is also a key member of the committee working to establish a women's shed in Coffs Harbour. Rosemary is considered a legend on the barbecue and in the kitchen at fundraisers and, for the past two years, she has been volunteering her cooking skills at Pete's Place, the drop-in engagement hub in Coffs Harbour for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Each week food prepared by Rosemary is delivered, ready to be heated up to feed the many grateful people who use the service. Rosemary has been described as incredibly consistent, reliable and thoughtful in her meal choices. She has also organised donation drives for blankets, warm clothing and other resources to meet the needs of those accessing Pete's Place services.

Judy Jackson has been a committed Red Cross emergency services volunteer since 2012. She is now the team leader for her local emergency services team at Woolgoolga. Judy, whose key roles include evacuations and recovery work, has been praised for being professional, organised and enthusiastic in all she does for her community. She supports staff and other agencies in their work and shares her connections and local knowledge willingly with new colleagues. During the 2019 bushfires, Judy was told about the need for help in Nymboida. Although she was in an evacuation centre in Grafton at the time, she referred the situation to her bosses and organised supplies to be taken into that community. She was in the first convoy, under a police escort, to get into the community and to give them much-needed help and support. Judy exemplifies the values of Red Cross, going above and beyond to make a positive difference in people's lives.

Volunteering is also at the heart of Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare, which marked its twenty-fifth anniversary with a celebration to show appreciation for its volunteer workforce. Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare president, Barry Powells, had the honour of cutting the cake. He was joined by the secretary, Larry Langman, and life members Desnee McCosker, Frank Kennedy, John Ross, Ron Smith and Elisabeth Edwards. Volunteers are vital to the success of Landcare locally, providing thousands of hours of hard work every year—13,000 hours in 2022-23 alone. The passion and dedication of its 350 volunteers is improving the natural environment and benefiting the entire Coffs Coast community.

Elsewhere on the Coffs Coast, volunteers are also the driving force behind the frontline work of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service. I enjoyed spending time with Bonville Rural Fire Service members recently to mark the completion of significant improvements at Bonville fire station. Brigade Captain Tim Jeffery, Group Captain Rob Cox and Coffs Coast team manager, Inspector Sandra Huer, were on hand to celebrate the important achievement. In 2022 I announced that the Bonville fire station refurbishment project had secured a \$30,000 Community Building Partnership grant under the former New South Wales Coalition Government. It is pleasing to see that the Bonville RFS now has first-class, modern facilities that will assist the brigade in both recruiting and retaining members. I thank all members for their vigilance in keeping our community safe.

WESTERN SYDNEY PUMPED HYDRO PROJECT

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (23:20): Australians are well known for being innovators, often ahead of the curve thanks to our country's unique environment where traditional solutions do not work. That is no more evident than in a project that is proposed for my electorate, Western Sydney Pumped Hydro. It is a site-specific project that responds to the unique challenge of what to do with a defunct coalmining washery. ZEN Energy, an Australian-owned energy company, has been selected by WaterNSW to examine the feasibility of the proposed Western Sydney Pumped Hydro project on Gandangara land. It is connected to Lake Burragorang, a man-made reservoir filled up by the Warragamba Dam that provides Sydney with its clean water. Western Sydney Pumped Hydro will utilise the former Burragorang Valley coal washery site in Nattai to generate clean energy.

Surrounded by the greenery of the national park, the remnants of the coalmine washery is a huge hole in the ground with no further purpose—until now. The site is already undergoing remediation, so this project will have minimal impacts on biodiversity and on cultural or heritage values. Pumped hydro will work by filling the remains of the coalmine with water, which is pumped through a pipe connecting it to the nearby lower Lake Burragorang. When energy is needed, the water in the upper reservoir of the former coalmine is released through pipes, which turn turbines to create energy—a lot of energy. One thousand megawatts of energy can be created. That is one gigawatt of renewable energy, enough to power half a million homes for eight continuous hours.

Solar power and wind turbines already offer clean energy solutions, but the project will have benefits beyond just power generation. It is a closed-loop system with no impacts on the water levels of the nearby Burragorang River or Warragamba Dam as the water travels back and forth between the two bodies of water, all while providing clean, renewable energy. Where the project differs from solar and wind turbines is that it is designed to store excess clean energy and make it available when the sun is not shining and the wind is not blowing, making it an ideal complement to the existing forms of renewable energy. The maintenance of the site and surrounding fire trails will also benefit firefighters during bushfires, all while creating energy security for the growing populations of Wollondilly and south-west Sydney.

Importantly, the project is not connected to the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall, which forms Lake Burragorang. I reiterate my previous statements on the dam wall and reaffirm my opposition to raising the dam wall. The project demonstrates that there are other ways to create clean energy that have positive impacts on the surrounding landscape. The project will create 1,500 jobs for locals during the construction phase and 80 ongoing jobs once Western Sydney Pumped Hydro is up and running. With a goal to start construction in 2027 and the project to come online in 2031, the project sets a genuinely exciting precedent when it comes to innovative thinking about renewable energy as we all work towards achieving Australia's zero carbon emission goals. It is time for action, as we reach a critical point in addressing carbon reduction measures. New South Wales has a part to play and an opportunity to be a leader in the field. I cannot wait to see more innovative, sustainable projects like this come to fruition.

POP IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (23:24): Today I shed light on a crucial issue that too often remains hidden behind closed doors: domestic violence. Recently I had the pleasure to again meet with the chair of Pop In at Moss Vale, Ms Vicki Kelley, and see the service's new premises after its move from Bowral late last year. It was a pleasure to meet some new members of the team, hear of the services they provide and discuss the support they will need into the future to continue to supply their programs. The Pop In service runs programs that support women and children to navigate the impact of domestic violence and abuse. Pop In provides experienced caseworkers to help clients develop safety plans, create budgets, liaise with police and seek legal help, as well access support for housing and mental health.

Located in Moss Vale, the premises has been graciously supplied by a generous donor. Currently the service and its employees are fully funded by philanthropy. Since the inception of Pop In in 2021, the service has provided care to over 600 clients, with an active average of 68 clients per month. However, we know the numbers are far greater. In New South Wales alone there are approximately 2,500 reports of domestic violence to police every month. Shockingly, according to Domestic Violence NSW, these numbers likely represent only 40 per cent of actual incidents due to under-reporting. Tragically, approximately 40 per cent of all homicides are domestic and family violence related. Domestic violence is often shrouded in secrecy and humiliation for survivors, a crippling situation where often women and children are unable to escape due to lack of finances and options for assistance. Deciding to leave a domestic violence situation takes a lot of planning. Often survivors are unsure of how or even where to begin. It takes an overwhelming amount of courage.

Pop In stands as a signal of hope for individuals and families navigating the difficult terrain of domestic abuse. Through its professional efforts, it offers a safe space for survivors to heal, seek help and reclaim their lives. It is important that the Government and the community rally behind organisations like Pop In to support

their mission and create safe environments for all. We must work together to challenge attitudes and beliefs. We must educate. We must create a culture of respect, equality and empathy, where violence is never tolerated or excused. Coercive control and domestic abuse are not private matters; they are a public health crisis, one which requires a powerful, coordinated response from all sectors of society. I acknowledge and congratulate Pop In on the imperative services it provides to the vulnerable constituents of my electorate and surrounding areas. I urge the New South Wales Government to support the services of agencies such as Pop In and the vital work they do.

STATE BUDGET AND WILLOUGHBY ELECTORATE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (23:28): The Minns Government will soon deliver its second budget. It is a chance to stop the cuts, to invest in local infrastructure and services instead of wielding the axe, and to start focusing on the priorities that matter to the people of the Willoughby electorate and New South Wales. Budgets are about choices. The Government must choose to take real action to address the skyrocketing cost of living. Across my community I hear anger at the direction and priorities of the Minns Labor Government. After only a year in office we have seen scandals, cuts and a government without a plan or vision for our future. There have been cuts to major infrastructure, programs and services. Not even the dying have been spared, with \$13 million cut from the Northern Sydney Local Health District's palliative care budget.

The upcoming budget must deliver better. It should restore the vision and investment in our communities that was the hallmark of Coalition budgets. It is particularly urgent now that the Government will substantially uplift density across Willoughby. There will be many new people but very little to grow the capacity of our local infrastructure and services. The housing affordability crisis must be addressed. How will the roads, public transport, sewers, open space, health services and more of our community's future be delivered? For instance, upgrades are needed at the ageing Willoughby Fire Station. That station that has not received a major upgrade in about seven decades, and the demands on its services will only become greater under the Government's plans.

In relation to education, the Government should be condemned for its approach so far on education. It has ripped \$250 million from our State's public schools. The number of opportunity class places at Artarmon Public School has been cut in half. The Minns Labor Government should stop penny pinching from our schools and instead start investing in our children's future. The budget must confirm funding for the two new schools in Chatswood and Gore Hill, and upgrades to Cammeray and Northbridge public schools need to be backed with real funding and a start date.

Open green space is chronically short in areas such as Crows Nest and St Leonards. The previous Government allocated \$78 million to invest in growing our green and open space with new public parks. With the Government's changes to special infrastructure contributions, that is now at risk. The budget should invest in visionary projects such as the St Leonards station platform park so local families have a greater chance to get outside and kick a ball and play. Let us invest in the Gore Hill Indoor Sports Centre and break the chronic shortage of sporting space that leaves many local kids missing out. Significant disruption has been caused through major project construction in Cammeray. It is time the community gets something back, with a commitment to undergrounding the service facilities and building green space on top.

We all know the Government has cut funding for grassroots community organisations. We have seen a \$100,000 cut to the Community Building Partnership program. Local groups, from school P&Cs to scouts and more, are suffering without funds to deliver essential projects. We have seen Willoughby made ineligible, seemingly, for the Local Sport Defibrillator Program. Under the Coalition every community across New South Wales received funding for life-saving automated external defibrillators. Access should not be dependent on your postcode. The Minns Government should reverse those cuts and start supporting people and community.

Our road and transport system keeps us connected. This Government cancelled the Beaches Link tunnel without any alternative plans. Instead of a road network review, the budget should commit to serious solutions. The Sydney Metro is a city-shaping investment in our public transport infrastructure by the Coalition. This Labor Government did not originally back it and has considered cancelling it. Let us show in this coming budget some real vision; we should fund a business case for a Metro line to the Northern Beaches from Chatswood. We need to bust road congestion once and for all.

So much of Willoughby relies on buses, but it is a service that is not working as well as it should and Labor's review has taken way too long. Chatswood is a major transport hub and it is time it had a bus interchange that is fit for purpose and befits the central role it plays in the region's transport network. Artarmon station requires accessibility improvements. Currently there is no feasible lift access from the station's eastern side. After years of rains, funding is needed to resurface deteriorated major local roads in Willoughby as well. Those are the projects that the Government should and must deliver. I will always stand up for the Willoughby community; it is about time the Minns Labor Government did too in the coming budget.

FLOOD MODELLING

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (23:32): I bring to the Parliament's attention an urgent issue which is causing the sterilising of land for housing developments in councils across New South Wales, including the Penrith and Fairfield city councils. Given the current discussion on the housing crisis, everything that is contributing to this housing crisis must be examined and corrected. I speak of an issue that has taken off even more so following the 2022 NSW Flood Inquiry. One of the 28 recommendations listed under the heading "risk-based approach to calculating flood planning level" states:

In working out a tolerable, risk-based flood planning level, consideration should be given to the PMF ...

The New South Wales SES glossary of terms states that the PMF stands for probable maximum flood and is:

The largest flood that could conceivably be expected to occur at a particular location ... commonly assumed to be ... once in 10,000 to 10,000,000 years.

Whilst the Government indicated it supported this recommendation in principle, evidence is emerging that this PMF risk-averse approach to flood modelling and evacuation route planning is being applied to land parcels that have the potential to yield significant housing development. I specifically highlight the recently gazetted Fairfield City Council local environmental plan [LEP] which had identified land parcels for developments within Fairfield CBD and Canley Vale, close to heavy rail transport and services, that have now been sterilised by this risk-averse approach to flood planning and mitigation—and, I highlight, with no consultation with Fairfield City Council.

In regards to Penrith City Council, approximately 60 per cent of the development potential within the CBD has effectively been halted because of this flood modelling and evacuation route planning. What is even more frustrating for these councils is the refusal of the SES to reveal its modelling, assumptions and data that it has used to make these decisions, which are, in effect, stopping development. We have identified two major flaws in the SES's approach to the Penrith CBD flood modelling. There could be more than just two, but these two have been identified. Number one, the SES counted residents twice when planning its evacuation modelling. It counted an individual living at their home as well as, at the same time, working in the Penrith CBD. The SES also ruled out evacuation routes up the Blue Mountains as a way of extending evacuation timelines, thereby making the evacuation timelines more problematic as more people have only one direction to evacuate to, and that is eastward.

We need a balance between risk avoidance and the supply of housing. In getting the balance right, there is of course no need to compromise on safety but also no need to be blocking a supply of housing that is considered by councils to be safe in terms of flood evacuation and council's own flood modelling. There must be clarity of the SES's role in planning. There must be clarity on who is responsible for policy and decision-making in emergency services. The SES has a conservative view, but that does not lend itself to the Government's sought outcomes. There needs to be a more nuanced approach.

Whilst the SES and NSW Reconstruction Authority have an incredibly important job to do, they must be required to engage transparently with all agencies, councils and the community in performing their roles. I raised this very issue of the sterilisation of land within the Penrith CBD with the Minister for Emergency Services in the Chamber last year. I gave him the above two examples of the flawed assumptions that effectively halt all development potential of the Penrith CBD. To date, sadly, he has taken no action to get all parties to the table to address these errors and work out a collaborative position on flood modelling, development potential and evacuation planning.

I call on the Premier and the planning Minister to take action. This issue is now spreading further afield, and more and more land identified for suitable development is now being shelved and sterilised, including land that would fit within the Labor Government's own Transport Oriented Development scheme. I call on the Minns Government to take charge and bring clarity to the planning role the SES holds, to immediately and independently review the risk-averse flood determinations that have sterilised land and, if necessary, to reverse these determinations with full and transparent consultation with all parties.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 23.37 until
Wednesday 5 June 2024 at 10.00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

THE LOBBY CAFE, MONA VALE

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—Mr Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the valuable role of coffee shops in my electorate of Pittwater, including those along our magnificent beaches, the Pittwater foreshore, in suburban

centres and elsewhere. They provide a community meeting place for friends and family and where business people can negotiate in convivial surroundings. I would especially like to highlight The Lobby Café in Mona Vale's Gateway Building, which is run almost single handedly by Yan Hong Wang, known by her customers simply as "Yan". This extraordinary woman produces her own homemade quiches, muffins, date slices, sandwiches and wraps, and has a remarkable ability to remember customers names and their order. Recently, my Local Traffic Committee representative, Phil Corbett, needed a quick meal before an evening appointment. Although the shop was all but locked up, Yan readily heated one of her delicious quiches, restarted the coffee machine and of course, remembered Phil's coffee order. To Yan and all those who serve in Pittwater's coffee shops, thank you for your great service and the valuable contribution you make to community cohesion in my electorate of Pittwater.

COOK TERRACE, MONA VALE, RESIDENT'S CAMPAIGN

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—Mr Speaker, recently residents of Cook Terrace approached my office concerning a proposal to route buses up their quiet, narrow street. The residents quickly put together a well organised campaign to convey their views on the proposal to Council and Transport for NSW. Not only did residents highlight the problem, they also helpfully provided the solution. It was a pleasure to meet with Cook Terrace residents in their street in February to discuss this challenge. Thanks to the efforts of the residents, I was able to successfully lobby Transport for NSW and local bus operator, Keolis Downer, to adopt the residents' proposal. I pay tribute to the team and Keolis Downer who readily listened to the residents' feedback and actioned it accordingly. Thank you to Mark Dunlop and the entire team. Thank you to Councillor Michael Gencher for his efforts in working with Council which was also involved in the proposal to move bus stops. And, I also pay tribute to and recognise the significant efforts of Helen Prentice, Joanne Trevitt and every other resident who engaged in the conversation on this challenge.

PHOEBE SAVAGE - NEWPORT SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I pay tribute to Phoebe Savage who was awarded the Hans Trumm OAM – Award for Patrolling Excellence at the 2024 'Bernies' Newport Surf Life Saving Club's Annual Awards Presentation night. The Award for Patrolling Excellence is a prestigious award and was first bestowed in 2007 to recognise and encourage excellence in Life saving and commitment to Patrolling. It was named after Hans Trumm OAM who exemplified these qualities. Hans became a life member of the Club in 1965 and served over 60 years. In speaking with fellow life savers, Phoebe is held in the highest regard, with her work ethic, humility, commitment to patrols and excellence being her hallmark. Phoebe's dedication to her community extends beyond the beach and into the classroom where she has served as a science teacher at Pittwater High School since 2020. Phoebe is held in high regard by the school community. Phoebe, thank you for your service. I am pleased that acknowledgement of Phoebe's contributions is now preserved for all time in the records of the oldest parliament in our nation.

DP WORLD

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I was delighted to attend the launch of DP World Yennora intermodal terminal site on Monday 20 May 2024, a momentous occasion that marked a significant milestone in DP World's journey. DP world's partnership with Stockland to operate a warehousing and dedicated port-rail service in Sydney signifies a crucial step towards Sydney becoming a global end-to-end logistics provider. DP World has been committed to providing integrated supply chain solutions. The Yennora facility's direct connectivity to the terminal and Port Botany precinct is a testament to this commitment. With this launch, Yennora Intermodal Terminal will offer 2x daily direct rail services to and from Port Botany on a dedicated DP World-owned and operated line. This launch represents more than just a new site; it symbolises a transformation in how logistics are approached. The benefits of this new terminal are vast and impactful. Reduced transit times, improved supply chain resilience, and integrated solutions that streamline supply chain processes across road, rail, warehousing, and freight operations are just the beginning. As the State Member for Granville, I am ecstatic to see a more connected and efficient future in logistics thanks to the launch of DP World Yennora Intermodal terminal.

ANZAC DAY SERVICE BY THE CABRA-VALE DIGGERS CLUB 2024

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—On 25th April 2024, I had the honour of representing the Premier of New South Wales, the Hon Chris Minns, at the Commemorative ANZAC DAY event, organized by the Cabra-Vale Diggers Club. The event was a tribute to the brave men and women who have served and sacrificed for our nation. The day commenced with a solemn march from the club to Cabra-Vale Memorial Park, echoing with the footsteps of veterans and their supporters, a reminder of the sacrifices made in the name of freedom. The community came together to pay our respects to our ANZAC heroes. The service held at Cabra-Vale Memorial Park had heartfelt speeches, moving readings, and the sombre sound of the Last Post echoing across the park. It was a moment of collective remembrance, a time to reflect on the courage and resilience of those who have served our country with unwavering dedication. Following the service, breakfast at Cabra-Vale Diggers Club provided a warm and

welcoming setting for the attendees. It was a chance to share stories, forge connections, and honour the legacy of our ANZACs in a spirit of unity and gratitude.

ANZAC DAY SERVICES AT THE MOUNTIES CLUB 2024

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—On April 25th 2024, I had the distinct honour of attending the ANZAC Day Services at the Mounties Club in Mt Pritchard. The solemnity and reverence of the occasion were palpable as I joined fellow attendees in commemorating the legacy of our ANZAC heroes. At the Mounties Club, the atmosphere was one of quiet reflection and gratitude as we gathered to honour the memory of those who gave their lives in service to our country. The speeches delivered and the laying of wreaths served as reminders of the sacrifices made by our brave servicemen and women. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have participated in this service, and I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Mounties Club for their unwavering commitment to preserving the memory of our ANZACs and ensuring that their sacrifices are never forgotten. Attending this ANZAC Day Service was a poignant reminder of the courage and selflessness displayed by our servicemen and women, and it is a privilege to have paid tribute to their enduring legacy.

NGATAI HETET - OUT LIVIN ADVENTURES

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Ngatai Hetet, from Oak Flats, for founding the organisation Out Livin Adventures which mentors disadvantaged young people. Ngatai grew up in the Illawarra after moving from New Zealand, engaging in outdoor activities and sports, and securing a premiership with the Warilla Gorillas. Now, with a family of his own, he gets to do what he loves every day in the outdoors, while helping young people with life skills and good decision-making, which includes during the recent South Coast Camping Adventures school holiday program. Ngatai has also helped participants start their own businesses, find work and get their driver's licence and boat licence. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Ngatai Hetet on this achievement and wish him and the organisation well.

MITCHELL WOELLNER

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Mitchell Woellner, from Dapto, coach of the Australian Outbacks U20s Gridiron team. The Dapto resident has been involved in one of America's favourite sports since joining the Wollongong Mustangs as a teenager. He played for the club for many years before leaving to try other sports but returned to take up a coaching position with the Mustangs. Mr Woellner coached Wollongong in the Gridiron NSW League and then ended up going up to Sydney and coaching for UTS for a few years. In 2022 he won the state championships with that team. He also coached the men's team and then he was appointed defensive coordinator for the New South Wales state teams in under 19's and under 20's as well as for the men's team. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Mitchell on this wonderful achievement and wish him and the team well in the World Championships.

WARILLA HIGH SCHOOL WORLD'S GREATEST SHAVE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate students at Warilla High School for their participation in the World's Greatest Shave. It is amazing that Warilla High School has been supporting this cause for many years and that the students at the school feel so strongly for raising funds for helping those impacted by Leukaemia. This year the school was able to raise over four thousand dollars, an amazing sum that will be greatly appreciated by the Leukaemia Foundation. All of those involved have commendably shaved their head for a great cause. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate the Warilla High School staff, students and parents involved in the 2024 iteration of the World's Greatest Shave.

BWAW - ALBURY WODONGA HEALTH CHILDREN'S WARD COURTYARD

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge Business Women Albury Wodonga (BWAW), for their remarkable fundraising efforts for the Albury Hospital children's ward. Being confined to a hospital can leave sick children feeling isolated and disconnected from the joys of childhood, but BWAW found a heartwarming solution to bring smiles and laughter to these young patients. Last year in July 2023, BWAW organised the Business Showcase Charity Event at Albury's Bended Elbow Hotel. This event brought together 13 visionary businesses, each sharing their goals and passions in engaging five-minute presentations. The generosity and community spirit displayed that night were nothing short of extraordinary. The initial goal was to raise funds for a new cubby house for the children's ward. Thanks to the overwhelming support and effort of our community, \$36 655 was raised. Stage A, has enabled not only a vibrant new cubby house but also improvements to the children's play area, updated turf and an array of delightful toys. I look forward to the completion of Stage B – a Specialty Sensory room and Stage C. Thank you to BWAW and everyone involved in this incredible journey for our young patients at Albury Hospital.

JOANNA REES

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—There's no doubt Lake Macquarie is one of the most naturally beautiful areas in our state, but like everywhere the aesthetic can take a hit when marred by rubbish left around by careless individuals. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of 69-year-old Joanna Rees from Toronto, who, for the past two years has made it her personal crusade to keep Lake Macquarie looking its very best. Joanna can frequently be found trawling the local streets, carparks, parks and communal areas outside the Royal Motor Yacht Club Toronto in search of litter, which she collects and disposes of appropriately. She says her motivation to do this community service was born out of a desire to keep the area looking lovely and in the hope that others will be inspired to follow suit. Joanna has also planted an extensive range of flowers and plants outside the cafes along Toronto's foreshore. She has done this all at her own cost. Joanna says she noticed more tourists were visiting the area and wanted to enhance their experience by beautifying public areas. I thank Joanna for this wonderful service she performs for our community.

CASTLE HILL HIGH SCHOOL, LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I recently attended Castle Hill High School where audiences were treated to an incredible performance of this year's musical, 'Legally Blonde; The Musical'. Castle Hill High School has an annual tradition of great musicals, and this year was no exception. The musical production provides a wonderful opportunity for the school to showcase performing and creative talents. The fantastic performance would not have been possible without the generous support of teachers and parents. I commend Co-Directors Josephine Spinks and Natalie Olivera, Musical Director Amy Danckert, Producer Lindy Jones, and Choreography Directors Caitlin Gabriel and Courtney Tuala. The highest recognition and commendation must however be given to the wonderful cast. There were close to one hundred students involved in this year's production. I recognise and commend all students with special mention given to Elyssa Tedesco who was wonderful as the lead role of Elle Woods; Alexander Barbera who played Emmett Forrest; Holly Spinks who played Paulette; Zac Danckert who played Professor Callahan, Charlie Hanson-Clinnick who played Warner Huntington III, Nina Barr who played Vivienne Kensington and Kiara Sandford who played Brooke Wyndam. Congratulations to the staff and to all students involved in the production.

DOMINIC AND TANYA VOTANO

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I recognise and commend Dominic and Tanya Votano for fundraising to support Cancer Council (NSW). Dominic and Tanya have been participating in car rally events for the last twenty-three years. Next month they will drive in their nineteenth Box Rally. Teams raise funds from the heart for cancer research. Driving in Shitbox and Mystery Box Rallies Dominic and Tanya have raised so far, an amazing total of \$503,504.00. This year they have raised so far \$74,645.00. Dominic and Tanya will drive their beloved pink 'Barbie Camper', a 1993 Toyota Tarago purchased at a cost \$1,000.00. The rally represents a significant part of their lives and whilst the rally is a chance to get away and rekindle friendships it is a chance to celebrate the hard work raising funds for Cancer Council (NSW). The Winter Shitbox Rally commences on 14 June 2024. About 240 vehicles will travel the 4,000-kilometre journey from Melbourne to Alice Springs over 7 days. I commend and congratulate Dominic and Tanya for wonderful efforts raising funds for such a worthy cause. Thank you to Box Rallies and to all involved. Best wishes and safe driving to all teams participating in this year's Rally.

OAKHILL COLLEGE GALA DAY, 25 MAY 2024

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The Oakhill College Parents and Friends Association Gala Fair is an annual event held each year. This year's Gala was held on Saturday, 25 May 2024. This year was another successful Gala. The generosity of the community was on display the with staff, parents, sponsors, and students working together to make the day a success. The Gala Day included Arcade Games, Agricultural Displays, Basket, Book and Market Stalls, BBQ, Cake Stalls, Crafts, Food Stalls, Raffles, Silent Auctions, Rides, and many other fun activities. The Sports Schedule including some wonderful matches with the final match of the day on Damien Oval being played between Oakhill College and Knox Grammar. Oakhill were successful with a scoreline, 35 points to 12 points. The Gala would not have been a success without the work of the Parents and Friends Association. The Committee will donate ten percent of net profits to a chosen charity and the remainder going toward the purchasing of Audio-Visual equipment for the new Commons and Atrium. I recognise and commend the President of the Parents and Friends Association, Carina Morales as well as the entire Parents and Friends Committee. Thank you to everyone involved.

BIRTHDAY – ASAD KHAWAJA

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in wishing Asad Khawaja a happy 34th birthday and note the following message for Hansard: "Happy birthday Asad! Have a great year ahead." It truly is a

wonderful thing to celebrate a birthday in a community like Ryde, and I am humbled to be able to play a small role in making Asad's day that little bit extra special. As you reflect on your birthday, I hope the memories are filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments that you will take on your journey in the future. Wishing you continued happiness and prosperity in the years ahead. Happy birthday Asad!

BIRTHDAY - MICHAEL LAM

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in wishing Michael Lam a happy 50th birthday and note the following message for Hansard: "I turn 50 today and was born in Ryde hospital. I would like to thank the beautiful community I live in for a wonderful life experience so far and I am looking forward to the future of our multicultural and diverse community. All the best Michael Lam." It truly is a wonderful thing to celebrate a birthday in a community like Ryde, and I am humbled to be able to play a small role in making Michael's day that little bit extra special. As you reflect on your birthday, I hope the memories are filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments that you will take on your journey in the future. Wishing you continued happiness and prosperity in the years ahead. Happy birthday Michael!

BIRTHDAY - LI HUI TAN

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in wishing Li Hui Tan a happy 61st birthday and note the following message for Hansard: "Happy birthday to Li Hui Tan, enjoy your life living in NSW." It truly is a wonderful thing to celebrate a birthday in a community like Ryde, and I am humbled to be able to play a small role in making Li Hui's day that little bit extra special. As you reflect on your birthday, I hope the memories are filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments that you will take on your journey in the future. Wishing you continued happiness and prosperity in the years ahead. Happy birthday Li Hui!

SENIOR SERGEANT LES NUGENT

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge the service and life of Senior Sergeant Les Nugent of Albury, who peacefully passed away on May 14, at the age of 71, after a battle with illness. Born in Wagga Wagga, as the eldest of three, Senior Sergeant Nugent grew up in the Riverina and developed a profound dedication to his community. Senior Sergeant Nugent served in the police force for over half a century, beginning his career in 1971 at Redfern. His remarkable journey in law enforcement culminated in his final shift in Albury in December 2021 and remained an officer until his passing. He will be remembered as one of the longest servicing members of the Police Force. Throughout his career, he dutifully engaged in various capacities including general duties, road policing, and crime prevention. His legacy extends beyond his professional achievements, deeply touching the lives of his family and community. Les' dedication and contributions to the community and the police force are deeply appreciated and will be remembered with great respect. I extend my condolences to his family and loved ones. Vale, Senior Sergeant Les Nugent.

WAVERLEY COUNCIL BEST OF THE BEST - PETER QUARTLY

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—I would like to congratulate Peter Quartly for being bestowed a 'Best of the Best Award' by Waverley Council. Every four years, Waverley Council acknowledges outstanding and sustained contribution to the community through the Local Hero Awards - Best of the Best. Winners of this award are recognised with a bronze plaque on the Bronte Beach or Bondi Beach promenade. Last year Peter celebrated his 60th season of patrolling with Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving Club. He has been club president of the Bondi Amateur Swimming club 13 times and has been an examiner/assessor for more than 40 years at Surf Life Saving Sydney. In 1987, Peter helped form the North Bondi Precinct of which he has been Chairman ever since. Peter was also a founding member of the Friends of Waverley Library and has been a member of the Sydney Water environmental group for 20 years. Peter has also sat on council and advisory boards for the North Bondi Methodist and Uniting Church. Congratulations Peter and thank you for your contribution to our community.

WAVERLEY COUNCIL BEST OF THE BEST - BRENDA MILEY

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—I would like to congratulate Brenda Miley for being bestowed a 'Best of the Best Award' by Waverley Council. Every four years, Waverley Council acknowledges outstanding and sustained contribution to the community through the Local Hero Awards - Best of the Best. Winners of this award are recognised with a bronze plaque on the Bronte Beach or Bondi Beach promenade. Having risen through the ranks of the male dominated local surf clubs, Brenda wanted to carve a safe space for female surfers and change the way girls experienced surfing. In 1995, Brenda launched Let's Go Surfing - an organisation that now employs more than 100 staff. In 1999, still looking to expand the female presence in the surfing community and increase the number of women in surf competitions, Brenda formed the Bondi Girls Surfriders Club. Today, Bondi Girls Surfriders Club continues to welcome hundreds of surfer girls and women of all ages, abilities and backgrounds every year and play host to monthly surf comps. Congratulations Brenda and thank you for your contribution to our community.

MICHAEL GLEZERSON NATIONAL ART SCHOOL

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—I would like to congratulate Michael Glezerson for hosting an exhibition of his latest works in the High Tide Room at the Bondi Pavilion. Michael is a student at the National Art School and alongside colleagues, put more than 70 sculptures on display. This is particularly remarkable given Michael's background – having only embarked on his artistic journey since 2022. All sculptures were hand formed from recycled scrap metal, whether it be from salvaged rusted, bent, or broken scrap steel offcuts. Michael says "the beauty of scrap metal art lies in taking something old, breaking it down and transforming it into something new." Congratulations Michael. I'm sure there will be future exhibitions!

DAVID TULL

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge David Tull on his fifty years of service as a New South Wales Justice of the Peace. The role of a Justice of the Peace was first created in 1787 and aimed to serve the community in a quasi-judicial capacity. As such, the position demands integrity, honesty and an impeccable character from individuals who fulfil duties of a Justice of the Peace. This is true for David and his service as a Justice of the Peace. This year, David was invited by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and the Attorney General, The Hon. Michael Daley MP to a ceremony at NSW Parliament House to thank Justices of the Peace across the state who have attained fifty years' service in 2022. Fifty years of service is of course an impressive feat, and I would therefore like to offer my gratitude on behalf of the Swansea Electorate to David for his dedication to our community.

IAN WILLIAMS

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Ian Williams on his fifty years of service as a New South Wales Justice of the Peace. The role of a Justice of the Peace was first created in 1787 and aimed to serve the community in a quasi-judicial capacity. As such, the position demands integrity, honesty and an impeccable character from individuals who fulfil duties of a Justice of the Peace. This is true for Ian and his service as a Justice of the Peace. This year, Ian was invited by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and the Attorney General, The Hon. Michael Daley MP to a ceremony at NSW Parliament House to thank Justices of the Peace across the state who have attained fifty years' service in 2022. Fifty years of service is of course an impressive feat, and I would therefore like to offer my gratitude on behalf of the Swansea Electorate to Ian for his dedication to our community.

JAMES RYMAN

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge James Ryman on his fifty years of service as a New South Wales Justice of the Peace. The role of a Justice of the Peace was first created in 1787 and aimed to serve the community in a quasi-judicial capacity. As such, the position demands integrity, honesty and an impeccable character from individuals who fulfil duties of a Justice of the Peace. This is true for James and his service as a Justice of the Peace. This year, James was invited by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and the Attorney General, The Hon. Michael Daley MP to a ceremony at NSW Parliament House to thank Justices of the Peace across the state who have attained fifty years' service in 2022. Fifty years of service is of course an impressive feat, and I would therefore like to offer my gratitude on behalf of the Swansea Electorate to James for his dedication to our community.

VALE MARIE FREEMAN, OAM

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)—Marie was a dear friend and lived in Glenfield on the same block of land all her life – for 84 years. A fiercely independent woman, Marie was renowned for her generosity and willingness to help others. Marie was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2002 for services to children with disabilities through the teaching of handicrafts and through the Guiding and Scouting movements. Marie was named Campbelltown Citizen of the Year in 2000 for her community activities since she was eight. She said it was her upbringing that fostered a sense of helping those in need. A quiet achiever, Marie had a 45-year long association with Glenfield Park School and was a much-loved and devoted member of the school community. Marie was an avid collector and reused everyday items to make handicrafts. Many of her handicrafts won awards at the Sydney Easter Show and Camden Show. Marie loved sharing her skills with others, and her collection of handiworks was her pride and joy. Marie will be greatly missed. May she rest in peace.

MITCHELL BOULTON

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I congratulate Erskine Park local Mitchell Boulton, from 1st South Penrith Group Venturer Scouts, on achieving the prestigious Queen's Scout Award. This is the highest award a youth member can achieve in Scouts and is a major milestone in a Venturer Scout's journey. Mitchell's extraordinary achievement is testament to his exceptional leadership, endurance, perseverance, enthusiasm, ideas and skills. He demonstrated these qualities through being a unit leader and attending the Venturer Leadership and Endurance Course, the Youth Helper course and being a youth helper. Some of the activities that earned him the award included learning to surf, abseiling, running activity bases, learning how to operate several power equipment bushwalking, first aid, basic water rescue and canoeing. The year ended with Mitchell leading a group of 5 Venturers on a four day hike across the Blue Mountains. Our community is better off for the tremendous contribution of people of Mitchell's character who strive towards excellence and lead others to achieve their best. On behalf of the Badgerys Creek community, I congratulate Mitchell on this incredible achievement and wish him continued success in all his endeavours.

CANCER COUNCIL FUNDRAISER

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—It was a privilege to have joined the community in Horsley Park for a Cancer Council fundraiser as part of Australia's Biggest Morning Tea. Almost 1 in 2 Australians are diagnosed with cancer before the age of 85. We must continue to strive towards a cancer free future and I am glad that my electorate of Badgerys Creek is committed to this cause. I thank and commend students, staff and parents of Horsley Park Public School and Marion Catholic Primary School for their generous contributions to the event, through donations and their valued time and effort. I was inspired by their support. Thank you to all who donated and took part in support of this very important cause, through many events held across the Badgerys Creek electorate and beyond. I encourage everyone to continue supporting this important cause every day of the year.

GOODSAM APP

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I am glad to have joined NSW Ambulance at Parliament House to find out more about GoodSAM, an app that connects volunteers to patients in the first critical minutes of cardiac arrest. It helps save lives by empowering the community to respond quickly when someone nearby goes into cardiac arrest. Cardiac arrest is often unexpected and for every minute a patient doesn't get CPR, their chance of survival falls by approximately 10 per cent. I encourage everyone in my community and beyond that if they are willing and able to perform CPR and are 18 or older, to sign up to receive GoodSAM alerts when someone needs help. Signing up and registering as a volunteer is an easy process and it may help save lives. I remind all who are considering that every minute counts. I thank the staff at NSW Ambulance for sharing awareness and information about the app with us all.

PANTRY TO EASE THE PAIN

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Free local produce along-side discounted supermarket items are helping those in Kempsey Shire doing it tough. The goal of the community pantry, which is manned by 28 volunteers, is to reach out to those in the neighbourhood who are lonely, struggling, or feel abandoned. They offer a lifeline to people who are having difficulty putting food on the table and experiencing food insecurity. The dedicated Volunteers work tirelessly to collect, sort, and distribute food to those in need, often going above and beyond to ensure that everyone is taken care of. An extra special recognition goes to the current leaders Kathy and Phill as well as the former leaders Ron and Elsie for their tireless efforts. Without these committed volunteers, the Kempsey Community Pantry would not be able to function. I think it is important to recognise the immense impact that food pantries have on our communities. They provide a safety net for those who are going through tough times, offering a glimmer of hope and support. The selfless individuals who dedicate their time and energy to running these pantries deserve our utmost appreciation and gratitude. Thank-you!

ALANA LEWTHWAITE

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Grappling her way into the history books, I rise today to congratulate Alana Lewthwaite on becoming one of the first women on the Mid North Coast to earn a black belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu. After 11 years of training and many of those spent coaching under Macleay Valley Martia Arts, Alana was appointed the honour during grading and became a trailblazer for young women in the sporting field. The black belt achievement wasn't an easy assignment for Alana. Off the back of injuring and overcoming major physical hurdles, Alana has risen above adversity and continuously proves she has the gumption, grit and determination. Lewthwaite has competed in state levels to the Pan Pacific Championships, held the number one spot in the Australian Federation of Brazilian Jiu-jitsu, has taken gold in the Queensland Submission Championships and alike. Now, Alana is hoping to inspire more women to take part in these male-dominated

sports, through women participate at the MVMA which now has 40 female students. Congratulations, Alana for earning this outstanding achievement. You are a legend in your field and I wish you all the best.

UNITED HOSPITAL AUXILIARIES

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—I rise today to acknowledge the more than 40 dedicated volunteers from across the Mid North Coast who recently gathered in Dorrigo for the United Hospital Auxiliaries 2024 Regional Forum. They represent a greater number of tireless volunteers across the local area that have collectively contributed more than 60,000 hours of service to their respective local hospitals, embodying the spirit of community and selflessness. In the past financial year alone, their efforts have contributed to raising a remarkable \$457,885 for the purchase of essential equipment that enhances patient care and comfort and ensures that our healthcare facilities remain at the forefront of medical excellence. The forum serves as a platform for volunteers to exchange insights, share ideas, and foster friendship among like-minded individuals committed to making a difference in healthcare delivery. I would like to give special mention to Dorrigo UHA members Sandra McGuire and Shirley Tyson who were recognised at the forum and presented with 20-year service badges. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed and the impact that you have made to our hospitals and the community is truly immeasurable. Thank you again to the United Hospital Auxiliaries and its volunteers.

PAUL COVINGTON

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to acknowledge Paul Covington's dedication to the community and his passion for radio, which has left a lasting impact on the Clarence Valley. For almost 40 years Paul has been a familiar voice to many listeners and has played a significant role in keeping the community informed and entertained. As Paul bids farewell to his radio career, he leaves behind a legacy as a beloved radio personality, which will continue to be remembered and cherished by all those who had the pleasure of listening to his broadcasts. The Clarence Coast's FM104.7 and 2GF family, along with the entire community will miss your presence on the airwaves Paul, I wish you all the best in your well-deserved retirement.

MACLEAN-KARATE KIDS

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of two karate prodigies from the The Dojo-Martial Arts, Maclean who train under academy owner Sensei, Nathaniel Wilks. Ruby Martini a 16-year-old student, who has been training and perfecting her skills for a decade now and Joe Bougen, a 10-year-old student who, along with Ruby, has excelled at three regional championships. Both students then competed to secure their placements in the state titles and successfully advanced to the national level. Ruby and Joe both placed at the national titles earning their spots on the Australian squad to compete at the World Martial Arts Championships in Portugal in October. Well done Nathaniel on tremendous coaching, and congratulations to Ruby and Joe for your exceptional performances with the opportunity to represent Australia.

ULMARRA RIVERSIDE AND VILLAGE PRECINCT

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—Congratulations to the Clarence Valley Council as they were honoured with the prestigious 2024 Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia's (IPWEA) Engineering Excellence award, for the Ulmarra Riverside and Village Precinct project. The award was presented at the IPWEA State conference on April 11, in the Hunter Valley, with Clarence Valley Council taking out the Design & Construction category for Public Works Project-under \$5million. The Ulmarra Riverside and Village Precinct project was designed to breathe new life into the village and enhance Ulmarra's appeal and create a memorable experience for people enjoying all that the village has to offer. Some features of the project included, upgrading roads and footpaths and the revitalization of Bailey Park, with the addition of modern barbecue and picnic facilities and the introduction of a new playground, equipped with water play features. In November last year, I had the privilege of attending the official opening of these facilities, alongside Clarence Valley Council Mayor, Peter Johnstone. This award is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all involved in this wonderful project, congratulations on a job well done!

PHUOC HUE - VESAK DAY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Sunday 26th May 2024, I was honoured to address our local Vietnamese Buddhist community at the annual Vesak Day Celebrations at Phuoc Hue Monastery Wetherill Park, and represent the Hon. Steve Kamper, Minister for Multiculturalism. In the Theravada Buddhist Tradition, Vesak is celebrated as the Birth, Enlightenment and Nirvana of the Buddha on a full moon day in the month of Vesak, while in the Mahayana Tradition, Vesak is celebrated as the Birth of the Buddha on the first full moon day of the fourth lunar month. This year, our local Vietnamese Buddhist community celebrated the 2648th Vesak Day with a procession led by the Senior Venerable Thich Phuoc Tan OAM, Abbot of Phuoc Hue Monastery. I was joined by my State parliamentary colleagues Tri Vo MP, Member for Cabramatta, David Saliba MP, Member for Fairfield, as well as the Hon. Chris Bowen, Minister for Climate Change and Energy, and Dr Cao Thang Ha,

President of the Vietnamese Community in Australia – NSW. Thank you to Thich Phuoc Tan OAM and all members of the Phuoc Hue Temple for a great event. I again wish all our proud Vietnamese-Australians a blessed and peaceful Vesak Day.

REV. JOHN JEGASOTHY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On 12 May 2024, Rev. John Jegasothy celebrated 50 years of Service to the Church and the Community in Sri Lanka and Australia at The Uniting Church, Northmead. Rev. John is a true pillar of faith. Providing trilingual Ministry, Rev. John served in Trincomalee Sri Lanka, an area where many Tamils were subjected to persecution and the horrors of the Civil War. Despite the dangers, Rev. John continued sharing Christ's teachings. Acting with courage and determination, he supported vulnerable communities as President of the Trincomalee District Human Rights Organisation. Rev. John and his family were forced to flee their home and seek safety in Australia. Arriving as a refugee, Rev. John settled in his new home and continued his mission to provide sanctuary to vulnerable people. Ever since, Rev. John has supported our Tamil community in Western Sydney. A steadfast advocate for Refugees and People Seeking Asylum, Rev. John fights for the safety, dignity, and settlement of all migrants as a Member of the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce. He is a friend, caretaker, confidante, leader and a voice for our community. Congratulations again Rev. John. Thank you for your dedication to justice.

WINTER SPORTS WORLD

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On 22nd May 2024, I was pleased to meet Peter Magnisalis, Managing Director, and George Giovas, Public & Government Relations, Winter Sports World (WSW), to be briefed on the visionary snow resort proposed for Western Sydney, after the Department of Planning and Environment granted State Significant Development Application approval for the project in January. In what is set to be a world-class tourism and winter sports venue in the heart of Western Sydney, WSW is designed to bring accessible, affordable snow sports to Sydney year-round. The landmark sporting attraction has been designed to combine skiing, snowboarding and snow play with restaurants, cafes, conference facilities and a 4-star, 170-room hotel. As the first of its kind in Australia, the WSW precinct is a breathtaking design by local architects Collins and Turner, with an impressive 300-metre advanced run and several resource-efficient sustainability features, including water harvesting, insulation and solar technologies in design. WSW is expected to create 2,700 jobs, attract 1 million tourist visits each year and inject more than \$220 million per annum into the Western Sydney economy. Congratulations to Peter, George and the WSW team on this amazing concept. I look forward to snowboarding the WSW runs.

LISMORE GEMFEST CONTINUES TO SHINE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I congratulate the Lismore Gem and Lapidary Club for another successful Gemfest event – attracting between eight and nine thousand people for the weekend event in May. The event is Australia's largest gem show and the success is a credit to the club – President Rodney Knight, Secretary Marcus Bebb and Vice President Jenny Bryenhoek. Along with the club committee and members they organise this event that takes over the Lismore Showground with more than 140 stalls and attracts stallholders and visitors from interstate and the local area. This year I particularly want to acknowledge Steve and Natalie Leslie from HARCOURTS who stepped up as major sponsors of the event at short notice. The sponsors are key to the event going ahead. The other major sponsors were NBNTV, Triple Z 2LM, Lismore City Council, along with sponsorship from The Lismore App, Richmond Sand and Gravel, Gemcut Ballina, Bunyips Great Outdoors Centre and Kristallen. I enjoyed wandering around all the displays, stopping for a cuppa at the CWA stall, and chatting to people in the sunshine. The event attracts people of all ages with fossicking activities for kids, gem-cutting demonstrations, and a huge variety of gems and crystals.

TABULAM - TRAIL OF LIGHT AND SOUND

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I wish to congratulate Sunita Bala and Zeb Schulz, of the Kyogle and Lismore-based RealArtWorks Incorporated on eight months of work which culminated in Tabulam: Trail of Light and Sound, a multi arts community collaboration on Saturday night, May 25. Poppy Harry Mundine Walker performed the Welcome To Country and I had the honour of opening the free accessible event which was attended by a huge, enthusiastic crowd. I'd also like to congratulate ReadArtWorks' project partners, including Arts Northern Rivers, Arts North West, Kyogle Council, Bioluminescence, The WhereHouse, and importantly, the Tabulam & District Progress Association. Tabulam: Trail of Light and Sound was a collaboration with Tabulam and Jubullum artist and community who participated in free inclusive creative workshops to create original live art. Tabulam's buildings became the canvas for stunning mapped projections using light, sound and text inspired by local narratives which investigated the notion of 'HOME'. The trail was a one-hour durational performance where the audience travelled by foot through town, wowed at every turn, finishing up at Tabulam Hall for the

show finale. RealArtWorks is an arts company which since 2008 has been perfecting socially engaged arts in our local communities.

TENTERFIELD LIONS CLUB MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I commend the Tenterfield Lions Club on fulfilling its mission to make a difference to people's lives in their local community over the past year. The club provided a snapshot of its efforts on its Facebook page recently and I praise its dedicated volunteers for fundraising through community barbecues, raffles and local festivals. Tenterfield Lions' commitment is for 100 per cent of those funds are returned to worthy causes, directly benefiting organisations and individuals who need it most. This is across education, health, community projects, emergency relief, disaster relief and international aid. The club also had its 58th Changeover Luncheon at Arrajay Downs with Outgoing President Lion Bruce Jackson handing over to Incoming President Lion Mike Rudge. Highlights included 1st District Governor elect Lion Stuart Perrett and Tenterfield Shire Mayor Cr Bronwyn Petrie presenting the prestigious Melvin Jones Fellow awards to Martin I'Ons, Bruce Jackson, Jenny Shearman and Lisa Dalton. Bruce Jackson presented Kim Rhodes, Steve Whiticker and Frances Williams with their 10-year chevrons. Recognition also went to Jane I'Ons for her humanitarian work, to Steve Whiticker, Frances Williams and Tad Cossins (outstanding commitment and service) and to Jenni Pentland (excellent service and commitment).

GISELE MESNAGE

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—I would like to wholeheartedly thank Gisele Mesnage for her tireless advocacy for vision impaired people in our community, and specifically those living in the Cardinal Freeman Village. After recently meeting with Gisele and her trusted guide dog Nyota it is obvious just how passionate Gisele is about sharing the experiences of vision impaired individuals and contributing to effective change that makes our city more accessible and walkable for everyone. Gisele works tirelessly to ensure that visually impaired individuals can safely navigate our roads and she has recently submitted detailed and well researched recommendations to both the Inner West Council and the City of Sydney where she outlined her experiences with the challenges of navigating pedestrian crossings. Gisele is actively and positively engaged in ongoing work with Inner West Council to find design solutions that enable all the community to safely and independently enjoy their local communities. The commitment of Gisele has never been more important for achieving improvements for the safety, accessibility and wellbeing of visually impaired members of our community. Thank you Gisele!

WURRIDJAL FESTIVAL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—During the month of March, the Cooks River Communities gathered for Wurridjal festival to celebrate the strong communities and ecologies along the mighty Cooks River. This annual event welcomes in the time of the mullet, known as "Wurridjal" in the Dharug or Eora languages spoken in the Sydney region along the Cooks River. The festival also acknowledges the importance of this annual event to Aboriginal people. The festival is coordinated by the Cooks River Alliance and begins at Marrickville Golf club with a Welcome to Country, smoking ceremony, music and games. A special thanks to the Peter Stevens, Andrew Tighe, Murray Waldron and the teams at Wolli Creek Preservation Society, Marrickville Golf, and the River Canoe Club for making this festival possible. With 30+ free events held throughout March and April, the festival highlights the incredible communities throughout the Cooks River catchment and the determination to regenerate it. The event includes a wide range of activities from guided walks, river clean-ups, Bushcare and cycling, to cultural workshops and panel discussions, there was something for everyone to enjoy. Congratulations to everyone involved!

TITA CARINDERIA, MARRICKVILLE

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Welcome to the neighbourhood Tita! In February of this year, Donut Papi's owners Christopher Palamara, Kenneth Rodriguez, and Karen Rodriguez-Labuni expanded their empire, opening one of Marrickville's newest cafés, Tita. The name "Tita", meaning "Aunt" in Tagalog is a nod to the co-owners and siblings Tita Marlene, who inspired them through her cooking and her generosity. This touching tribute embodies the owners' aim to curate a welcoming dining experience for patrons. The colourful café takes inspiration from the traditionally maximalist interiors of carinderia in the Philippines creating a sense of nostalgia for the owners and Filipino patrons whilst also providing an insight into Filipino culture for those who have not experienced it. Inner Westies are travelling to Illawarra Road to experience the fusion of authentic Filipino and modern Australian cuisines. With a menu spanning sweet and savoury options of everything from char siu tocilog to Ube soft serve, Tita has something for just about everyone. I encourage everyone to visit Tita and immerse themselves in this endearing tribute to loved ones combined with an exciting fusion of cultures.

LABEL ENJOYS GLITTERING SUCCESS

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge Kerriane Dundas and her daughters Maddison Singe and Isabella Dundas for their outstanding contributions making Table Top a global name through their label 'Eloquence Equestrian'. Kerriane, Maddison and Isabella's achievements as NSW businesswomen are truly commendable. Their strategic marketing approach has led to sponsorship arrangements with Olympic hopefuls, such as rider Jessica Dertell and six-time Olympic equestrian Mary Hanna, who endorse their home-grown creations. With Ms. Dundas's lifelong connection with horses, their dedication has resulted in the creation of a high-quality brand with a signature collection for both horse and rider. Eloquence Equestrian's careful selection of an 'elite team' of riders, including Olympic and Paralympic contenders, showcases their commitment to excellence and innovation in the equestrian world. Congratulations Kerriane, Maddison and Isabella for your remarkable achievements and impact on the equestrian community and for representing NSW business with such distinction. Well done to Maddison's husband for his creative input in naming the brand "Eloquence Equestrian", which has contributed to the success of their brand on a global scale.

RED SHIELD APPEAL

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)—The persisting impact of the cost-of-living crisis has aggravated the challenges already being faced by many people in my electorate. The Macquarie Fields Salvation Army is a beacon of hope for people in our community doing it tough. Captain Darren Kingston and the team at Mac Fields Salvos do an extraordinary job helping others, through a regular community pantry, market stalls and events promoting community connection, friendship, faith and fun. The Men's Mob meet regularly to provide a safe space for discussing mental health and other issues. Now, the Red Shield Appeal, is seeking community support to help continue these programs and assist people who are struggling to make ends meet. This year, the Red Shield Appeal celebrates 60 years – a significant milestone. Since 1964, the Salvos have been walking alongside everyday Australians to provide much-needed assistance, comfort and hope in times of crisis. Every 17 seconds, the Salvation Army in Australia helps someone in need. Providing tangible support and new beginnings on a daily basis for those in desperate need is why we all say 'Thank God for the Salvos'.

ZONTA CLUB MEMORIAL BENCH

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—On Friday 31 May, I was honoured to join members of the Zonta Club of Hunter Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Mayor Kay Fraser in officially inaugurating a domestic violence memorial bench on the Warners Bay foreshore. The bench was installed thanks to the advocacy of the Zonta Club of Hunter Newcastle, and is intended to be a long-term, tangible reminder of the costs of domestic violence. The bench is dedicated to women and children in our community who have suffered domestic and family violence and reminds us to stand up, speak out and act to prevent violence against women. At the launch, attendees placed sunflowers and pink and red roses on the bench in memory of lives lost. It's an excellent representation of Zonta's mission to empower women locally and internationally, and their ongoing, long-standing support in the struggle against domestic violence. I wish to acknowledge the board of the Zonta Club of Hunter Newcastle, including Governor Jean Dally, Lt. Governor Bernadine Guy, and officers Marilyn Smith, Penny Lucas, Sue Johnston, Helen Grimson and Stephanie Cameron. Thank you, Zonta, for continuing to raise awareness and address the scourge of domestic and family violence in our community.

HOME-START FAMILY SERVICES

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I wish to acknowledge the extraordinary work done by Home-Start Family Services over the past thirty-five years, particularly in the Charlestown Electorate, across the Newcastle-Lake Macquarie region and around NSW. Home-Start brings volunteers from local community to help give parents with babies and young children the type of practical and emotional support needed over the first five years of their children's lives. All our volunteers complete a seven-week training course where they learn how to support vulnerable families in a strength based, trauma informed way, and learn about the other local services that are available to struggling families. There are currently 46 volunteers across NSW who provide 7488 volunteer hours every year to 52 families, including 83 parents and 135 babies and young children. That adds up to \$325,000 worth of practical hands on support every year. My thanks to the Newcastle-Lake Macquarie volunteers, including Katrina Knight, Carmen Watkins, Sharon Clynick, Robin Langham, Lee Bini, Julie Duncan, Sharyn Ayerst, Nicolle Challinor, Lee Grien, Carolyn Harris, Mary Bowyer, Jane Blackall, Anne Steiner, Colleen Marks, Anita Ibbotson, Isabella Harrison and Katrina Brooker. Your work means so much and is so appreciated.

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CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—Clean Up Australia Day, an event dedicated to environmental conservation, offers communities across the nation a chance to actively participate in preserving natural landscapes and urban areas. In recognition of this important day that was held on 3 March this year, I attended two clean ups: one organised by BAPS at Macleod Park Prestons and another at Willowdale Park in Denham Court. The clean-up events were attended by enthusiastic volunteers from the local area who helped to remove litter and enhance the beauty of the park. It was wonderful to witness the collective responsibility that we share in fostering a sustainable environment. By coming together to clear debris and tidy our shared spaces, we not only improved these parks' aesthetics but hoped to raise awareness about the ongoing need to care for our surroundings every day. It is always a pleasure to engage with my constituents, especially when they come together as a community for this important environmental cause.

AL FAISAL COLLEGE IFTAR DINNER

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—It was a great pleasure to attend the Ramandan Iftar dinner at Al-Faisal Collage Liverpool Campus in Austral on 27 March. This holy month teaches us about patience, spirituality, and community, values that Al-Faisal College upholds with great dedication. At the break of the daily fast, it was a time of reflection on the lessons of Ramadan, fostering a spirit of generosity, community and unity among us all. Events like this Iftar dinner not only bring us together to share a meal but also weave the rich fabric of our diverse community tighter. I immensely enjoyed attending this blessed evening with the school community and thank Al-Faisal College, for hosting this wonderful event. May this Ramadan bring peace and happiness to all.

KEMPS CREEK UNITED, BILL ANDERSON RESERVE UPGRADE

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—It was my honour to attend the Kemps Creek United Soccer Club Local Small Commitment Allocation Project Official Opening on 13 April. The club secured \$50,000 from the Local Small Commitment Allocation which was used for essential drainage works for Filed 1 of Bill Anderson Reserve. Additionally, the club has successfully secured a \$25,000 grant from the NSW Football Legacy Fund that is being utilised to install hybrid turf at the reserve. The new turf aims to enhance the durability of the fields, particularly in high-traffic areas, allowing the club to host various football events under diverse conditions. Ross Maiorana the club president, emphasised the goal of creating a lasting legacy for both current and future members. The club, which has a strong community presence since 1976 and boasts around 520 members, plans to use the upgraded facilities to support continuous football activities throughout the year.

BIKE RIDE FOR BRAIN CANCER

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby)—Lucie Leonard was 34 when she lost her seven-year battle with a grade 3 astrocytoma in 2012. Her mother, Robyn Leonard, quickly became a passionate consumer advocate for brain cancer research and was inspired to create Australia's first brain cancer biobanking consortium. Brain cancer kills more people under 40 than any other cancer yet remains one of the most under-researched. Brain cancer survival rates have not improved over the last 30 years and remain one of the lowest. In 2018, the charity, Brain Cancer Collective, was launched with the mission to raise funds to support initiatives that will accelerate brain cancer research in Australia. I was privileged to be at the start of the Road to a Cure fundraising event. This is a two-day, 222km, bike ride from Hornsby to Wisemans Ferry and back, in support of the Brain Cancer Collective charity. My friend, Ross Bowles, is both a brain cancer survivor and prolific fundraiser for this event each year. I was

impressed to learn that this small group of cyclists have raised over \$1,000,000 from this annual event, in the last five years. All funds go towards fighting brain cancer.

CLOVER BRADLEY, OAM

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby)—I was very pleased to learn Clover Bradley was recognized in the 2024 Australia Day awards with an Order of Australia Medals (OAM) for her "service to the community through a range of organizations". Passionate about orchids, Clover has been enthusiastically connected with various Orchid Societies, including serving as President of the Berowra Orchid Society since 2022 and as Secretary of the North Shore Orchid Society since 2016. Clover is also a member of the Ukulele Friends and a long-time volunteer with Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT. Together with her late husband, Bill Bradley OAM, Clover was very actively involved with Hornsby Connect, which they helped establish in 2016. Hornsby Connect is a wonderful organization run by volunteers that provides groceries, at a heavily subsidised rate, to those doing it tough in the Hornsby area. Its continued success is a wonderful legacy for both Bill and Clover. Clover Bradley has received many awards for her tireless work in the Hornsby community, including for many decades with Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital. It is my pleasure to congratulate Clover Bradley for being awarded an OAM. This beautiful Hornsby lady is highly deserving of her award.

GLENORIE PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby)—The Glenorie Progress Association is a wonderful organization that now, with the most recent electorate boundary change, represent an area within the Hornsby electorate. This organization is widely respected and has always been effective at community advocacy since it was established 130 years ago. Glenorie is a vibrant rural area but faces the challenge of being dissected by Old Northern Road that serves as the Local Government and State electorate boundary. This means the Progress Association deals multiple councils and State MPs as they represent their community on a broad range of issues. Glenorie also faces the challenge of retaining its rural ambient and preserving its unique bushland environment. At same time balancing the delivery of modern infrastructure and appropriate development. The GPA is very capably guided by Di Coxon Ellis who leads an active and enthusiastic executive. They make it their businesses to be across all issues affecting their community as well as informing and inviting participation from local residents. I thank the Glenorie Progress Association executive for the wonderful service they continue to provide their local community as Glenorie changes with the times but remains the special place that its residents have always loved.

CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN NATIONAL SORRY DAY

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)—Thank you to Aunty Noelene Holten and Aunty Shirley Carr for sharing their stories at the Canterbury Bankstown Council's National Sorry Day event this year. We acknowledge Sorry Day on 26 May to recognise the experiences and strength of Stolen Generation survivors and acknowledge historical wrongs committed against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Aunty Noelene shared her experiences of living on the Mission whilst Aunty Shirley told her family story and the terrible effects of hiding Aboriginal heritage. I was privileged and saddened to hear of the treatment of Aboriginal people during the Stolen Generations. However, listening to Aboriginal voices provides a better understanding of this terrible injustice and how we can do better in future. May we continue to recognise the trauma caused by the Stolen Generations as well as the strength and resilience of Stolen Generation survivors in the healing process. I thank everyone who attended this event, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who allowed us to stand with them on this day. Thank you, Aunty Noelene and Aunty Shirley. I join many around the county in saying I am sincerely sorry.

ST CHRISTOPHER'S CRICKET CLUB

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)—Congratulations to St Christopher's Cricket Club on their annual awards day, and players, Max Gaughan, George Psomas and Luke Stocks on recognition of their cricketing prowess over the season. Max was awarded Mini Player of the Year, whilst George was awarded Junior Player of the Year, off the back of winning Mini Player of the Year last season. Eighth grade captain Luke received Senior Player of the Year and is so well respected amongst the club, the junior award has been named in his honour and is now known as the Luke Stocks Shield. Alison Sheehy was awarded Club Person of the Year for her role in going above and beyond for the club, developing relationships with sponsors and making sure everyone has a good experience. Located in Panania, four of the club's teams managed to make the semi-finals this season. Congratulations to all award recipients and thank you to all players and club members for championing the important Aussie tradition of cricket in our electorate.

BETTY RUTHVEN 100TH BIRTHDAY

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)—A very happy 100th birthday to life member of the Labor Party and East Hills local, Betty Ruthven. Betty has lived a fascinating life. Born in 1924 in Belmore, Betty attended St

George Girls High School, and later Sydney Technical College studying dressmaking and millinery. During World War 2, Betty worked as a telephonist and phonogram operator in the GPO at Martin Place, often taking calls from military bases. In 1952 Betty got married and together with her husband, they built a house in East Hills. Unfortunately, Betty's husband passed away in 1966 leaving Betty to raise their three children. Not only has Betty volunteered with the Labor Party for many years helping out at elections, she has also been active in several school, social and community organisations such as East Hills Primary P&C, HiLo Ladies Social Golf Club and the Royal Botanic Gardens of Sydney. Well-travelled, Betty enjoys bushwalking, gardening, baking and sewing. I am so glad to hear that Betty enjoyed her birthday celebrations at a vineyard in the Southern Highlands with her beloved friends and family. Congratulations on your 100th birthday Betty.

FIONA AND RAYMOND LO

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Two stalwarts of the Bathurst hospitality industry have retired after 35 years in business. It is with great pleasure that I wish Lo's Rose Garden Chinese Restaurant owners Fiona and Raymond all the best as they enter a new chapter in their lives. While there were many mixed feelings as they closed the doors for the last time, it was an emotional time to catch up with the many loyal customers they fondly call "friends" and "part of the family". However, despite the emotions that come with making such a life changing decision, the Lo's are now looking forward to spending more time with their children. Over the years Fiona and Raymond have developed strong relationships with their customers and looking back have many fond memories of their time in Bathurst, the city they were proud to call home. I wish the Lo's every success and happiness as they prepare to make the transition to life in Sydney and assure them, they will be missed by everyone who had the chance to enjoy their fine food and hospitality.

SUEANNE MANHOOD

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—It's a pleasure to congratulate Sueanne Manhood on the accolade she received at the recent 2024 Western NSW Business Awards in Bathurst. Sueanne was a finalist in the Outstanding Employee category and deservingly took out the major honour to be crowned the victor. Taking out such a prestigious title shows the dedication and commitment Sueanne has shown in the role as Director of the Bathurst Little Learning Centre where she works. She has been working with children for more than 20 years and treats it if it were her own, taking incredible care to perform all her duties to the highest standard and demonstrating this work ethic to her team and mentoring trainees. Her greatest achievement to date is readying their brand new service for its very first Assessment and Rating through the Department of Education. Working closely with her team and management, Sueanne ensured every area of compliance was adhered to the highest level resulting in the Bathurst Little Learning Centre obtaining a rating of "Exceeding" for each of the seven quality areas put under the microscope. Congratulations Sueanne on a job well done.

DON PEARCE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—After an association with the Bathurst Thoroughbred Racing (BTR) Club dating back to the 1980s, Don Pearce is saying goodbye to the organisation. Mr Pearce served on the committee of the BTR for the past 12 years but has decided it is time to call it quits. Being the owner of a successful business, and now taking over running his father's earth moving business following his death, signing off was a difficult decision. Over the years, Mr Pearce has plenty of fond memories from involvement with local thoroughbred racing, especially being able to spend time with his family there. Annually, his favourite day with the club has been the Soldiers' Saddle race day which brings thousands of people from all over the state to Tyers Park. Mr Pearce is still aiming to stay as involved with the club as possible despite running two businesses. He will go to the race meetings whenever possible and will provide sponsorship for races when he can. On behalf of the wider Bathurst sporting community, I would like to thank Don Pearce for the massive contribution he had made to thoroughbred racing in the region. It is greatly appreciated.

FEMALE CONVICTS PROJECT

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Last month I had the pleasure of attending Maitland & Beyond Family History's Female Convicts of Maitland and the Hunter Seminar. I was also given the honour of launching their "Rosebuds – Children of the Maitland & Hunter Valley Female Convicts" publication and bonnet collection. The launch was the culmination of four years of research of female convicts connected to Maitland. The team identified 1,000 women and the book is these women's stories. Congratulations to Female Convict Bonnet Project Coordinator Vicki Osborn and the volunteer members of the Maitland & Beyond Family History. Their countless hours of effort have ensured that the contribution women made to the early settlement of Maitland is recognised. Their research importantly has resulted in a record of the challenges they faced as convicts, women, wives and mothers. The day also saw presentations and discussions by Dr Brian Walsh, author of 'Convict Women on Farms in the Hunter Valley' and Maitland female convict presentations about Elisabeth Benson, Caroline Haines and Charlotte Dawson. I thank Maitland and Beyond

Family History for their ongoing dedication to preserving and enriching this important part of Maitland's development and history.

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Each year I have the pleasure of hosting and attending Australia's Biggest Morning Tea events to support the great work of the NSW Cancer Council. This annual event which aims to raise \$15 million has been running for 31 years. Interesting other facts that I discovered at this year's Tea-rivia event include: Australia's biggest morning tea set a Guinness book of Records record in 2005 for the World's largest Simultaneous Tea party; 5 billion cups of tea are consumed across the globe each day; There are over 3000 tea varieties; The world's largest tea bag weighed in at 250kg; It takes around 2000 leaves to make 450g of tea; Each year more tea than coffee is consumed globally. While that is all interesting, what I am so grateful for is the work the Cancer Council of NSW do to support those impacted by cancer and to strive to find the answers and cures we need. Thank you to everyone who held, attended, or donated to Australia's Biggest Morning Tea this year.

HUNTER REGION BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to all the Maitland businesses who were successful at the recent Hunter Region Business Excellence Awards. Morpeth Family Medical Practice's Dr Laxmi Nahar was named Business Woman of the Year, congratulations Laxmi. Rutherford's Network ICT was named Online Business of the Year and managing director Shane Meister was highly commended in the Business Leader of the Year category. Gillieston Heights Telethrive was also highly commended in this business category. The Mai-Wel Group took out the not-for-profit Business of the Year award and Chisholm based business Get Fit for Life was named Health Services Business of the Year. Rutherford's RAS Training and Services won the Trades & Industry Business of the Year and Thornton's Connect Cleaning Group were highly commended in that category also. Picture This! Custom Framing was the winner of the General Business of the Year award and was highly commended in the Customer Service – Whole Business category. Congratulations also to Evolution Hair Co who were highly commended in Personal Services. These outstanding businesses have been recognised for their commitment to providing excellent service, innovative products, and outstanding customer experiences. They truly embody the spirit of our community.

AMBER LANE DISTILLERY

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)—Congratulations to Co-owner Rod Berry from Yarramalong Whisky Distillery Amber Lane who has once again swept up top honours at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition 2024. Amber Lane distillery received two medals, a Double Gold Medal for its Pineau 350 whisky and a Gold Medal for the Apera 100 whisky. The San Francisco event awards 30 different medals to 30 different categories ranging from vodka and gin to whisky making Amber Lane Distillery one of Australia's most awarded whisky producers. Amber Lane was established in late 2022 becoming quickly renowned for its large premium barrels, longer maturation cycles, and the careful application of European distilling principles. In the last two years Amber Lane has been successful with four gold medals, previously awarded the Double Gold Medal for its Apera 87 and a Gold Medal for Silk Road in 2023. Each Amber Lane Distillery release since September 2022 has won national and international gold medals. Mr Berry and staff are incredibly proud of the calibre of whisky they are making, and the feedback from both the public and the industry, is a testament to their passion and dedication to producing high-quality whisky.

CENTRAL COAST WOMEN'S GOLF ASSOCIATION

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)—Central Coast Women's Golf Association fundraised \$33,500 to Coast Shelter who is a Community Housing Provider and operates specialist homelessness services offering short to medium-term housing. The funds raised had been allocated to one of the women and children's refuges to purchase a house full of new furniture after extensive renovations were required due to water damage and damp issues. The new furniture was purchased from Fantastic Furniture at Gosford offering a discount of support. The golf members are made up of eight affiliated clubs across the Central Coast from Wyong, Toukley, Kooindah Waters, Shelly Beach, Magenta Shores, Mangrove Mountain, Everglades Country Club, Gosford, Woy Woy and The Springs. The members had the opportunity to see first-hand to witness the impact of their donations by visiting one of the refuges, meeting with residents and staff. I would like to acknowledge the members from Central Coast Women's Golf Association for your contribution and dedication in supporting the community which will impact lives of women and children ensuring they have access to a nurturing home environment as they work towards rebuilding their lives.

JASMINE PARISH

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Jasmine Parish is a member of the Central Coast Dragon Boat Club who recently represented the Junior Joeys team with 10–18-year-old team members from around Australia to participate in the Junior Division of the Australian Dragon Boat Federation National Championships. The Junior Joeys team competed in the 200m, 500m, and two 2km races over 2 days in April, scoring 1 gold, 1 silver and 4 bronze medals. Being a newcomer in the fast and furious, paddle driven water sport only less than a year, Jasmine showed true determination in her training to reach her goal at national level. Jasmine was guided and trained with Central Coast Dragon Boat Club coaches Donna Lerway and Chris Young. Congratulations to Jasmine on your achievements and good luck in your sporting journey.

NEWCASTLE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM AWARDS 2024

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—The second annual Newcastle Hospitality & Tourism Awards were held on 27 May 2024 to recognise outstanding contributions to the visitor economy in Newcastle. The event was hosted by the Newcastle Tourism Industry Group who bring together hotels, restaurants, tour operators and event organisers to collaborate on the visitor economy experience. Three of the awards winners are based in Newcastle, with Out of the Square Media taking out Industry Support Partner of the Year, the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club winning Employer of the Year, and Tamara Young from the University of Newcastle recognised as Employee of the Year. I congratulate the winners and other finalists for their contribution to the Newcastle visitor economy.

STOCKTON SHARKS

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—The Stockton Sharks under-15s women's rugby league team once again braved a cold night of strong winds and rain to attend Sleepout for Soul, a fundraising event to support the homeless and vulnerable in our community. Sleepout for Soul is an annual event where people pack a swag or sleeping bag and sleep rough for one night. Participants learn about homelessness and hear about the lives that have been transformed by the charitable work of Soul Hub. Soul Hub organised the event to raise funds that will provide thousands of free meals each week to highly disadvantaged members of the community. The Stockton Sharks received overwhelming support for their courage and altruism, beating their \$1,000 target to raise a total of \$3,437, one of the highest fundraising teams in the event. Their contribution saw Soul Hub surpass their goal of raising \$200,000 to reach a final tally of \$297,297. The outstanding work of the participants, donors and volunteers will go a long way to support those in need. I congratulate the Stockton Sharks for their contribution and community mindfulness.

SMART RECOVERY

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I would like to acknowledge the 20th anniversary of the non-profit SMART Recovery Australia, who run addiction self help groups across NSW and Australia. SMART Recovery is an evidence-based recovery method using cognitive behavioural therapy to support people with substance dependencies or problem behaviours to lead a balanced life. The focus on recovery recognises that we can learn new behaviours and adapt coping strategies to improve our lives and reduce problematic behaviours, complementing the harm minimisation approach of most alcohol and drug services. I recently met with the SMART Recovery Australia CEO and heard about the success of their programs, with about 30 regular meetings occurring across NSW and more than 70 regular participants from the Sydney electorate. The groups can also include friends and family members, helping them support positive behaviour change. SMART Recovery first started in King Cross in 1994 as an evidence-based and secular option and it is great to see these groups are still going strong and have expanded across the country.

PHILIP THALIS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I wish to put on record the achievements of Philip Thalís, awarded the 2024 Australian Institute of Architects' highest honour, its Gold Medal. This award recognises Philip's distinguished and outstanding service designing or executing buildings and urban infrastructure. He won the original visionary international design competition for Barangaroo, which was discarded to benefit private interests. It is telling that Philip spoke out about this betrayal and his company found itself unsuccessful for government tenders when he called this out. His integrity and passion for our city stand proudly. Philip is the founding principal of Hill Thalís Architecture and Urban Projects and a former City of Sydney Councillor (2016–2021). He's been a long time advocate for a city that is liveable and gives priority to the people living in, working in and playing in it, including public space, public facilities and green open space. Philip worked on the Sydney Olympic Village for Sydney's 'Green Games' and made a very significant contribution to

the City of Sydney's long term plan Sustainable Sydney 2030. I congratulate Philip on this formal recognition of his contribution to making Sydney a great place to live.

PETER KELLY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—It was an honour to attend the Volunteer Appreciation Day and District Medal Presentation for our NSW Rural Fire Service, Central Coast District last month. Mister Speaker, our firefighters do so much more than fighting fires. They are often the unsung, humble heroes in our community, which is why I am pleased that we had the opportunity to acknowledge their service during the presentation day last month. From car crashes and hazardous material incidents to natural disasters and community education, they really are prepared for anything and they are ready to help anyone, anywhere, anytime. Mister Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Peter Kelly of the Avoca Beach Brigade who was recently was awarded the 10 years active service Long Service Medal as part of the District Medal Presentation. Peter is the Senior Deputy Captain of the Avoca Beach Brigade, and I am told he is the mastermind behind many great initiatives within the station. Congratulations Peter on this wonderful recognition of your service and thank you for your ongoing dedication to serving and protecting our community.

STEPHEN GRIBBLE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—It was an honour to attend the Volunteer Appreciation Day and District Medal Presentation for our NSW Rural Fire Service, Central Coast District last month. I would like to acknowledge Stephen Gribble of the Erina Brigade. Stephen was awarded the National Medal recognising 22 years of diligent service to the NSW RFS. Initially joining the Mooney Mooney Brigade in 2000, Stephen then transferred to Brisbane Waters in 2015 which later became known as Erina Brigade. Stephen has attained firefighting qualifications up to crew leader and specialist qualifications in safe working on roofs, chainsaw operations, rural fire driving, prescribed burning supervision, first aid, fire boast crew and skipper. Stephen has been a dedicated member attending many training and community events and was awarded Life Membership in 2020. He has also deployed to many emergency events both locally and interstate. Stephen was awarded the Rural Fire Long Service Medal in 2013, the Premiers Bush Fire Emergency Citation in 2020, the National Emergency Medal in 2021 and the Rural Fire Service Long Service medal 1st Clasp in 2023. Congratulations Stephen on this wonderful accolade and thank you for your ongoing dedication to serving and protecting our community.

GARRY BEST

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—It was an honour to attend the Volunteer Appreciation Day and District Medal Presentation for our NSW Rural Fire Service, Central Coast District last month. I would like to acknowledge Garry Best of the Empire Bay and Gosford Bulk Water Brigade. Garry was awarded the National Medal for 21 years of diligent service to the NSW RFS. Initially joining the Patonga Brigade in 2001, Garry then joined the Empire Bay Brigade in 2005 and became a dual member of the Gosford Bulk Water Brigade in 2007. Garry has been an integral part of these brigades and has made a significant contribution to the District and the Rural Fire Service as a whole. Assisting with district training, district fleet movements and supporting major incident operations with logistics. His commitment to Empire Bay Brigade was recognised with Life Membership in 2018. Garry has also been awarded the Rural Fire Service Medal in 2013, the Premiers Bush Fire Emergency Citation in 2020, the National Emergency Medal in 2021 and the Rural Fire Service Long Service medal 1st Clasp in 2023. Congratulations Garry on this wonderful accolade and thank you for your ongoing dedication to serving and protecting our community.

ABBY ABDULLAH - ASLA EARLY CAREER TEACHER LIBRARIAN AWARD 2024

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—The Australian School Library Association (ASLA) is the national authority, the peak forum in the field of teacher librarianship and school library resource services. Every year ASLA acknowledges Librarians across Australia with awards which highlight their dedication to educating young Australians. This year, ASLA announced Ms Abby Abdallah, a teacher librarian at Chullora Public School in Greenacre, as the winner of their Early Career Teacher Librarian Award 2024. This national award recognises and honours an Australian Teacher Librarian who, within their first five years in the role, has made an outstanding contribution to their school community and potentially beyond. Abby champions literacy and dignity and makes a real difference to the lives of her students and our community. She also organises fundraisers to support our community at large and teaches our students that giving back is important. This award is a testament to Abby's commitment to Chullora Public School and our community. Abby, your commitment to providing children with excellence in all aspects of education is greatly admired. On behalf of our community, congratulations and thank you for everything you do to make our community better.

ARMANDO GARDIMAN, OAM

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I would like to extend my congratulations to Armando Gardiman OAM for being awarded the prestigious George Churchward Medal for his outstanding commitment to football. Armando has been a player, team official and administrator for over 40 years but his most significant impact on the game was 'off the field' when he was called upon to assist with chairing the Association's Disciplinary Tribunal in 2005 where he handled the most challenging of hearings. As a trained lawyer, he has chaired over 250 panels for the Association's Disciplinary Tribunal as well as chairing appeals committees. He advocated for the Association to invest money and resources in female-specific programs including officiating, coaching and playing. He also championed female participation which in 2023, saw more females than males on Football Canterbury's Board of Directors. His services include providing legal advice on a pro-bono basis, and he continues advising community football clubs and National Premier League Clubs. Armando has also been recognised for significant services providing legal advice to asbestos disease institutions. Once again congratulations to Armando Gardiman OAM for his ongoing amazing work and services not only to the football community but the community at large.

BANKSTOWN WOMEN'S BULLDOGS CELEBRATE THEIR ACCEPTANCE IN THE NRLW

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Bankstown Women's Bulldogs on their remarkable achievements of being accepted into the NRL Women's Premiership (NRLW). This outstanding milestone is a testament to the dedication, talent, and perseverance demonstrated by the players, coaches, and supporters of the Bulldogs. Their journey to the NRLW exemplifies the resilience and passion that define our community, showcasing the remarkable capabilities of women in sports and paving the way for future generations. The acceptance of the Bankstown Women's Bulldogs into the NRLW is not just a victory for the team but also a triumph for our entire community. It reflects the inclusivity and diversity that are integral to our values, inspiring all individuals, regardless of gender, to pursue their aspirations with determination and courage. Their presence in the league not only elevates the profile of women's sports but also serves as inspiration for empowerment of young girls and women across our community, proving that with dedication and perseverance, anything is possible. I am extremely proud of the Bankstown Women's Bulldogs team and look forward to celebrating their successes on and off the field.

OUR LIVING RIVER - 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House the Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG), an alliance of community groups working with local and state government agencies to improve waterway health in the catchment. This year marks ten years since the launch of the PRCG's 'Our Living River' mission to make the Parramatta River swimmable again by 2025. I was pleased to attend their 10th Anniversary Community Day in March, which was a fantastic opportunity for children and adults of all ages to learn more about our precious river systems across Sydney, and what more we can do to protect them from pollution. It was also great to hear about how the PRCG is working with Inner West Council to make Mort Bay swimmable again! I would especially like to thank Peter Montague, Nadia Young, Angela Dunnett, Jasmine Payget and the entire PRCG team for all your hard work organising and hosting the 'Our Living River' 10th Anniversary Community Day along with the City of Canada Bay.

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I want to acknowledge students and staff of the University of Technology, Sydney, a fantastic tertiary institution located in the south-eastern corner of my electorate. With a total enrolment of over 44,000 students it is one of the largest Universities in Australia. No doubt every MP in this place has constituents who have studied, or are considering studying at UTS. It was such a pleasure to visit the campus last month and see some of the amazing work they're doing to create sustainable and re-useable items from things like recovered glass, as well as sustainable fashion, both of which will drastically reduce waste and divert materials away from landfill. I also met some of the team working to create a safer and more inclusive space for students. We are incredibly fortunate to have them doing such amazing work right on our doorstep. I particularly want to thank Danielle Woolley, Ellen Goh, Catherine Pruscino Jacqui Wise, Michael Gonzalez, Danielle McCartney as well as Stefan Lie and Kate Sweetapple for giving up some of your time and showing me around your campus.

APIA LEICHHARDT FC'S 70TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—It is no small feat to run a successful football club that caters to players of all ages and stages in a community, but the APIA Leichhardt Football Club has now been doing it for more

than seventy years. I was honoured to speak at their recent 70th anniversary gala dinner along with a host of dignitaries including the Italian Consular General, Gianluca Rubacotti. I want to acknowledge and thank all of the players, coaches, managers, executive, staff, club members, and of course all the wonderful parents who have put in hour upon hour of blood, sweat and tears over so many decades. So much of what has been achieved by APIA Leichhardt FC is possible only through the dedication and commitment of volunteers – people turning up for one another, and for the team. I also want to take a moment to acknowledge the important role APIA Leichhardt FC plays in fostering women's involvement in the sport. As 2023 premiers of the NPL NSW women's league and winners of the Sapphire Cup, thank you for all your hard and important work.

GEORGES RIVER RUGBY INCORPORATED

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to congratulate the entire team from Georges River Rugby Incorporated, who recently received funding under the Local Sport Grant Program. I could not think of a more deserving organisation! Since the mid-1960's, Georges River Rugby Incorporated have taken the time to promote the health and wellbeing of our younger members of the community. They have truly created a culture of camaraderie and sportsmanship. The club recently received just over \$6,500 to assist with the purchase of more rugby club equipment, which I know will go a long way in enhancing the quality of training sessions. The goal of this funding is to increase participation, as well as excellence, both on and off the field. I would like to thank Richard Ekholm, as well as the entire team, who despite all of the challenges, have done a fantastic job and continue to work hard for our local community. A big congratulations to Georges River Rugby Incorporated once again and I look forward to working alongside them well into the future.

LUGARNO PUBLIC SCHOOL ANZAC CEREMONY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the student leadership team, the P&C and teachers from Lugarno Public School, who recently hosted their annual ANZAC day commemoration. Of course, ANZAC Day is when we acknowledge the brave servicemen and women who have fought in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations throughout our nation's history. However, ANZAC Day is also about reflecting on what unites us as Australians. I would like to thank the Principal of Lugarno Public School, Justine Williams, for all of her efforts over the years. Both her and her team are incredibly hardworking and do an absolutely fantastic job caring, teaching and nurturing their students. I would also like to commend all of the students from Lugarno Public School, who were incredibly respectful and well behaved during the entirety of the service. ANZAC Day is such an important time in our nation's Calendar, so it is refreshing to see that the values of courage, mateship, and sacrifice are still so important to the next generation. These values have truly paved the way for the freedoms we enjoy today. Lest we forget.

WALK SAFELY TO SCHOOL DAY AT MORTDALE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Every year, students at primary schools across my community participate in 'Walk Safely to School Day'. This gives an opportunity for local families to participate together, encouraging kids to stay active, healthy and safe. This year, the students at Mortdale Public School took it upon themselves to make Walk Safely to School Day even bigger and better than before. I was incredibly proud to hear that my son James and his classmates got behind the idea and lobbied the school to make this happen. Many of the students, parents and teachers met at McRaes Reserve, in Grove Avenue and then walked the rest of the way to school, which I must say, is a beautiful walk on an autumn morning. It was wonderful to see so many students get involved. Not only is walking to school good for your physical health, but it is also good for your mental health and emotional regulation. Once again, I'd like to congratulate the students from Mortdale Primary School. It is so refreshing to see the younger generations getting involved and making our community a better place for all.

MAGIC ROUND NORTH SYDNEY OVAL

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—On Saturday 18 May, my kids and I had the delight of cheering on the mighty North Sydney Bears at North Sydney Oval for Sydney's own Magic Round. At what was also a beer and food festival, the Magic Round featured league legends Greg Florimo, Darryl Brohman and James Graham who came to sample the best of the food, beer and entertainment at the home ground of the North Sydney Bears. In the Magic Round itself, Sydney's most notable league teams were represented plus three of the great foundation clubs of the North Sydney Bears, Newtown Jets and Wests Magpies playing across six games. Spectators were treated to not only a great choice of food and drinks, but also a variety of activities for the kids. In a sense, the Magic Round was a nostalgic step back in time to give contemporary spectators the experience of 'footy as it once was'. I would like to congratulate the North Sydney Bears for hosting such a fantastic Magic Round which proved a real hit for all the fans and spectators.

VERA FONG, 103RD BIRTHDAY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I had the joy of celebrating an incredible milestone on Saturday 19 May with a beloved Willoughby resident, the amazing Vera Fong, who turned 103! Born in Melbourne in 1921, Vera has lived through so much of our modern history including the roaring 20's, the Great Depression, the Second World War, five Monarchs, 25 Australian Prime Ministers, and 31 NSW Premiers. Her long life is a testament to resilience and grace. It was an honour to join her birthday celebration with her three wonderful children and family at Bupa Aged Care in Willoughby. I thank the caring staff at Bupa for organising the wonderful Birthday celebrations which featured party balloons and a delicious spread of afternoon tea. Vera's vibrant spirit and incredible life journey continue to inspire us all. Our centenarians are a priceless human asset who give us that precious living link to our past. The life experience and wisdom of centenarians such as Vera Fong enriches us all. I wish Vera many more happy and healthy years ahead!

SENIORS MORNING TEA

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—On Tuesday 28 May, I had the joy of hosting my third Seniors Morning Tea as the Member for Willoughby. Meeting our seniors face-to-face over morning tea is one of the annual highlights on my local calendar. In what was a wonderful morning at the Northbridge Golf Club, it was a pleasure and honour to host such a lovely group of seniors and engage in many meaningful discussions. I always appreciate the honest feedback and ideas they give me. I would like to offer a big thank you to our speakers: Senior Constable Dominic Trevor from Chatswood Police Station, the Customer Care Specialist, Nenita Hammer, from Service NSW Chatswood branch, and Jill Nash, an inspiring advocate for ageing well. Their informative and educational presentations were truly appreciated by our audience. I warmly thank the Northbridge Golf Club, my staff and everyone who worked behind the scenes to make the Seniors Morning Tea a success. I look forward to many more of these community events that bring us closer together.

MR BRIAN WHITE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise Mr Brian White. Since Mr White's commencement with NSW Ambulance (NSWA) in January 1979 he has undertaken many roles, not only here in Australia through the provision of critical care for residents of NSW but also supporting the education and training of prehospital care to colleagues in Thailand, as an ambassador for NSWA. Mr White has led several structural reforms and identified opportunities to improve business performances, service delivery outcomes and regional roster reforms leading to improved paramedic welfare. Following a few deployments to other stations and his educative role, Mr White was promoted to Deputy Superintendent, then Superintendent, before fulfilling the role of Deputy Commissioner, permanently filling this role in May 2023. As a recipient of the Ambulance Service Medal at the Australia Honour Awards 2023, Mr White has been unanimously recognised for his distinguished service to the NSW Ambulance Service. Mr White, I offer my sincere thanks and congratulate you on your credible and extraordinary achievements for the communities of regional NSW and beyond over the past forty-five years and wish you well in your retirement.

UNITING CROOKWELL VOLUNTEERS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise Uniting Crookwell Volunteers. Uniting Crookwell currently have six volunteers who undertake a variety of activities at the Uniting Aged Care facility. Cate and Graham Stanton find the enjoyment of their role through crafts, reading, playing board games, and striking up conversations with residents. Shireen McDonald shares her passion of gardening with residents, many of whom were once proud gardeners themselves. Therese Harris is always keen to participate in craft activities and the social outings, which the residents really enjoy. Peter and Sylvia Cullen have immense pleasure in sharing their love of music with residents, also providing church services. I thank you all for fulfilling your Volunteer roles, which undoubtedly have a meaningful impact upon the lives of residents. National Volunteer Week was held between the 20th - 26th May, with this year's theme being 'Something for Everyone'. It is such a valuable time to stop and recognise the many volunteers across local and national communities that give of their time, whilst sharing their many passions, personal attributes, and skills, which contribute to the lives of so many people.

PENROSE COMMUNITY HALL

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—Penrose Community Hall, built in 1954, has always served as the vibrant heart of the village. As the community has grown it surpassed the capacity of the aging hall. This necessity became even more pronounced following the devastating 2019-2020 bushfires, underlining the need for a modern communal space to support the village. The community rallied dedicated volunteers, who generously contributed their energy, time and expertise toward achieving a new hall. Through a successful grant application to the Australian and NSW Governments Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund, alongside support from the

Council's Community Assistance Scheme, the new hall was built. Today, the new Penrose Hall - with its stage, green room, storage, kitchen, disability access and seating for 125 - is a testament to the spirit of the community. I had the pleasure of attending the official opening, also attended by the Governor-General of Australia his Excellency Mr David Hurley and Her Excellency Mrs Hurley. In extending my heartfelt congratulations, I wish to express profound gratitude to all the volunteers who contributed to the project's success. It is through their collaborative efforts that this vital asset now stands as the embodiment of resilience and unity in Penrose.

JESSICA SMITH

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)—I want to acknowledge the Softball achievements of Penrith local Jessica Smith. At only 18 years old, Jessica received the Barry Blanchard Senior Female Player of the Year Award and her second Penrith Valley Sports Star Award. Recently, Jessica was a member of the U19s Australian Softball Team at the Canada Cup in Vancouver and pitched against Chinese Taipei in March's Quad Series tournament. While representing the NSW U23s team in January, she competed at the National Softball Championships in Adelaide. Jessica was the youngest pitcher in the side and pitched in the semi-final. She also played and pitched in Penrith City Softball Association's Division 1 Men's Grand Final, who were ultimately crowned Premiers for the 2023/24 season. After completing her HSC at Penrith Christian School last year, Jessica is set to live out her dream and relocate to the United States to study and play softball. Through hard work and dedication, Jessica secured a two-year full athletic scholarship at Crowder College in Missouri. Penrith wishes you good luck in your endeavours, Jessica; you are an inspiration to aspiring female athletes, and your hometown will always be cheering you on.

HEART HEALTH NSW

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today, I acknowledge Heart Health NSW and the invaluable support they provide to the Port Macquarie Base Hospital Cardiac Rehabilitation Program. Heart Health NSW is a non-for-profit incorporated organisation based in Port Macquarie. The dedicated members aim to provide one-on-one support to those who have experienced a heart event and their carers. This is achieved through fundraising for cardiac and physiotherapy resources, hospital visitations, assistance with hospital rehabilitation and exercise programs post rehabilitation. A recent donation of a new \$4,000 treadmill from Heart Health NSW was welcomed by staff and will support the rehabilitation process for those patients recovering from surgery. Heart Health NSW President Doug Short and his team presented the equipment to Jannie Denyer from the Cardiac Rehabilitation program, noting the valuable contribution it will make to the gym. Previously, Heart Health has donated weights, an upright exercise bike and other vital equipment. It is no doubt that the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program is so successful and has claimed a series of accolades, and not surprisingly considered a leader in rehabilitation in NSW. I thank Doug and the members for their unwavering support which continues to improve the lives of people recovery from cardiovascular disease.

ROGER BARLOW

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise a staunch community advocate, Roger Barlow who has served an impressive 15 years as President of the Bonny Hills Progress Association (BHPA). Roger and Pam Barlow are well known in the Bonny Hills community for their strong representation and determined efforts. As President he has played an important role in the delivery of upgrades to the Bonny Hills Community Hall, construction of the multipurpose netball courts, installation of exercise equipment at Rainbow Beach, murals and picnic tables, conservation projects and improved footpaths as well as the establishment of the annual Bonny Hills Art Prize. Mobile blackspots and Houston Mitchell Drive intersection upgrades have been the focus of the organisation with Roger at the helm and his active role in developing the Bonny Hills Reserves Master Plan has not gone unnoticed. A humble and team spirited man, I know Roger would acknowledge his past Committee members and the community for helping to realise these projects and events during his time as President. On 25th May, community groups and business representatives attended a barbecue to thank Roger for his instrumental involvement in the community he has loved and supported for years. Thank you Roger!

TOM JENKINS CROSS DUATHLON CHAMPION

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today, I recognise the most recent achievements of Port Macquarie resident Tom Jenkins, who has won the 15–17 year age category in the Australian Cross Duathlon Championship held during April 2024 at the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Two years ago, I recognised Tom's achievements in the Auscycling National All Schools Cycling Challenge and he has continued to receive impressive accolades in cycling and mountain biking since then. The cross duathlon is a demanding athletic event, which consists of a run leg, followed by a cycling leg and concluding with a final run, in a format similar to a triathlon. Tom's impressive list of wins and places over the past few years is a testament to his unwavering focus and commitment. The hours of physical training, downhill riding, mental grit and physicality that is required to achieve this result is significant. Tom has now been selected to proudly represent his country in the Australian

Multisport Team for the upcoming Multisport Championships in Townsville this August. Tom will represent Australia in the cross triathlon and cross duathlon events which will be held over 12 days. I wish Tom all the best in his sporting endeavours.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI IN RAWANDA

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—The 30th Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide Against Tutsi in Rwanda was held on 25 May at NSW Parliament. It was an honour to attend this solemn occasion and pay tribute to the memory of those who suffered oppression and injustice. This event allowed us to gather in acknowledgment of the survivors and reaffirm the inherent dignity of all humans. Thirty years ago, Rwanda experienced unspeakable acts of violence against innocent men, women, and children. In commemoration of this event, we are to revive our commitments to never allow such horrific acts occur again, and rather allow our behaviours to be led by courage, resilience and kindness. The Rwanda community in Western Sydney have experienced a steady growth over the years, creating a vibrant cultural and social network. These community members actively engage in local community events as they work to preserve and pass down their rich heritage to future generations. Let this serve as a reminder that their legacy is not one of despair, but rather of hope and renewal.

MIRACLE BABIES FOUNDATION'S QUADRUPLE GIVING DAY

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—Tuesday 21 May 2024 marked Miracle Babies Foundation's Quadruple Giving Day, the biggest fundraising day for the organisation that supports premature and sick newborns, their families and hospitals that care for them. I had the pleasure of joining the foundation at their head office in Moorebank to mark the occasion, alongside Jenny Ware MP, Member for Hughes, who is also a mother to miracle babies. Miracle Babies ended up raising \$165 000, exceeding their original target by over \$40 000, which will support 1 154 families going through their hospital journey. Over the last 8 years, they have raised over \$1 million, which is an incredible achievement by all the staff, volunteers, and matching donors. I would like to congratulate the hard-working indefatigable CEO and co-founder Kylie Pussell, and her team Danielle Hodgson, Tina Parker, Jamie-Lee Lelliott, Michelle DiBiasi, Olivia Markis, Nicole Carey, and Thalia Del Castillo. I would also like to thank the donor partners BabyLove, Mounties, WaterWipes, and Natalis for giving generously. Together, we can continue to make a profound difference in the lives of these families, ensuring that every baby has the best possible start in life.

ARCHBISHOP BASILIOS

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—Recently, I had the honour of meeting His Eminence Metropolitan Basilios of the Antiochian Orthodox Church with my Parliamentary colleagues Mark Speakman MP, Mark Coure MP, and Eleni Petinos MP. We had a fruitful and insightful discussion regarding religious freedoms and how the Antiochian Orthodox community contributes to the wonderful fabric of our multicultural and multifaith society. We had the opportunity to also discuss culturally and religiously sensitive education and the faith-based aged care organisations that are key to making the future brighter for our ageing population. Archbishop Basilios' leadership and spiritual guidance is an inspiration to so many in the community, and voices like his help shape policies that reflect the diverse voice of our state. It was an absolute privilege to meet with His Eminence Archbishop Basilios, and I look forward to working with the Antiochian Orthodox Church in the future to foster strong relationships with their community.

RFS AWARDS 60 YEARS-PLUS

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Recently, it was my privilege to attend an award presentation event for Riverina Highlands Rural Fire Service volunteers in recognition of those volunteers who quietly dedicate decades of service to their communities. All emergency service volunteers deserve our gratitude regardless of time in service, but today I acknowledge those members who have devoted between 60 and 69 years to the RFS. From the Batlow Brigade, congratulations to Robert Bowman (61 years of service) and Laurence Dodds (62 years); from Brungle, Brian Frost (60 years); from Darlow, Pat Roche (61 years), John Crain (64 years), William Crain (64 years) and Paul Quilty (65 years); From Tumut Plains, Thomas Stacy (62 years) and Geoff Stacy (62 years). From Yaven Creek, John Ferguson (61 years), Roger Pearce (64 years), Robert Cheney (65 years), William Pearce (65 years) and Elizabeth Roche (65 years). Many of these remarkable volunteers have held leadership positions with their brigades and received awards such as life memberships or Premier's Citations for their work in the 2019/2020 bushfire emergency, and all have demonstrated courage, commitment and dedication. All answered the call when needed. Thank you to these special people for doing so much for so long.

BARD TO THE BONE

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—If, as the Bard said, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players", then Wagga Wagga can offer up the cast of a William Shakespeare fan club like no other. Because, as unlikely as it may seem, Wagga is home to the world's oldest continuous Shakespeare club and in

fact, is celebrating its 120th anniversary this year. Formed in 1904, the Wagga Wagga Shakespeare Club has remained active ever since, not breaking for war, pandemic or any other disruption. Originally for women-only, the club now includes men, with increasing interest from younger members. Aged from their early twenties to their mid-eighties, they meet every month to read and discuss the works of the great man. And while 'some have greatness thrust upon them', Wagga's Shakespeare fans have achieved greatness on their own. My congratulations to current members Neryl Quilty, Fay Walters, Margaret Bannister, Janice Gemmel, David Gilbey, Ros Mc Kinney, Viv Harling, Rosie Hughes, Kerri Whitehead, Terry Charlton, Robert Haywood, Balin Willis and Eleanor Waters Jones. I hope the club thrives for another 120 years because as the man himself said, 'Good company, good wine, good welcome can make good people'.

AWARDS FOR RFS VETERANS

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Every country community knows its Rural Fire Service volunteers are the backbone of community safety and that all are to be thanked for their service and dedication. Today, I congratulate volunteers from my electorate who have made their service a lifetime calling. At recent award presentations, Darlow Brigade's Warren Allen was recognised for an amazing 73 years of service, which has seen him attend many fires and incidents since joining in 1950. Following the 2019/2020 bushfire emergency, Warren was awarded the Premier's Citation for his commitment during that challenging time. Equally impressively, Ross Kell received honours for his 72 years' service to the Bombowlee Brigade. Holding positions including callout officer, training officer and brigade president, Allan's commitment was recognised with Life Membership of the brigade in 2018. Congratulations also to the recipients of the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal, Kerryanne Cummins of Tumut Brigade and Peter Symons of Gocup Brigade. Both were awarded for their efforts during their deployment to Canada during wildfires in 2017. All are worthy recipients and on behalf of our community, I thank them for their dedication and passion. We are in safe hands with such devoted volunteers on hand to help.

BALMORAL BURN RAISES \$1.5 MILLION

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker, the Humpty Dumpty Foundation's Balmoral Burn kicked off with a bang this year, raising an astonishing \$1.5 million for vital medical equipment to help sick children in hospital. The Balmoral Burn has now raised more than \$23.7 million since its inception in 2001. Each year, thousands of people tackle the 450 metre stretch of Mosman's Awaba Street and this year, the event saw an amazing 5000 people in attendance. I would like to make special mention of Camilla, Eloise, Tara and Stuart Pollard, who were this year's top fundraisers, raising an astounding \$41 400. The family of four hold the Humpty Dumpty Foundation close to their heart. Their beautiful twins Camilla and Eloise, who are now old enough to run the Balmoral Burn, were born at 28 weeks at less than 1kg. The twins survived thanks to equipment supplied by the Humpty Dumpty Foundation. Now, the family is giving back through fundraising. Congratulations to all those who raced on Sunday, and thank you to all those who donated. Thank you to the fantastic team at the Humpty Dumpty Foundation, whose work is so selfless and gives so much to our community.

FELIX PAL TO REPRESENT AUSTRALIA AT WORLD WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker, I want to congratulate a local Mosman teen, who has incredibly been chosen to represent Australia at the World Water Polo Championships later this year. Felix has taken the main stage in the Australian Water Polo sphere, being picked for the Australian team at just 17 years old. He is currently in year 12 and juggling the normal teenage pressures of the HSC as well as the honour of competing for our country on his shoulders. A passion and talent for water polo runs in Felix's family, as his father is a former US champion, and his late grandfather played in Hungary. Felix is currently raising money to make the trip to Argentina in July so he can represent our country in the championships. Congratulations Felix, and best of luck on the international stage and back home for the HSC. I'm sure you will make Mosman and Australia very proud. We will all be cheering you on from home.

HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY SDN MOSMAN

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker, I want to wish SDN Mosman a happy 80th birthday. SDN is a child-safe not-for-profit organisation, fostering and promoting wellbeing, learning and development. We know it takes a village to raise a child, and for the past 80 years, they have provided that village support system for the parents of Mosman. SDN Mosman was created during the Second World War to help ease the burden of childcare for the women working and helping with the war efforts. Today, childcare is so important to our society, with more women than ever in the workforce whilst raising children. The party was graced with a rendition of 'We Are Australian' sung by the children of SDN Mosman, which was followed by a birthday cake. Thank you to their dedicated staff, who work tirelessly to support local parents and give their children the best early childhood education and care. Special thanks to SDN CEO Kay Turner, Head of Communications Dianne Speakman, and SDN Mosman's Director, Sangeeta Konsam. These are three incredible women who have dedicated their careers to childcare. Happy Birthday SDN Mosman.

NOVA TEAM AUSTRALIA

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—From more than 5,500 entries across the country, Beresfield company Nova Team Australia has won the Business Growth Award at the 2024 Australian Small Business Champion Awards, held in Sydney on April 12 and 13, 2024, and attended by more than 2,000 people. The ASBCA, running since 1999, celebrates the achievements, economic, social and cultural contribution of today's 2.5 million Australian small business operators. The submissions from Newcastle and the Hunter region reflected the resilience of these small business operators during tough times. Experts in shower screens, wardrobes, glass splashbacks, mirrors and joinery, Nova Team Australia use cutting edge technology. General Manager Matt and Office Manager Mandy attended the awards, celebrating team spirit, the strong leadership of Directors, Kyle, Corbin and Kris, who have propelled the business to new heights, and the establishment of the new factory enabling services to be expanded and increasing investment made in advanced machinery and equipment. Growth in the business has enabled Nova Team Electrical, and the acquisition of Nova Designer Coatings, signifying a commitment to innovation and a dedication to meeting the evolving needs of customers. Congratulations, Nova Team Australia!

OMNIA WHEEL

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—The HunterNet Industry Excellence Awards marked its 32nd annual celebration on March 22, 2024 at Newcastle City Hall, with over 240 attendees highlighting noteworthy accomplishments and contributions of local industries, individuals, apprentices and trainees. These awards underscore the region's commitment to innovation, collaboration and excellence across diverse industries. The 2023 Export Award went to Beresfield small local SME OMNIA Wheel for exceptional growth in export revenue. Managing Director Peter McKinnon says that the business likes to be seen as an innovator and disruptor, leading and developing a market with huge potential, manufacturing around 18,000 patented commercial multi-directional omni wheels a day. OMNIA Wheel is creating demand for its product in Europe and the US (where they have exported over 80% of their wheels), growing markets due to strong efforts by the sales team. With improved aesthetics and functionality, there is interest from global brands such as Amazon, Walmart, UPS and Walgreens, and increased demand for wheels for conveyors, trolleys, assisted living products, patient handling, rehabilitation, disabled mobility and luggage and robotics applications. Congratulations, OMNIA Wheel – your talent, dedication and innovation reflect the strength and vitality of our local industries.

JEFF ALLEN - FIRE AND RESCUE NSW STATION 454 TARRO

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—In March 2024, Jeff Allen (aka "Steve") moved on after seven years of service since 2017. As with all good firefighters, Jeff had a strong commitment to safety, a promise of community assistance and an oath to protect those in peril. He believed heartily in the NSW Fire and Rescue motto: "We are Fire and Rescue NSW and we are PREPARED FOR ANYTHING". Selfless contributions to the community – courage, professionalism and leadership. Jeff engaged with many Strike Teams over the years, and sometimes led the crews, acting as Deputy Captain. He always helped out behind the scenes with community activities and events: the Tarro, Beresfield and Woodberry Santa Christmas Eve Lolly Run hear the sirens and horn. I am sure that Jeff would agree that Honourable, serve your community dynamic role of an on-call firefighter dedication and bravery admired by many but pursued by the bold few. I commend the work of firefighters who risk their lives to protect their local community. You have helped to make a difference. Thank you for your service, Jeff – and enjoy that extra time with your family.

FREEMANS REACH CRICKET CLUB

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury)—Mr Speaker, on Saturday the 1st June 2024, I had the pleasure of attending the Freemans Reach Cricket Club Presentation night. The Club has once again had success in the Grades and many personal achievements were acknowledged. A special congratulations to Club President, George Greentree, who was honoured for his 50 years of service with the Club. George rightly received a standing ovation for his contribution and commitment. It was wonderful to see a President's Award go to Steve and Karen Clements for their outstanding volunteering and support for the Club. In 2017, the Club held its centenary celebration marking their proud history of sporting and community achievement at Freemans Reach. I wish Freemans Reach Cricket Club the best for the future. The longevity of many of the club's members is a testimony to the comradery and spirit of the club. Thank you Mr Speaker.

KILLARA RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—In May 2024, the Killara Rural Fire Brigade held their Annual General Meeting. I recognise President Stuart Clark AM, Captain Andrew Wilson, Senior Deputy Captain Matt Limburg, Secretary Stu Knibbs, and Treasurer Chris Miller. Thank you to all the volunteers within the ranks of Killara Rural Fire Brigade for their ongoing and dedicated service to our community. Their dedication is invaluable as they

work incredibly hard to ensure our community is prepared for and protected during the bush fire season. As a community that is proud and boasts about its natural beauty and landscapes, it's sometimes hard to think about the risk it may pose but the efforts of the RFS help mitigate risk. I look forward to the opening of the new fire station at Koola Avenue in East Killara and personally presenting an official NSW flag in the very near future.

KU-RING-GAI STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On 22 May 2024, we celebrated 'Wear Orange Wednesday' to pay tribute to our State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers, including our very own and local Ku-ring-gai SES. Wear Orange Wednesday is an opportunity for the wider community to show our deep appreciation and thanks to our SES volunteers that work incredibly hard to ensure the safety of NSW residents during natural disasters. Our SES volunteers are there – rain, hail, and shine – to answer our calls for help. This includes unpredictable times of wild weather, floods and fallen trees – they are our first port of call, and we are thankful for their efforts to respond. I recognise the Ku-ring-gai SES management team, Unit Commander Marie-Annick Kyle, Deputy Unit Commander David Swain, Deputy Unit Commander Kyle Henderson and Deputy Unit Commander Roy Brown. Thank you for your ongoing leadership and co-ordination of the SES to our community. I also recognise and pay gratitude to all the SES volunteers within the Ku-ring-gai Unit for your dedication to our community.

LINDFIELD FUN RUN - KU-RING-GAI ROTARY CLUB

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Sunday 19 May 2024, Ku-ring-gai Rotary Club successfully held their annual Lindfield Fun Run. This community-oriented event attracted over 2,000 participants that walked, jogged, and ran with friends and family throughout the Lindfield and Roseville. Participants took on one of three courses – two, five or ten kilometres to raise funds for local charities, including the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter and Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service (KYDS). I recognise the remarkable efforts of Ku-ring-gai Rotary, led by the energetic John Hepburn and joint-presidents Malcolm Braid and Ted Price. Thank you also to all the amazing volunteers! Events, like the fun run, help create a sense of community spirit and I thank Rotary for their efforts to bring our community closer together. I congratulate all those who took the opportunity to take part and fundraise for many worthwhile courses. Well done to all the winners. My good friend and mentor, the Member for Bradfield, Paul Fletcher in good humour texted me after the run to say that he was the fastest MP on the day. I look forward to training and participating once again in the Lindfield Fun Run in 2025.

WADALBA OOSH

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)—Thanks so much to all our early childhood educators – the energy and care you provide for our littlest learners is so very important and appreciated. And thank you so much to the fabulous team at Wadalba OOSH club for providing such a fabulous place to spend time before and after school. The beautiful children had been so well-prepared and it was with incredibly excitement that I joined them for afternoon of Paralympic information, combined with Vietnamese cooking and sporting activities. The afternoon's education session was about inclusion for everybody, and the importance of treating everybody with kindness and respect, no matter what their background, ability, or disability, where they were born, or how clever they are. Wadalba OOSH is fabulously multicultural with kids & educators from Africa, Tonga, Vietnam, Philippines, Chile & Japan. hat's just this year and who knows for next year. The Wadalba kids – ranging from 5 to 10 years of age – have a fabulous enthusiasm for learning new things, have cooked omelettes, learnt teamwork and sharing & asked collection of very curious questions and I had a ball TOO!

SHE CAVE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)—I had the absolute pleasure of representing the Minister for the Central Coast in a visit to the She Cave at Kanwal. This amazing resource for women is filled with every craft imaginable, and the offerings of warm-hearted generosity to learn, communicate, and enjoy. For anyone interested in craft entering the She Cave is like entering Aladdin cave of delights! There are beads, fabrics, paints, knitting, crochet hooks, glitter, and glue-able things galore. There is a massive wall lined with every imaginable art and craft magazine with ideas and possibilities. The She Cave is a safe place for so many women from the communities of the northern end of the Coast. I heard stories of women arriving to donate beanies or craft products they no longer intend to use, who also share their stories of escaping DV, rape, financial challenges, and you can feel that the She Cave is a place of love, acceptance and caring for everyone. Thanks to Central Coast Council for providing the space and to everybody who gives their time. Special thanks to Regina who led this baby from the very beginning - and a round of applause for She Cave.

THE HUB OF MANGROVE MOUNTAIN

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)—It's heartwarming to congratulate The Hub of Mangrove Mountain for their well-deserved recognition as the recipient of the Rotary Club of Kariong/Somersby's Community Service Award. This prestigious accolade is a testament to The Hub's dedication and outstanding commitment to serve the

Mangrove Mountain community and visitors. This café was originally called Mangrove Mountain General Store and after a marvellous renovation, The Hub of Mangrove Mountain has become the centrepiece of Mangrove Mountain community. The Hub people believe in Think Local, Support Local and Buy Local; therefore, most of their stocks are sourced locally. If you love cheesecake, you might consider paying this beautiful café a visit because you will dance through many choices such as jazzy berry swirl, rock and roll snicker or tango native finger lime curd. This recognition is not only a reflection of The Hub's commitment to provide the best services and it's also a celebration of the collective spirit and generosity that thrive within our community. I congratulate The Hub for the wonderful sense of community provided for all those who live in the Mountain Districts region and thank all those involved for making our beautiful Central Coast a better place!

~break

SES COMMANDER SUSIE SKOF

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Madam/Mister Speaker, Today I would like to recognise Griffith's SES commander Susie Skof who was recently honoured as part of National Volunteers week. Susie was appointed as the first female SES unit commander for Griffith and has been recognised by the state body as a prime example of inspiration to others. In her role, she advocates for and promotes women's involvement in leadership positions, particularly in male dominated industries. Commander Skof has always had a strong desire to serve the community which has included significant involvement assisting in the 2019/20 bushfires and the flooding in the Lismore area. She has worked in disaster welfare with the Department of Communities and Justice. Susie is constantly looking for ways to support her community and acknowledges that all volunteers directly contribute to the safety and well-being of others during emergencies and natural disasters. Commander Skof has contributed to a positive precedent for future generations of leaders within the NSW SES. Our community is indebted to Susie for her service.

BURONGA GOL GOL AND DISTRICTS LIONS CLUB

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Madam/Mister Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge the Buronga Gol Gol & Districts Lions Club who have been volunteering within the community for 50 years. A group of local men and women who engage in teamwork, mentoring, networking, leadership, responsibility and so much more! Raising a substantial amount of money over the years, they have cooked a lot of sausages! The members have donated time and effort including wood cutting, Christmas hampers and catering for local events, and are very much valued for their dedication. Two original members, Tom Modica and Len Foreman have spent half a century with this club and are still actively involved since the first meeting on 23 May 1974. I congratulate both Len Foreman and Tom Modica for their personal fifty years of commitment and the Buronga Gol Gol Lions Club and members past and present for making a real difference to the communities they represent.

JANALEE CONROY AND GUS MCDONALD

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Janalee Conroy and Gus McDonald of the Dubbo Kangaroos Rugby Club who celebrated significant milestones with the Roolettes on Saturday 18 May 2024, at their annual ladies day. As Janalee ran on the field, she did so for her 50th game with the club. This is ordinarily a significant achievement, but it is even more remarkable considering Janalee has spent most of that time as the team's captain. Her dedication, loyalty and leadership has undoubtedly played a significant part in the team's success. The team coach, Gus McDonald, was also celebrating a 50 milestone. His 50th game as coach of the women's team. Coaching can be a difficult job, which requires unwavering passion, commitment, and the ability to inspire players to reach their full potential. It is commendable to see Gus's efforts in continuing to do so. The team continued the celebrations joining the club after the game where they auctioned off special ladies' day jerseys, raising funds for their selected charities, Hear our Heart, Dubbo Dementia Choir, Support the Girls and Orana Support Service. Congratulations Janalee and Gus and good luck for the rest of the season!

JOHN FARDELL

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Raymond (John) Fardell who is celebrating half a century of dedicated service to Local Government! John has seen many changes within Council since beginning his career in 1974, including name changes. He started with the Dubbo Municipal Council before Talbragar Shire Council and then Dubbo City Council. Operational changes have also been significant. Over his years of employment John has operated a variety of equipment including a tractor and slasher with no cabin, an Austin Tipper, eight-wheeler trucks and R-Model Mac Semis. Although John celebrated his 75th birthday recently, retirement is not on the cards any time soon! He rides his push bike to work every morning arriving an hour and a half before his starting time. His first job of the day is to grab a bucket of warm water and sponge to wash his truck down, before making a cup of coffee so he is ready to go at his shift start time of 7am.

Congratulations John on this significant achievement! Your contributions to Local Government, Council and the community are truly commendable.

JOHN HOWE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to acknowledge John Howe as he approaches his retirement from Mudgee High School after a 27 year career! John started at Mudgee High School on 1 September 1997 after previously working for the Commonwealth Government for 24 years. He saw the job advertised in the Mudgee Guardian, addressed every single element of the position in his application and was soon hired. Officially the school's Grounds Assistant, John, in his signature khaki's, is affectionally known as a jack of all trades! Hardworking and an ability to handle a wide range of tasks make him an extremely valued member of the team. From doing repairs, building shade structures or landscaping, if it needs doing, John can do it. When John started, he had no tools at his disposal, he acquired everything "bit by bit", a lesson he applied to his work at the school, constantly making improvements. Not being constricted to a timetable and constantly surrounded by people, John has relished in the freedom of the job and what every new day can bring. John will be greatly missed when he runs the flags down for the last time on his last school day. Happy Retirement John!

HOPE RUN - JEREMIAH PROJECT

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury)—Mr Speaker, on Sunday the 25th June 2024, the wonderful organisation Jeremiah Project held their annual Hope Run. The run started at Parramatta and finished at Vineyard Church, Vineyard. The Jeremiah Project is a homeless ministry helping those in need across Sydney. It is a not for profit organisation. It supports the vulnerable and lonely on our streets. It began with Jacky Turano providing beanies and blankets to the homeless shelter in Windsor. Hawkesbury has always had a close connection with the Jeremiah Project. I commend the Vineyard Church for their ongoing help to some of the most vulnerable people in our community. As the name suggests, this project is about providing hope. Through ministry, volunteers reach out to those who need connection to their community. I see the constant demand for the Jeremiah Project in Hawkesbury and surrounding suburbs. I pray their work continues and congratulate them on another successful Hope Run. Thank you Mr Speaker.

CRONULLA STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE UNIT

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge the incredible volunteers from the Cronulla State Emergency Service ("SES") Unit for thrusting themselves into dangerous paths during weather events to protect and assist others. Cronulla SES members are part of a network of over 10,000 highly trained professionals across the state who share a commitment to supporting our community in times of need. But the work of the Cronulla SES goes beyond responding to emergency events. Volunteers sacrifice their time weekly to attend training and develop their skills and also raise community awareness about flooding events through planning and education. During 5 and 6 April 2024, the Sutherland Shire recorded rainfall ranging from 140mm in Cronulla to 257mm in Wattamolla activating 10 flood rescues, 37 overland flood events and 80 storm damage requests for assistance across the area. Led by Unit Commander Peter Rozea, Deputy Commander's Brian Ede, Chris Watts and Bridget Clark, the 79 active volunteers went above and beyond in responding to these emergency events. I thank all Cronulla SES Unit volunteers for their continued dedication and service to others to our community and extend my best wishes for the future.

PORT HACKING LITTLE ATHLETICS CENTRE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I recognise the Port Hacking Little Athletics Centre and the successful Annual General Meeting on 14 May 2024. Port Hacking Little Athletics Centre is a wonderful sporting organisation which embodies the spirit of family, fun and fitness. This organisation has been encouraging Miranda kids to get active for many years and facilitates young people engaging in sport, improving their skills across a range of activities, and indeed even pushing themselves to achieve personal bests. Of course none of this is possible without the hard-working volunteers behind the Port Hacking Little Athletics Centre. I recognise the Executive Committee of Mat Cook, Trevor Orsaris, Phil Turpin, Christine Kousoulis, Annette Kesselring and General Committee Members Matt Jupp, Ray Russell, Leni Villivli, Nicole Orsaris, Sonia Lewis and Melissa Mullin for investing their time and efforts to ensure the smooth running of the competition and events throughout the season. Grassroots sporting organisations like the Port Hacking Little Athletics Centre are an important part of the fabric of our community and I thank all involved for fostering a love of athletics in our youth.

ORCHIDS OUT WEST

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury)—Mr Speaker, on the 17th May 2024, I had the pleasure of opening the annual Orchids Out West event at Hawkesbury Showground. This three-day program showcase some of the most beautiful orchids from across Australia. The pavilion was a riot of colour and wonder. The Hawkesbury District Orchid Society displayed some stunning local plants that was a credit to their members. I

would like to commend Mr Malcolm Stone is his capacity as Chairperson of Orchids Out West. This event was brilliantly organised and brought a lot of pleasure to exhibitors and visitors. It is another show that brings visitors and an economic boost to Hawkesbury. I acknowledge the Orchid Society of NSW. This organisation is 90 years young in 2024 and has 63 societies or clubs across the state. Irene Chalmers is the state president and steers the OSNSW on its successful path promoting the cultivation and exhibition of these wonderful plants. I am looking forward to the 2025 Orchids Out West event. Thank you Mr Speaker.

LOCAL WATER POLO OLYMPIANS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate six men and women based in my electorate who've been selected to represent Australia in water polo at the Paris Olympics. Cronulla Sharks players Marcus Berehulak and Milos Maksimovic will step up to be part of the 13-man Aussie Sharks team for the games. They will be joined by UNSW Wests players, Angus Lambie of Burraneer and teammate Matthew Byrnes of Caringbah South, as well as Yowie Bay's Sydney Uni representative Chaz Poot. With 10 Olympic debutants the Aussie men are said to have no fear of their opponents as they head into the 12-team tournament. Also flying the flag for the Shire in Paris will be another Cronulla Sharks player Danijela Jackovich who has been selected to make her Olympic debut as part of the 13 strong Australian Stingers women's team. The Stingers will compete in a 10-team competition and with a string of recent top-5 global finishes, including fourth at last year's World Championships, the Aussie women are chasing a medal in Paris. I congratulate these men and women on gaining selection after much hard work and wish them success as they pursue Olympic glory in Paris from late July.

ALI KARABACAK - COMMUNITY SPIRIT - WOONONA KEBAB HOUSE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—The April flooding event in the Illawarra left many households and businesses devastated, and at these times it is important to highlight the community spirit and acknowledge those within the community who are outstanding members. Mr Ali Karabacak a community hero assisted the neighbourhood by providing free food to those affected and those helping with the clean-up efforts from his food van, the Woonona Kebab House, which has been in his family for almost twenty years. Thanks to Mr Karabacak's generosity, he was able to do what he could for our beloved community as everyone worked together. I would like to express my gratitude to Mr Karabacak for his kindness and his humble attitude, which inspired others to join in support of the repair efforts however they could. It's heartening to witness such a shining example of solidarity, demonstrating that we can overcome challenging times together.

ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC COLLEGE BASKETBALL TEAM

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—The Sydney Catholic Schools inter-school basketball competition is fiercely contested! I am excited to recognise the senior girls basketball team at All Saints Catholic College in Liverpool, who emerged as Conference 4 Champions in as part of the Sydney Catholic Schools term 1 basketball tournament. The girls won all of the five games they played throughout the term, and defeated Mount St Joseph and Clancy Catholic College, who achieved second and third respectively. One team member, Tahlia Caddy, was awarded the player of the tournament medal for her exceptional contribution to the team. I am also delighted to highlight the success of other All Saints' teams in the competition, with all 3 boys' teams placing second in all conference 4 categories, with the other girls' teams placing third in two other age categories. I extend my congratulations to the senior girls basketball team at All Saints on their well deserved victory, and I look forward All Saints dominating the courts at future competitions as well! Well done!

BONNYRIGG HIGH SCHOOL P&C

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community to support a school. This was very obvious at the recent Thank You Morning Tea hosted by the Parents and Citizen's Association (P&C) of Bonnyrigg High School. I acknowledge and express my appreciation to the remarkable array of supporters, including Food Bank, Fairfield Hotel, Club Marconi, Cabramatta Leagues Club, Liverpool Catholic Club, Woolworths Bonnyrigg, and Kelloggs that have been brought together by the P&C, who continuously show support for Bonnyrigg High School initiatives. The collaborative efforts of the P&C, which was only established a couple of years ago, is truly inspiring. Their tireless commitment to advocacy and fundraising initiatives significantly enrich the overall educational experience for students. They are keenly aware of the transformative power of education and are committed to ensuring that the student population of Bonnyrigg High School is supported to achieve their best academically, by having strong community and local connections. I was joined at the Morning Tea by my colleague the Member for Cabramatta, Tri Vo, as well as the Member for Fowler and Mayor Frank Carbone. I wish the P&C well in their future endeavours.

BARNEY GLOVER

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—Emeritus Professor Barney Glover AO has been a strong advocate for Western Sydney at the highest levels of Australia for many years. It was bittersweet to formally bid him goodbye at a farewell event which was a tribute to his exemplary leadership as Vice-Chancellor and President of Western Sydney University (WSU). Professor Glover's distinguished career spans many academic leadership roles, including his previous tenure as Vice-Chancellor at Charles Darwin University. He has demonstrated exceptional prowess in university management, research, and overseeing major development projects. Moreover, Professor Glover's business acumen and thought leadership is evidenced by his service on various corporate boards, state and national centres, covering diverse sectors such as health, energy, mineral exploration and telecommunications. Throughout his time at WSU, Professor Glover worked to realise his vision to expand access to and the visibility of tertiary education across the broader Western Sydney community. As he embarks on his new role as Commissioner of Jobs and Skills Australia, I thank him for his remarkable contributions and extend my heartfelt wishes for continued success – I know he will have just as significant of an impact in this space as he had on tertiary education in Western Sydney.

BOAT WISE

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I recently had the pleasure of meeting with Tristian from Boat Wise to discuss his small business located in Drummoyne. Tristian specialises in providing quality education in boat handling and water safety with an emphasis on practical, hands-on learning since 2020. Tristian established Boat Wise after moving to Drummoyne near the local marina and has operated across New South Wales ever since. His experience working at the Sydney Boathouse instilled a deeply rooted passion for the industry which he spoke about with fond sentiment. In our discussion, Tristan's enthusiasm for boating safety was profound. His dedication to equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills essential for responsible boating was admirable. It is evident that Tristian believes in going above and beyond for his clients, offering courses tailored to their unique vessels and experience level. On behalf of our community, I thank Tristian for providing such a remarkable service in our area. It's great to see young people having a go in business.

AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF BEAUTY DERMAL AND LASER

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I recently had the privilege of meeting with Olivia from the Australian Academy of Beauty Dermal and Laser in North Strathfield. The AABD is a second-generation family business, started by Olivia's mother with a campus operating in North Strathfield which is located in the Drummoyne electorate. Their state-of-the-art facility has been providing the highest quality training in beauty and laser since Olivia's mother Sue's first accredited course began in 1996. The North Strathfield campus currently hosts over 100 students, who come from all walks of life. I was impressed by the academy's prioritisation of hands-on learning with study taking place not only in the classroom but across their innovative student salons. Olivia spoke with passion about the importance of beauty therapy both as a vocation, and as a small business owner. Olivia and her team's dedication and enthusiasm for the industry is to be commended. I thank Olivia for her hospitality and appreciate the support and guidance she provides to students in our community. Wishing AABD all the very best now and into the future.

BULAHDELAH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise Bulahdelah Chamber of Commerce & Tourism for their successful nomination of Bulahdelah in the 2024 NSW Top Tourism Town Awards. Bulahdelah has been announced as a finalist in the Small Tourism Town category. The Top Tourism Town Awards celebrate the diversity and outstanding regional destinations of New South Wales, showcasing the value of tourism to towns and communities across the state. This recognition highlights Bulahdelah's contribution to regional tourism and its status as a premier destination for travellers looking for unique experiences. Whether you are seeking outdoor adventures, eco-friendly retreats, or local gift shops & cafes, this town has something for everyone. I invite travellers near and far to discover the magic of Bulahdelah and experience firsthand why it's a finalist in the 2024 NSW Top Tourism Town Awards. Congratulations, Bulahdelah Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, this recognition is proof of the hard work you do in promoting Bulahdelah as a must-visit destination.

CLUB TAREE COMMUNITY TEAM

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise a milestone for an extraordinary group of individuals in my electorate. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Club Taree Community Team. The Community Team started ten years ago, when Paul Allen, CEO of Club Taree, introduced the concept. It was a way to connect the Club Taree team with the broader community. Since its inception, the Club Taree Community Team has volunteered 10,231 hours and raised \$934,198 for the community, what an achievement! These efforts have supported countless community projects, initiatives, events, community partners, fundraisers including the

Clubs initiatives such as le Tour de Taree and the Club Taree Mental Health Challenge. Congratulations Paul and the Club Taree team for your hard work and contribution to the community over the past decade. You've made such a positive impact on the lives of many, and you should all be very proud. Well done!

HARDING MILLER SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS - AKIRA WATTON AND MATILDA SCOTT

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise Chatham High School students - Akira Watton and Matilda Scott who are both recipients of the Harding Miller Education Foundation Scholarship 2024. Harding Miller Scholarships are provided to female students who show high academic potential and are currently experiencing low socioeconomic circumstances. Each scholarship recipient receives a new laptop, high-speed internet, face-to-face and online tutoring, online homework assistance, prepaid expense cards to cover school essentials such as textbooks and excursions, as well as study skills resources and a personal coach to guide them over the four years of the scholarship. The scholarships are awarded to students at the start of Year 9, and, at the end of Year 10. Thank you, Harding Miller Education Foundation, for providing support to help our promising young girls reach their full potential. Congratulations Akira and Matilda on your outstanding achievement, you should be so proud of yourselves. I wish you both continued successes, and that this scholarship provides opportunities and bright futures ahead.

CANOWINDRA CWA

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Combating adversity led to the birth of some amazing organisations in Australia and one continues to be a stalwart for its community. I talk about the Country Womens Association and today I wish to congratulate Canowindra's branch on reaching its 100-year milestone. Formed within two years of the CWA's national launch in 1922, Canowindra's founding members took the opportunity to come together for friendship and support. Tackling isolation for country women was a major goal for the CWA, but since then it has become a powerful lobby group for rural and regional Australians through wars, the Depression, natural disasters and the pandemic. It has moved with the times and taken a strong stance on issues affecting rural communities. An example is Canowindra CWA's recent opening of its Nurture co-working space, the first in NSW, in its building. Office furniture, internet connectivity and partitioned space are provided for locals and visitors to conduct business. The Canowindra branch has owned its building since 1937 and since then it has housed health clinics, musical events, meetings and, of course, morning teas. Relevant and strong, the Canowindra CWA is a wonderful asset and I wish it many more birthdays.

DON STRACHAN

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention to the amazing rugby union career of Orange's Don Strachan, who is now Australia's oldest living Wallaby. Don is something of a celebrity in central west's rugby circles, first pulling on the Green and Gold in 1955 for a New Zealand tour. He is also a founding member of Orange's first and oldest rugby club, Emus. Emus was established in 1947 and holds a special place in Don's heart. Recently he presented the First XV with the match ball and jerseys before they took the field against traditional rivals Orange City. On that day Don received a much-deserved guard of honour. Now 95, Don became the oldest living Wallaby when good mate Eric Tweedale passed away in 2023. He is also the oldest living NSW Waratah. Born into a potato farming family, Don attended Hurlstone Agricultural High School where his rugby prowess was quickly identified, representing combined high schools for a match on Victoria in the Pacific Day. A tighthead prop, Don has also captained Emus, Central West and NSW Country to success and I thank him for his commitment to the game in country NSW.

HELEN MILLER

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Orange's health care sector features a raft of amazing individuals and Helen Miller is one of them. Helen is regarded as a luminary in aged care in Orange but is also a valued member of the community, particularly in the arts. As LiveBetter's general manager of in-home support services, Helen leads with energy and passion. Her extensive experience enables her to be a wonderful role-model to LiveBetter's workforce, which is 70 per cent female. Spending much of her career in the aged care arena, Helen is aware of end-of-life and is an advocate for a better understanding of death and alleviating the fear which accompanies dying. Helping people experience 'a good death' is something she strives for. She is also a member of Orange's working group for a stand-alone palliative care facility. This year, Helen was named the International Women's Day ambassador for the Orange Chamber Music Festival, an event that showcases international, national and local musicians and venues around Orange and district. The honour recognised her significant contribution to the community over many years, including her active participation in the festival and the Orange Regional Art Foundation.

PICTON VIEW CLUB VISIT

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—The Picton VIEW Club visited my office this week to share with me the work they do in the community. VIEW stands for Voice, Interests and Education of Women, with clubs located across Australia, and the Picton VIEW Club has 55 members. VIEW Clubs of Australia is a leading women's organisation and support network that empowers women to have their voices heard on issues of importance in Australian society. Through their admirable fundraising efforts for the Smith Family, VIEW Clubs make a remarkable difference in the lives of disadvantaged Australian children and their families and also for the women of our community. Picton VIEW Club proudly sponsors, sponsoring five students on the Smith Family's Learning for Life Program. Offering a chance for connection and contribution, they provide an opportunity to give back and help others in need and break the cycle of poverty for young people. This VIEW club in my Electorate, along with the many others located Australia wide, make a considerable difference in people's lives, and I thank you all for your invaluable efforts and contributions.

MACARTHUR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION INC 2024 SEASON LAUNCH

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—The Macarthur Football Association Inc. held a successful launch event in March to kick off their 2024 Community Season. I wish all the clubs the very best for an exciting and rewarding season ahead! The Macarthur Football Association Inc. (MFA) oversees football competitions for 24 member clubs across Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly. Wollondilly Electorate Clubs include Burragorang District Soccer Club, Douglas Park Wilton Football Club, Picton Rangers FC, Tahmoor Soccer Club Tahmoor Taipans. Football in Macarthur can be enjoyed by male and female players from the age of five, and is a great way to stay healthy, to participate in the community and to develop connections and friendships. Clubs are run as not-for-profit organisations, with dedicated volunteers giving their time and efforts to keep the clubs running. These volunteers do their hard work behind the scenes, at training sessions and on game days for the benefit of our youth and community, and I am thankful for all they do. I look forward to getting rugged up and attending some games this season to enjoy the enthusiasm of the spectators, and team spirit of the players.

WOLLONDILLY SMALL BUSINESS SHORTLISTED FOR AWARDS 2024

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Wollondilly has once again shone in the 2024 Australian Small Business Champion Awards, the country's premier small business awards program. Presentations occurred over two nights in April in Sydney and one small business from Bowral came home a winner - Hannaford Eyewear in Bowral. Congratulations also go to the nominees from Wollondilly. From the thousands of entrants, we are proud of the following small businesses who were finalists in their categories: From Bowral, Ladies Behind the Tradies for Accounting Bookkeeping Services; Samuel Gee Pies and Pastries, Balaclava, in the Bakery category; The Stress and Trauma Clinic, Bowral, in the Psychology category; Earth Property Buyers Agents, Mittagong, in the Real Estate Buyers Agent category; Dust N Ranch Outfitters, Bowral, for the Retail Sole Operator; John Winter Carpets, Mittagong, for the Trade Services category; Five Littles, Bargo, for the Fast Food/Takeaway Shop category; Windy Oaks Produce, the Oaks, in the Fresh Food category; Steins Plumbing Solutions, Silverdale, for the Plumbing Services category and Kalinya Estate, Bargo, in the Tourism category.

GET SILLY - FLETCHER CROWLEY

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr speaker, I rise to acknowledge the courage, drive, enthusiasm and vision of teenager, Fletcher Crowley of Manly Vale, in my electorate of Manly. Late last year, Fletcher attempted a double backflip on a mountain bike, which left him a paraplegic. As he made the attempt, he yelled his well-established motto, 'Get Silly' which he has tattooed on his leg and has now become a campaign, complete with stickers, aimed at encouraging more people to get out and exercise. His irrepressible personality also has him planning to ride from Perth to Sydney to raise funds for spinal awareness and given his experience as skier, has his sights set on sit-skiing at the 2030 Paralympics in the French Alps. Fletcher's aims are admirable and inspiring, but I suspect somewhere along the way, he may also just 'Get Silly'. We wish him the very best.

MANLY LAGOON FRIENDS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to the wonderful work undertaken by Manly Lagoon Friends under the leadership of President. Mel Koeman and her dedicated team of workers. As the name suggests, the group is committed to preserving and improving Manly Lagoon – a wonderful natural feature in my electorate of Manly – and to foster enthusiasm for ecological custodianship. The group seeks to develop ways the community can be informed and educated about the state of Manly Lagoon and the environmental principals that affect its value. Members help ensure the health of the waterway, its natural surrounds and tributaries, are protected and where required are rehabilitated. In this regard, they recently planted 100 new trees at the Manly Lagoon East Bushcare site, identified as important riparian land for bank stabilisation, pollution reduction, vegetation biodiversity and as a habitat for small creatures and water birds. I encourage anyone

interested in the group's activities to visit its website, manlylagoonfriends.org for more information, and for the opportunity to sign up as a Manly Lagoon Friend.

GARGI AWARDS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—The Gargi Awards have been held by the Hindu Council of Australia on International Women's Day since 2018. I was honoured to attend this year's awards on April 25. The award is named after Gargi Vachaknavi, a 7th century ancient Indian philosopher considered the first woman philosopher and a renowned expounder of Vedic Literature. She was clearly a woman of many talents who challenged male philosophers and wrote hymns in the Rigveda. The awards honour remarkable women in Australia who set a positive example and have a significant impact on the development of girls and women in the community. Niyati Gupta, director of Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre presided over the ceremony representing CG Dr Janakiraman. I offer my congratulations to the following worthy winners: Visual Arts - Devangna Tiwari; Performing Arts - Vanaja Dasika; Science & Research - Dr. Manasi Murthy Mittinty; Social Welfare - Gargi Ganguly; Language & Literature - Sangeeta Varma; Community Service - Deveena Bhatnagar.

NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE MEDALS - CUMBERLAND POLICE AREA COMMAND

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—I thank Superintendent Andrew Holland and Acting Superintendent Darren Beeche, Commander for the Cumberland Police Area Command, for his invitation to the Cumberland Police Area Command Awards Ceremony on 23 April 2024. This area command is a very challenging one and community policing is a vital service in our area. I particularly congratulate the three police who received the National Police Service Medal - Sergeant Daniel Irwin, Sergeant James D'Morais and Senior Constable Brooke Thorne. This award recognises police officers who have made a unique and significant commitment and have given ethical and diligent service. It is only open to police who have undertaken a minimum of 15 years service. I also pay tribute to officers who received the National Medal for 15 years of service, Sergeant Daniel Irwin, Sergeant James D'Morais, Senior Constable Brook Thorne and also Sergeant Matthew Jones who received the National Medal – 25 Years clasp. Police play an extremely important role in our society working everyday to address social cohesion. It is our role to ensure they are adequately resourced to fulfill their duties. I Thank you all for your contribution and service.

BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—I was thrilled to attend the Nan Tien Temple and Buddha's Light International Association (IBAA) Sydney Chapter 30th anniversary event to celebrate Buddha's Birthday at Tumbalong Park along with the Premier and Minister Kamper. Buddha's Birthday, also known as Vesak, is celebrated worldwide to commemorate the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha. These Sydney celebrations have been ongoing since 1995. This year's theme was "Co-existence and Co-prosperity" highlighting the fact that our future depends not on hyper individualism and competition, but on co-operation and community. I was reminded again about the core teachings of Buddha, the importance to "Do Good Deeds, Say Good Words, Think Good Thoughts as' and to focus on giving out faith joy and hope. The Festival was lively and focused on the good things, with a multitude of events including a Dharma ceremony, prayers, tea meditations, talks on environmental preservation and sustainability, musical and dance performances, vegetarian food stalls and flower offering ceremonies. I am very proud that Nan Tien Vihara in Parramatta was the first IBAA temple in NSW. I thank the organisers for their invitation and for focusing us all on what will really bring us peace and prosperity.

ALICE MCCANN

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)—I pay tribute to Alice McCann, a dear friend and mentor, who passed away earlier this year. As the inaugural Vice-President of the Botany Historical Trust in 1994, her contributions spanned over two decades, enriching the Trust's endeavours with her intimate knowledge of the Mascot area. Her leadership as President of the JJ Cahill Memorial High School P&C underscored her dedication to educational and communal advancement. Above all, Alice was a straight shooter whom I could always trust to tell me what's what. She often reminded me of how mischievous I was as a boy and how she frequently had to give me a playful clip over the ear. This dynamic didn't change even during the years I represented her community as Mayor and as a local MP. She remained a great, loyal friend since my childhood. Alice's rare blend of humility and profound empathy left an indelible mark on Botany's heritage. Her legacy of compassion, integrity, and unwavering dedication will continue to inspire generations, ensuring the preservation of Botany's essence for posterity. Vale, Alice McCann.

PETER ORLOVICH

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)—With a heavy heart, I pay tribute to Dr. Peter Orlovich, a stalwart in historical preservation and education. As a founding member of the Australian Society of Archivists and an instrumental figure in promoting archival education at UNSW, his impact has and

continues to reverberate through generations of archivists. His passion for local heritage and preservation shone through his work as an Executive of the Botany Historical Trust. From the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives to local councils, Peter's influence was undeniable in his field. Appointed as Counsellor to the Geographical Names Board in 2001, where he served until his passing, Peter was honoured in 2016 for 50 years of outstanding service to the Board. Vale, Peter Orlovich. Your departure leaves a profound void in our community.

TONY BLEASDALE

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)—In the heart of Blacktown, a beacon of service and compassion has dimmed. Tony Bleasdale OAM, Mayor and cherished community stalwart, leaves behind a legacy of unwavering dedication. Hailing from Liverpool, England, he journeyed to Australia, forging a path of resilience and generosity. From bricklayer to successful business owner, Tony epitomised the spirit of giving back. As Mayor, his tireless efforts transformed Sydney's West, advocating fervently for the disadvantaged. His kindness knew no bounds; a man who paid for strangers' funerals because he could. Blacktown, the city he loved, bears the mark of his compassion. Rest peacefully, Tony Bleasdale OAM.

SUPERINTENDENT ROHAN CRAMSIE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to recognise and acknowledge the St George Police Area Commander, Superintendent Rohan Cramsie. After 30 years' service in the NSW Police Force, Superintendent Cramsie is moving on and venturing into new challenges. I want to thank Superintendent Cramsie for his outstanding service and dedication to the people of the St George Region. Since his appointment to the St George Area Command in May 2022, Superintendent Cramsie has worked tirelessly to mitigate crime, promote safety and support young officers. I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the work that policewomen and policemen such as Rohan Cramsie do every single day and for putting their lives on the line to protect our community. We have the best police force in the world and the best local area command which would not have been possible without the invaluable contribution of Superintendent Cramsie. On behalf of the St George community, I wish to thank Superintendent Rohan Cramsie for his dedicated service to the police force and our local command. I wish him all the best for his future.

JIM AND MAUREEN

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, some of you here may have heard of Jim and Maureen, a beautiful Manly couple who have managed to generate a powerful movement of education and compassion through the simple action of saying hello and starting a conversation. Jim's wife, Maureen, currently lives with Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia. When Jim found that Maureen was struggling to engage with members of the community, he had the brilliant idea to have a t-shirt printed which informs others of Maureen's condition and invites them to greet her and have a chat. The response in the media and the community has been overwhelmingly positive for Jim and Maureen, and has struck a chord with many, including even the Premier. Through striving to make each day as enjoyable as the last for Maureen, Jim has kickstarted a movement of Dementia awareness which has spread around the country and made headlines overseas. If you ever happen to be visiting Manly beach and see them out and about enjoying the sunshine, I encourage you to say hello and give them a wave. Doing so has changed Jim and Maureen's life for the better, and it might just change yours.

ANZAC DAY SERVICES AT THE TRIGLAV MOUNTIES 2024

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—On April 25th 2024, I had the privilege of attending the ANZAC Day Services at the Triglav Mounties in St Johns Park. Similarly marked by solemn ceremonies and tributes, the atmosphere at Triglav Mounties underscored the profound significance of this day in our national history. The service was a reminder of the courage and selflessness displayed by our servicemen and women, and it is a privilege to have paid tribute to their enduring legacy at Triglav Mounties. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Triglav Mounties for their unwavering commitment to preserving the memory of our ANZACs and ensuring that their sacrifices are never forgotten. Attending this ANZAC Day Service was a deeply moving experience, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated in honouring the memory of our heroes. The sense of community and respect for our fallen heroes was truly palpable, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended.
