

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE .....	1926
APPROPRIATION (BUDGET VARIATIONS) BILL 2015 .....	1906, 1943
APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2015 .....	1906, 1943
APPROPRIATION BILL 2015 .....	1906, 1943
AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT .....	1898
BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP .....	1931
BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS .....	1911
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE .....	1898
CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL PROJECT .....	1940
CENTENARY OF ANZAC .....	1948
CHAMPION EQUESTRIAN ZOE BUNTING .....	1956
CHINESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION COUNCIL EISTEDDFOD .....	1963
COMMUNITY RECOGNITION STATEMENTS .....	1954
COOTAMUNDRA ELECTORATE AWARD RECIPIENTS .....	1967
CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CHILD SEX OFFENCES) BILL 2015 .....	1898
CRONULLA-SUTHERLAND SHARKS LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAM .....	1956
DEATH OF DR WILLIAM CHIU .....	1900
DIGGERS BALL .....	1954
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS .....	1964
DISTINGUISHED VISITOR .....	1898
EASTLAKES FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE INC. ....	1957
ELDER ABUSE .....	1957
ELOUERA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB AWARDS .....	1959
FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE VESAK DAY CELEBRATIONS .....	1958
GILLIESTON HEIGHTS COMMUNITY .....	1956
GRANVILLE TAFE STUDENTS AWARDS .....	1960
HOLBROOK REPLICA SUBMARINE PROJECT .....	1957
HOLLEY SUMMERVILLE-KNOTT ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS .....	1958
HUNTER STORM RESPONSE .....	1969
INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION .....	1943
INGLESIDE PRECINCT .....	1974
INNER WEST TRAIN LINE .....	1915
INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES .....	1943
JOBS GROWTH .....	1941
..... KEVIN JOCHELSON AND FIESTAFY 1959	
KU-RING-GAI COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY GROUPS .....	1968
LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE .....	1924
LOWER CLARENCE MAGPIES RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB .....	1956
MR LUKE SIKORA .....	1926
MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE BOATING PROJECTS .....	1911
NON-PROFIT BODIES (FREEDOM TO ADVOCATE) BILL 2015 .....	1898
ORANGE ELECTORATE COMMUNITY EVENTS .....	1962
PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICE .....	1943
PARRAMATTA SCHOOLS .....	1973
PETITIONS .....	1944
PREMIER'S VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARDS .....	1961
PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS .....	1960
PUBLIC HEALTH (TOBACCO) AMENDMENT (E-CIGARETTES) BILL 2015 .....	1898, 1945
PUBLIC HOUSING .....	1926
QUESTION TIME .....	1926
RAMADAN AND EID AL-FITR .....	1965
REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE .....	1928
REPRESENTATION OF MINISTER ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS .....	1926
RHYS HAYNES .....	1943
ROSE BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL .....	1968
SAINT SWITHUN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, PYMBLE .....	1959
SCHOOLS LEARNING MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS REFORM PROGRAM .....	1933
SCOUT MEDALLION RECIPIENT JAMES HULL .....	1958
SECONDARY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM .....	1958
SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE REGULATION OF BROTHELS .....	1948

SERVICE NSW .....	1938
SHELLHARBOUR HOSPITAL .....	1921
ST GEORGE ROWING CLUB .....	1970
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS .....	1943
STATE BUDGET AND EDUCATION .....	1936
STATE ECONOMY.....	1934
STATE INFRASTRUCTURE.....	1927
STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2015 .....	1898, 1947
SYDNEY AIRPORT .....	1973
TAMIL STUDY CENTRE.....	1955
THELMA SPENCER 108TH BIRTHDAY .....	1955
TRIBUTE TO JOSH WALKER .....	1959
TRIBUTE TO LUKE SIKORA.....	1957
TRIBUTE TO MAURIE LYNCH.....	1972
TRIBUTE TO NICHOLAS GILBERT .....	1959
VISITORS .....	1911, 1925
VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE OFFICERS JACK BARNES AND ALISON GRANSDEN .....	1958
WALK THE TALK EVENT.....	1955
WOLLONGONG JOBS .....	1971
WOOLGOOLGA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB .....	1965
ZONTA YOUNG INDIGENOUS WOMEN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.....	1956

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday 25 June 2015

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**The Speaker (The Hon. Shelley Elizabeth Hancock)** took the chair at 10.00 a.m.

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

## **CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CHILD SEX OFFENCES) BILL 2015**

**Message received from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.**

## **PUBLIC HEALTH (TOBACCO) AMENDMENT (E-CIGARETTES) BILL 2015**

## **STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2015**

**Messages received from the Legislative Council returning the bills with amendments.**

**Consideration of Legislative Council's amendments set down as an order of the day for a later hour.**

## **AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT**

**The Clerk** announced the receipt, pursuant to the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, of the following reports of the Auditor-General:

- (1) Performance Audit Report entitled "Efficiency and effectiveness in tax collection: Office of Finance and Services, Office of State Revenue", received on 25 June 2015 and authorised to be printed.
- (2) Financial Audit Report, Volume Three 2015, received on 25 June 2015 authorised to be printed.

## **BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

### **Notices of Motions**

**General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) given.**

## **DISTINGUISHED VISITOR**

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** I recognise in the public gallery and welcome to the Parliament former Premier of New South Wales the Hon. Barrie Unsworth.

**Pursuant to sessional order general business orders of the day for bills proceeded with.**

## **NON-PROFIT BODIES (FREEDOM TO ADVOCATE) BILL 2015**

**Bill introduced on motion by Mr Paul Lynch, read a first time and ordered to be printed.**

**Mr PAUL LYNCH** (Liverpool) [10.13 a.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It gives me pleasure to introduce the Non-Profit Bodies (Freedom to Advocate) Bill 2015 on behalf of the Opposition. The object of the bill is to prohibit State agreements from restricting or preventing non-profit bodies from commenting on, advocating support for or proposing changes to State law, policy and practice. The origins of the bill lie in democratic principle and in the principles of good governance. One of the core principles of democratic societies should include free and open discussion with no unnecessary artificial constraints. In 1859 John Stuart Mill, in Chapter II of his classic *On Liberty*, wrote:

No argument, we may suppose, can now be needed, against permitting a legislature or an executive, not identified in interest with the people, to prescribe opinions to them, and determine what doctrines or what arguments they shall be allowed to hear.

He also wrote:

... speaking generally, it is not, in constitutional countries, to be apprehended, that the government, whether completely responsible to the people or not, will often attempt to control the expression of opinion, except when in doing so it makes itself the organ of the general intolerance of the public.

It is more than ironic that some people who often quote Mill are also those who sometimes advocate gag clauses in government funding agreements. Neither opinions nor silence should be bought. Not-for-profit bodies, ranging from but not restricted to community legal centres to human service non-government organisations, should not be gagged from expressing their opinions for fear of having government funding withdrawn. They should not have to agree in advance of accepting funding to submit to a gag. That goes to a basic democratic principle: opinions should not be bought. It is only too tempting for governments, especially conservative ones, to try to silence criticism of their policies by denying or withdrawing funding. Organisations should not have to choose between funding on the one hand and speaking out publicly on policy issues that affect their sector on the other.

These are not merely matters of democratic principle, important as they are. They are also important considerations as to how governments get their policies correct. As Mill argues, one arrives at accurate positions by confronting contrary views. Non-government organisations [NGOs] will often have detailed, on-the-ground knowledge of problems and social issues. Their knowledge often will be different and superior to the official knowledge that government may have. Frankly, often they know more about issues than do government officials. They are frequently best placed to know how to improve things and deal with existing problems. They are exposed to large clienteles, which gives them an opportunity to recognise systemic patterns. If government wants the best possible policy, the best possible programs, the best possible governance outcomes, then the advice, opinions and lobbying of the non-government sector are essential.

The role of legal centres, for example, in developing policy in areas such as domestic violence, sexual assault laws and work and development orders is a powerful argument not to restrict the capacity of such organisations in lobbying and campaigning. The work that NGOs do is often about assisting some of the most marginalised and disadvantaged communities, families and individuals. Doing so systemically just makes it more effective. Regarding community legal centres, the Productivity Commission report entitled "On Access to Justice Arrangements" argued that such advocacy was an efficient use of resources. It addresses systemic issues and not just individual cases. That benefits the community more broadly. The Productivity Commission said this about community legal centres:

Strategic advocacy and law reform that seeks to identify and remedy systemic issues, and so reduce the need for frontline services, should be a core activity ...

This is even more so in a context where other longstanding sources of advice to government have been or are being restricted. In New South Wales, the criminal law review division no longer exists. The NSW Law Reform Commission has been lacking a chair and a full-time director for two years and has not had a reference from Government since late 2013. In this context, even greater effort should be made to have NGOs provide the benefit of their experience and expertise. The provisions of the bill are quite simple. Clause 3 provides the relevant definitions. Clause 4 is, in effect, the operative provision and prohibits agreements between State agencies and non-profit bodies that contain prohibited content. To the extent that they do contain such content, they are void.

Clause 5 provides that prohibited content is any requirement that restricts or prevents a non-profit body from commenting on, advocating support for, or opposing change to any matter established by the law, policy or practice of the State. These are simple provisions but they enshrine significant principles. This is not the first such legislation in Australia. As I indicated earlier, the bill is based on a Federal statute that passed through the Commonwealth Parliament in 2013. At the time it was supported by the Liberal Party and The Nationals and was proposed by the Labor Party in Government. I note in particular the effusive speech in support by Senator Fifield, who is now, as he was then, on the Coalition front bench. At the time States were called upon to pass complementary legislation.

The bill seeks to prevent the throttling of the voice of the vulnerable. It seeks to stop the stifling of public criticism. It makes government decision-making better informed. It listens to bodies that are often in a unique position to provide feedback. The fears of stifling the not-for-profit sector are not unrealistic concerns. The Howard Government, for example, had contracts for funding with organisations from the community sector

that regularly and routinely included gag clauses. It also reserved the right to censor public statements before they were released. This policy was overturned after the 2007 election by the incoming Labor Government. It was followed by the 2013 legislation, to which I have referred. That in turn was followed by the Not-for-profit Sector Freedom to Advocate Act 2013 in South Australia.

The Newman Government in Queensland imposed gag laws on community legal centres and subsequently proposed legislation to that effect. This was done in conjunction with funding cuts. The Federal Government has also attempted to use tax policy with the revocation of charitable status to silence some NGOs. It pursued proceedings concerning organisations such as AidWatch and the Hunger Project. Some commentators perceived an agenda to control and silence civil society. These concerns have not been absent from New South Wales. I note that while this bill deals, as it should, with the not-for-profit sector generally, much of the recent debate surrounds community legal centres and legal assistance services.

In 2012 in this State the Government foreshadowed changes that many saw as replicating the Queensland example, and it was described precisely as that. Anna Cody, then chair of Community Legal Centres New South Wales, expressed concern at this possibility and pointed out that a government should be able to manage criticism. The proposed New South Wales Legal Assistance Services funding principles caused great concern. At a time of funding cuts and defunding of services, the gag clause is an even greater threat. As Federal funding cuts are potentially posing an existential threat to community legal centres [CLCs], there is presently an even greater pressure for compliance on the part of CLCs.

These issues are particularly topical now, because recent reports suggest that the Federal Government is again pushing for provisions on funding agreements that prevent CLCs from advocacy and lobbying and contacting politicians. The agreements are proposed to be joint State and Federal. That means, if these reports are correct, that the States, including this State, will be signing up to a gag clause. A strong, innovative, independent not-for-profit sector is essential to getting government policy right and building a fairer community. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Daryl Maguire and set down as an order of the day for a future day.**

**Pursuant to the sessional order general business notices of motions (general notices) proceeded with.**

#### **DEATH OF DR WILLIAM CHIU**

**Mr DARYL MAGUIRE** (Wagga Wagga—Parliamentary Secretary) [10.21 a.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges with sadness the death of *honoris causa* Dr William Chiu, JP, former Chairman of Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China, and Honorary Life Member of New South Wales Parliament Asia-Pacific Friendship Group.
- (2) Notes Dr Chiu's outstanding contribution to Australia, particularly New South Wales, and the underprivileged people of China through his philanthropy and humanitarian work.
- (3) Joins with the Australian Chinese community in extending its deepest sympathy and condolences to Dr Chiu's wife and family and mourning the loss of a great friend to the Parliament and the people of New South Wales.

I move this motion with great sadness. The motion relates to the loss of a dear and wonderful friend to Australia, to New South Wales and to the Parliament. He was a friend of many members on both sides of this House. Dr William Chiu was a wonderful human being, a fantastic person with a generous heart. Throughout his lifetime he gave to many organisations and he worked tirelessly for the peaceful reunification of China. In 2000, Dr Chiu formed the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China and remained chairman until December 2014. He championed that cause. He hosted functions in Australia and, indeed, around the world for world peace. He invited people such as United States of America former President Bill Clinton to speak and he persuaded former prime ministers Bob Hawke and Malcolm Fraser to sponsor the conference in Australia.

Dr Chiu sponsored many events to promote peace, including functions in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, about Tibetan Buddhism and other religions. Dr Chiu was born in Malaysia and educated in Australia and New Zealand. He was a very successful man and was very involved in universities

and education. He had a passion to encourage learning, and in that respect he gave to a number of universities around the State. He was given the title Doctor Honoris Causa of Letters by the University of Western Sydney, but that was not the only university he was involved with. He sponsored traditional Chinese medicine cancer research at the University of Sydney and donated funds towards that research. He sponsored the University of Sydney Business School Australia Business Network and the Chinese Philosophy Centre at the University of New South Wales and he was involved with the University of Western Sydney.

William Chiu promoted and fundraised for the less fortunate in places such as Tibet, Sichuan, Yunnan, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Guangdong, Gansu, Hunan, Fujian, Qinghai and Guizhou. I attended with Dr Chiu the program in Qinghai, where procedures were performed to remove cataracts from the eyes of blind people. It was an event that I will never forget. When the entourage of Chinese and Australian doctors, ophthalmologists and others arrived at Qinghai some 200 people had been booked in for cataract surgery. In fact, 600 people turned up for surgery, and by the time we left they had all been treated through the generosity of the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China's fundraising. I note that the New South Wales Parliament, through former Premier Barry O'Farrell, contributed \$10,000 to that program.

A gentleman came up to William Chiu and our group and presented us with beautiful scarves. He held out his left hand and said, "I can see. Yesterday I was blind but I can see the fingers on my hand. Thank you." I will never forget that experience. That demonstrated to me the value of the Dr Chiu's work and leadership. Dr Chiu was well regarded by the Chinese leadership. He mixed with many people, including prime ministers and presidents. Recently he met with President Xi, along with other leaders of the Chinese and world community. He was regarded very highly by all. I have never heard a bad word said about William Chiu.

On Sunday I attended a memorial service, which was very well attended by the Australian Chinese community. Dr Chiu's brother and sister attended and they related some terrific memories. Warm and wonderful words were said about the contribution that this man had made during his life. Dr Chiu was not an old man. He was born in 1947 and passed away, sadly, on 25 May 2015. A funeral service was held in Beijing on 1 June 2015 at the Babaoshan Cemetery, East Hall, Beijing—which was a very fitting place for it to be held.

I spoke at the memorial function on behalf of the New South Wales Parliament Asia-Pacific Friendship Group. I move this motion today to give other members of the group and friends of William Chiu the opportunity to make some remarks about a man who will not be forgotten. He was short in stature but a giant on the Australian, Chinese and world scene. He was a giant of a man who gave and gave. He will be missed. This debate affords members the opportunity to reflect on their involvement and connection with Dr Chiu.

**Ms SONIA HORNER** (Wallsend) [10.28 a.m.]: It was with great sadness that I learnt of the passing of Dr William Chiu in Beijing on Wednesday 25 May this year. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga and the chair of the New South Wales Parliament Asia-Pacific Friendship Group for bringing this motion to the attention of the House and providing to members the opportunity to contribute to debate on the motion. Mr Chiu was a man accomplished in many fields, an advocate for peace and a great representative of the leadership of the Chinese community. Reading through Dr Chiu's résumé, one feels a mix of bewilderment and admiration: How could any one man get so far and achieve so much not only for his community but also for China, Malaysia and Australia.

I first came to know Dr William Chiu when I joined the Asia-Pacific Friendship Group in 2007. My Government colleagues and I had a delightful relationship with Dr Chiu. He was a very clever man. He knew that he needed to make friends, he wanted to make friends with everyone and certainly he made sure he did that. We all had the benefit of spending some time and sharing meals with Dr Chiu. Like my colleague the member for Wagga Wagga and Parliamentary Secretary I had some involvement with the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China [ACPPRC] and went to many of its dinners. Dr Chiu was a founding chair of that organisation whose aims are peace, prosperity and love across the nations, which is a wonderful quest. I cannot imagine a more worthy goal or a greater standard-bearer of the ACPPRC than Dr Chiu. I wish the ACPPRC all the best in the future. The new leader has big shoes to fill.

Dr Chiu's achievements were manifold. Like the member for Wagga Wagga, I will tell the House a little about his background. He was born in Malaysia. He was educated in Australia and New Zealand and earned two masters degrees in both commerce and chemistry—fields in which he was both esteemed and acknowledged. He was granted an honorary doctorate of letters from the University of Western Sydney, which I learned only today, and he also was a philanthropist, which I particularly admire and respect. His philanthropy was well known in the Chinese and Australian communities.

I do not want to take up too much of the time of the House because I know many members wish to speak. I will confine my remarks to saying that, like the member for Wagga Wagga, one of the relationships I built up with Dr William Chiu was through my attendance at a few of the Asia-Pacific Friendship Group excursions, such as for Eyes on China. My first visit was to Inner Mongolia, which was a real experience. Like the member for Wagga Wagga I was overwhelmed by the gratitude that the Chinese and Inner Mongolian communities, particularly in Hohhot, showed for our wonderful Australian doctors who travelled there and for so much money that we were able to donate to help the province. I had never previously seen so many people in old pyjamas walking out with smiles on their faces to express gratitude not only to Dr Chiu but also to all the wonderful doctors.

I could not buy Vegemite anywhere in Hohhot, which was one of my worries for a very brief moment, but the excursion was a wonderful experience. I later attended a few other excursions. In the future, I would like to have that opportunity again. My experience reinforced the fact that our doctors work extremely hard. It was extremely philanthropic of our doctors, nurses and staff to give up so much time to help people in China. Although I was invited to watch the surgery and did so for a short time, I left after a while because it made me feel sick. I do not have the stomach for it, but I admire the doctors and nurses who do. It was all done with minimal anaesthetic and maximum gratitude.

In conclusion I make the point that our community will miss Dr Chiu. I certainly will miss Dr Chiu for his friendship, his philanthropy and his help, during the term of this Government, in fostering our relationships with all the different provinces in China. That is probably the most important message we received from William—that it is about being friends. We can do good things together when we try and we can achieve peace and prosperity for both countries. Vale, Mr William Chiu—a man whose life was too short, but it was a life in which much was achieved.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN** (Willoughby—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) [10.34 a.m.]: It is with deep sadness that I acknowledge the life of William Chiu, who was a very close friend to many members of this House on all sides of the aisle. William was a man of deep conviction. He saw his role in public affairs and public life in New South Wales as deepening the friendship between Australia and China. But on a very personal level, it was not just about ticking boxes for William. It was really about making sure that he got to know people on a one-on-one basis and really make a difference. I believe he made a huge contribution by allowing us to appreciate and understand the deep connection between Australia and China as two neighbours in the same part of the world as well as through the values we share as Chinese and Australian communities.

The charity work William did, including through Eyes on China, simply was outstanding. William was a man of great conviction, great compassion and a man who looked at the bigger picture and appreciated that Australia and China would both be strengthened by deepening relationships on a human level between people in our respective provinces and States. He made a difference to public life. I know that William's health was failing him in the last few years of his life, but he did not let that hold him back. Whether it was organising functions for worthwhile causes or acknowledging the deep and strong bilateral relations we share with China, William was always on the go and always doing things to improve community life in New South Wales while maintaining strong relations and strong values.

I express my disappointment that I was unable to attend his memorial service on Sunday. I appreciate the strong support shown for his contribution to public life in New South Wales. He was a man of great conviction, great passion and great ability. He was a man who appreciated that we always must be vigilant. We cannot assume that things are going well or take friends for granted. He continued to work hard, year in and year out, and he made a difference. All members come to this House wanting to make a difference in whichever area they wish to pursue. I say with great admiration and affection that William Chiu made a difference by building strong relations between New South Wales and China and by allowing us to appreciate the values we share on a cultural level in addition to the significant trade and economic values and relationships we have.

I express my deep condolences on William's passing. We will miss him terribly on a professional and personal level. I thank the Asia-Pacific Friendship Group for formalising our respect for William through this motion in the Parliament. I think it is absolutely appropriate to recognise a man for his contribution. I express my sincere condolences to his family.

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD** (Myall Lakes) [10.38 a.m.]: As President of the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club, I wish to make a contribution to the discussion of this condolence motion.

Mr Deputy-Speaker, I am aware that you are the immediate past President of the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club. The Lions Club played an important role in William Chiu's life. William was a phenomenal supporter of Lions and the work of Lions across the world. William Chiu was a great friend of the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club and he was an honorary member of our club. When I first met William he was excited at the prospect of becoming an honorary member—the first time that that had been extended to someone from outside Parliament.

I remember William's first attendance at a meeting in 2012 at which we had a great character, the former member for Murray-Darling, John Williams, who was the Lion tamer and sergeant. On that day John Williams decided that everybody would be fined for various reasons, and William Chiu was no different from any other member of the Lions: he would be found out for something, and he would be fined! John Williams decided that the fine for the day would be \$50. William Chiu was certainly fined, as were the rest of us. It did not have a big impact on William Chiu but it did have an impact on other members at the meeting.

William Chiu attended all of our Lions Club charity functions. He was recognised by Barry Palmer as a Melville Jones recipient. Melville Jones was the founder of Lions International, and it is the highest award that one can attain in the Lions Club movement. William attended all our charity functions to raise money. For example, in 2012 we raised funds for the Sydney Eye Hospital. The number one cause of Lions International is to cure blindness around the world. That year we raised \$134,000 to buy an important piece of equipment for Sydney Eye Hospital, which is also the eye bank for New South Wales. And William Chiu was part of that. The second charity that year was the George Institute for Global Health—

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** No relation.

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD:** No. It is no relation to the Deputy-Speaker. The institute works with the University of Sydney, and runs a program with Lions for people with blindness. I can remember that night. William Chiu was enjoying a glass of red when he said he would pay \$25,000 if the then Attorney General, Greg Smith—a great Lion himself—would sing three songs. Greg Smith sang those three songs with passion, and it was much appreciated by William Chiu. He grabbed me and said in his wonderful way how much he loved Greg Smith and how Greg could sing with passion. Greg sang an Elvis Presley song and he also sang two Frank Sinatra songs, *New York, New York*, and *I Did it My Way*. In the second year we raised money for the Barry Palmer Foundation, Follow Your Dream. Once again William Chiu paid a significant amount of money for the then Attorney General, Greg Smith, to sing his songs. It was a great night, as were all the charity functions. The death of William Chiu is a great loss not only for the New South Wales Parliament but also for New South Wales, Australia and the world. Vale, William Chiu.

**Dr GEOFF LEE** (Parramatta—Parliamentary Secretary) [10.42 a.m.]: Today I pay tribute to Dr William Chiu. I was deeply saddened by the news of Dr William Chiu's recent passing, and send my heartfelt condolences to his wife and family. Dr Chiu leaves a remarkable legacy. I am honoured to have known him for just over four years. Dr Chiu was an internationally successful businessman and entrepreneur, but his real legacy is being remembered as a great humanitarian and philanthropist. Dr Chiu will be remembered for his work and leadership in economic and cultural development between Australia and China. Notably, Dr Chiu was able to transcend politics, breach the gaps and work with either side in the interests of Australia and China. Dr Chiu will be remembered for his generous philanthropic contributions, such as his contributions to the University of Western Sydney.

I was pleased to attend the university when Dr Chiu made a donation to enable students to better study cultural relations between Australia and China and to better understand China and its diversity and how Australia and New South Wales in particular can work together with China. He was known for his charity, warmth and friendship, thus fostering distinguished service in Australian and Chinese relations. I know of no other person who made such a lifelong commitment and was dedicated to the peaceful reunification of China. His leadership of the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China is well known. For me, his signature initiative was the Eyes on China project, which has helped more than 5,000 people in China regain their sight—those who need help, those living in remote parts of China who do not have access to the necessary surgery to remove their cataracts. As Dr Chiu's legacy, that program, which has already changed the lives of more than 5,000 people, will continue.

Dr Chiu was instrumental in raising money for disaster relief not only in Australia but also overseas. In 2014 I was honoured to be present at the University of Western Sydney for his conferral of an honorary doctorate of letters, thus recognising his great work, entrepreneurship and philanthropy, and his work in the



community. As a leader in the Chinese community he was recognised as someone who truly advanced the bonds between Australia and China. No Chinese New Year will ever be the same. Many members of his House attended Chinese New Year celebrations, and one person who was always present was Dr Chiu. He was always saying kind words and greeting everyone. He always had the time to talk to us. We will miss Dr Chiu. I pay tribute to Dr Chiu for his generosity not only to the people of New South Wales but also to people throughout Australia and China. William leaves an indelible mark on our society and will be sorely missed. Rest in peace, Dr Chiu.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO** (Ryde—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) [10.46 a.m.]: In April 2014 Dr William Chiu was awarded a doctorate of letters *honoris causa* by the University of Western Sydney in recognition of his work to foster China-Australia relations, his significant contributions to Australian public life and his commitment to Western Sydney. He was a long-serving President of the Australian Council for the Promotion of the Peaceful Reunification of China [ACPPRC] and chairman of the Oceanic Council for the Promotion of the Peaceful Reunification of China. I was present when Dr Chiu was awarded his honorary doctorate. It was an amazing occasion. Community leaders from across the board gathered to respect a man who made such a great contribution to our way of life.

The ACPPRC was established in 2000; Sydney and New South Wales were very different then. New South Wales was diverse in 2000 but it is extraordinarily more diverse now. Back in 2000 we needed leaders such as Dr Chiu to create organisations such as the ACPPRC to provide a framework, a guideline, to move forward and to ensure that we live in the harmonious society that we enjoy in New South Wales today. Dr Chiu was seen as an outstanding leader in the broader community but he was definitely an outstanding leader in the Chinese Australian community. When I was first elected to Parliament in 2008 the then member for Ku-ring-gai, Barry O'Farrell, said to me, "There are a number of people who you need to speak to in the Chinese community"—I had a large Chinese constituency in Ryde—"and William Chiu is one of them."

I remember the first time I went to see William Chiu. He was very wise in his counsel, a gentle soul and very caring, and he provided solid advice in relation to some of the issues that existed in community affairs. Subsequently when I became Minister for multiculturalism in 2011 Dr Chiu was one of the first people from whom I sought counsel in the Chinese community. Again, I always listened carefully to his advice. He had a lot of experience under his belt and he was highly respected.

Dr Chiu has left his mark on this country and, no doubt, on China. Not many people can boast about leaving their mark. Dr Chiu's legacy was bringing people together. As the member for Parramatta said, when we reflect on Chinese New Year celebrations we will realise that part of the success of those celebrations is because of the human capital that Dr William Chiu invested in relationships. I will miss Dr Chiu as a friend and as a senior figure in the Chinese Australian community, particularly in Sydney. I offer my sincere condolences to the members of his family who know that he has left a positive mark in New South Wales. Vale, Dr Chiu.

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA** (Davidson—Parliamentary Secretary) [10.50 a.m.], by leave: Dr William Chiu was a highly respected man in the Australian Chinese community and the wider Australian society for his huge contribution to China-Australia relations and community causes over many decades. He was a wonderful role model for members of the Chinese community in Australia, in particular. He was a successful businessman, a leader, an organiser and a generous man of vision who inspired others.

Dr Chiu was a remarkable global citizen. He was born in Malaysia and was educated in Australia and New Zealand. He achieved two masters degrees, in chemistry and commerce, and received an honorary doctorate of letters from the University of Western Sydney. Dr Chiu was the convenor, chairman, sponsor or patron of many community service organisations in New South Wales, particularly those dedicated to promoting friendly relations between Australia and China.

As acknowledged at his memorial service last Sunday in Sydney Town Hall, Dr William Chiu was a staunch supporter and promoter of world peace and China's peaceful reunification. He was a noted philanthropist, a social activist, a supporter of charities and a successful entrepreneur. He was an active and persistent promoter of the friendly relationship between Australia and China. He was a distinguished leader of the overseas Chinese community. William was also a strong advocate for Chinese culture and for cultural and educational exchanges between Australia and China.

William was a modest and softly spoken man but had firm determination with a voice that was heard at the highest levels. His big heart was matched with big dreams, including the restoration of the eyesight of

thousands of China's poor through the Eyes on China program, which he drove for over a decade. Like many parliamentary colleagues, I attended numerous fundraising dinners in aid of this worthy cause. I was also privileged to attend last year's Eyes on China program in Guizhou along with the Hon. Carmel Tebbutt. We witnessed the profound impact of the work William led under the auspices of the Australian Council for the Promotion of the Peaceful Reunification of China. In so doing, he received support from various medical, business and community groups such as Lions International as well as this Parliament's Asia-Pacific Friendship Group, as others have attested.

William's care, compassion and love for his fellow human beings was likewise evident in his personal philanthropy and his work to raise money for national disaster relief, both in China and Australia. In so doing, he promoted cultural understanding and goodwill within our multicultural communities. Like others I offer my condolences to William's family and friends. I express my appreciation for his warm friendship and community service and I remember his contribution as an inspiring example for others to follow in the future. Xie xie, William.

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** I am proud that Dr William Chiu was a close friend and I was saddened to hear of his passing. In this debate we have heard about what this single human being achieved in such a short time. We have heard about his generosity. Bill was not only a great friend but also a true ambassador and an inspiration in his efforts to foster China-Australia relations. I am a former president of the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club and the member for Myall Lakes is the current president. He spoke of what Dr William Chiu has meant to the club as he was its first honorary member. William's love of the Lions ethics of serving was reflected in his life. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for moving this motion.

**Mr DARYL MAGUIRE** (Wagga Wagga—Parliamentary Secretary) [10.55 a.m.], in reply: Thank you Mr Deputy-Speaker for your kind words about the late Dr William Chiu. I also acknowledge the contributions made by the members representing the electorates of Wallsend, Willoughby, Myall Lakes, Parramatta, Ryde and Davidson. The member for Wallsend said Dr Chiu was a clever man and indeed he was. She said that we can do good together and those sentiments are fitting. Dr Chiu did not buy friendship; he earned it. The member for Willoughby spoke about William's failing health in his later years. Indeed, William led the last Australian Council for the Promotion of the Peaceful Reunification of China [ACPPRC] delegation to Beijing in 2014, although he was in a wheelchair.

As we have heard, William was very involved in Lions Clubs Australia and he was a recipient of a Melvin Jones Fellowship. As the member for Parramatta said, the University of Western Sydney played an important part in William's life. The member for Ryde said William was a gentle soul who provided good advice, and we can all attest to that. The member for Davidson referred to William as an entrepreneur, which is true as William was a successful businessman. Some of his interests included cattle breeding and importation into China long before others. He was also the owner and operator of the cable car at the Great Wall of Beijing, amongst many other business interests he pursued, including investing in property. These pursuits gave him the ability to donate money to less fortunate people and organisations.

The booklet handed out at William's funeral service contained letters from around the world including from organisations such as Lions Club International, the University of Sydney, the University of Western Sydney, Multicultural NSW, the Business Council of Australia and the Chinese Youth League of Australia Inc. There were also letters from individuals including at the Consulate of the People's Republic of China and the embassy in Sweden. These letters make it clear that William Chiu was held in the highest regard by people right across the world. We will all miss William Chiu and it is clear that members have spoken about him from the heart. Members have spoken about their involvement with Dr Chiu and said that William had friends from all walks of life—presidents, former presidents, Prime Ministers, the International President of Lions Clubs and so on.

William Chiu frequently visited Beijing where his advice was sought. He represented the Australian people in Beijing on committees that advised the Government on how to meet the challenges of this part of the world. In 2010, he received the Quong Tart Lifetime Achievement in Community Service Award. In 2014 the University of Western Sydney conferred on him a Doctor of Letters. In 2013 he was made an Ambassador of Goodwill by Lions Club International. In 2014 he was awarded a Melvin Jones Fellowship in Toronto, Canada. Also in 2014 he received a Certificate of Honour for long-term service to the Chinese community from the Chinese Government. He was also an honorary life member of the New South Wales Parliament Asia-Pacific Friendship Group. They are just a few of the titles given to Dr William Chiu.

As I said, William Chiu did not buy friendship or respect; he earned it. He was a great man and he will be missed by everyone in this place and by the Australian-Chinese community that he led so well. He was a small man in stature, but a giant on the Australian and world scene. We will miss William Chiu. We send our condolences and respect to his family and friends. Vale William Chiu.

**Question—That the motion be agreed—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion agreed to.**

**Pursuant to resolution government business proceeded with.**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL 2015**

### **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2015**

### **APPROPRIATION (BUDGET VARIATIONS) BILL 2015**

#### **Second Reading**

**Debate resumed from 23 June 2015.**

**Mr LUKE FOLEY** (Auburn—Leader of the Opposition) [11.01 a.m.]: This year's State budget undermines the economic foundation of New South Wales. It is a budget built on sand, not stone. Instead of putting the State's finances on a more sustainable footing, the budget increasingly makes us vulnerable to the volatility of Sydney's property market. Because of its obsession with selling off profitable State-owned corporations, the Government is now more reliant than ever on revenues from property taxes, particularly stamp duty. When the Sydney housing boom ends, as it will, and the surge of stamp duty dissipates, what will our State's budgetary position look like?

The Government is so focused on the quick fix that it no longer sees the need for prudent economic management. It claims that \$20 billion will be raised from the privatisation of the State's electricity transmission and distribution networks. We will see. However, it is not sound management of the State's finances to spend every last cent of the proceeds on capital works with no allocation whatsoever for the substantial operational expenses that will be incurred when these projects come to fruition. Operational expenses, like paying the staff who will work in the new assets, cannot be imagined away. One does not need to be an opponent of privatisation to understand that prudence dictates that some allowance should be made for ongoing operational expenses that will need to be met. Indeed, this is the most economically rational of points to make.

This budget contains no plan to deal with the \$25 billion of cuts that have been inflicted on our schools and hospitals by the Commonwealth Government. In fact, 40 per cent of the New South Wales budget comes from Commonwealth payments. As Tony Abbott's cuts have proved, this imbalance has devastating consequences. The solution is a new pact with the Commonwealth Government on tax revenue. A fair share of the tax paid by the citizens of New South Wales should be returned to fund schools, hospitals and other infrastructure we use. There must be an ironclad agreement so that no Commonwealth Government can refuse to meet its obligations to health and education. On 13 May, the day after the Commonwealth budget reaffirmed \$25 billion of cuts to the funding of our State schools and hospitals, the Premier welcomed that budget on the floor of this House. He said of the budget:

It will provide a great benefit to New South Wales.

No, it will not. A sustainable and predictable share of income tax and the GST must be delivered to New South Wales. The Government likes to talk about making New South Wales number one again, but I have some sobering truths to share.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition will be heard in silence. I call the member for Kiama to order for the first time. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** When the Government was elected there were 187,000 people unemployed in New South Wales. That number has surged to 225,000 people today. One in eight young people looking for work cannot find a job. That figure is one in six across regional areas, and in many areas it is higher still. In

Richmond and the Tweed, youth unemployment stands at 17.5 per cent. In Orana in the Far West, it is 17 per cent, and in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie it is 18.1 per cent. We should not accept this. The regions of New South Wales are crucial to our economy. Many regions are undergoing difficult transitions because of our increasingly global and interconnected economies. Regions like the Illawarra and the Hunter have been making a fundamental transition for the past 25 years. Just last week the Illawarra was hit hard by speculation that the steel industry could cease. I make it clear that under a Labor Government regions like the Illawarra will never face the difficulties of economic transition alone.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Kiama will come to order. Members will come to order. Government members will come to order. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** A State Labor Government will always guarantee a leadership role. A Labor Government will always extend a helping hand. We have done it before and we will do it again. We will focus on expanding business opportunity, delivering crucial infrastructure and investing in people. Rural and regional areas are important to Labor—they always have been—and it is time this Government gave them the attention they deserve.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will be removed from the Chamber if they continue to interject during the Leader of the Opposition's address. The House will come to order.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** Unlike the ideologues opposite, I do not believe that the private sector always does things better than the public sector; that private is always good and public is always bad. Unlike the ideologues to our left, I do not believe that public is always good and private is always bad. For me, what matters is what works. I meant what I said on the day I was elected the Leader of the Labor Party in New South Wales: I will champion an enterprising private sector and an essential public sector in this State. The responsibility of government is to ensure that services are delivered. The private and the not-for-profit sectors should play a significant role in the delivery of our public services. Let me be clear: When it comes to the delivery of our public services, the priority must always be delivering those services in the interests of their users.

The interests of the users of our public services must come first. The public interest must prevail over special interests. That is why Labor supports the determination of the Australian Energy Regulator to deliver lower prices to this State's electricity consumers. Electricity is a cost to every business. A cut in power prices is a boost to business that makes our entire economy more competitive. Labor wants to save small businesses up to \$528 on their yearly power bills. Labor wants to see each and every household in New South Wales save up to \$313 on their annual power bills. This Government does not. It will be in court next week, taking legal action to keep everyone's electricity prices high.

This Government wants high electricity prices for a quick sale, and it is prepared to hurt every household to achieve that. The Government is effectively seeking to impose an electricity tax—a tax on all of the people of New South Wales—just to fatten the pig for market day, just to achieve a higher price for our electricity assets. There is no excuse for this. The Government should withdraw its legal challenge and let the price cuts be delivered. If we look around, we see the same pattern of this Government supporting higher prices at the public's expense with no gain in productivity.

Consider our ports. I see no compelling need for the State to own ports in 2015, but I do see a compelling need to ensure the public interest is protected by properly regulating what a private monopoly can get up to. In a trading economy like ours, ports are crucial. The Government privatised the ports in what it claimed was a textbook transaction. Selling a monopoly without regulating in the public interest is not economic reform. It is a reckless action, the consequences of which are now clear: massive increases in charges. At the Port of Newcastle charges are up 60 per cent to \$75,000 a vessel. These cost increases damage our State's competitiveness.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure will come to order.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** But we should not be surprised. It is the Government members who are the ideologues here. When the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission concluded that, if Macquarie Generation was sold to AGL, consumers would pay more for electricity, receive lower quality service and be offered less choice, what did the Government do? It just proceeded with that sale. Selling assets is not reform unless it raises productivity and enhances competitiveness. Government should enhance the welfare of our

community and boost the income of households. This Government does the opposite—it imposes costs on businesses and families. It hinders our competitiveness and hobbles our economic future. The Premier seems to think that the role of Government is simply to get the next deal done, regardless of the impact this has on the public of New South Wales. From ports to electricity, at each turn the Government is working against the public interest. The Premier is a deal-maker, not an economic reformer.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Again I ask the House to come to order. Government members will come to order. I call the member for Baulkham Hills to order for the first time. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** The time has come for new thinking about the delivery of our public services. Last week I travelled to India. Prime Minister Modi has set a hugely ambitious goal of training 500 million Indians by 2022. Education services are a significant export earner for us.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I call the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to order for the first time. Opposition members are not helping the Leader of the Opposition by arguing across the table. Neither side is helping. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** India is New South Wales third-largest source of international students.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Baulkham Hills to order for the second time.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** India is turning to the world to help them meet their aim of upskilling half a billion people. Last week I met with the Chief Minister of Prime Minister Modi's home State of Gujarat, Mrs Patel, and several of her ministers.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to order for the second time.

**Ms Noreen Hay:** Throw him out.

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

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** They expressed to me their desire to increase collaboration in the area of education and training. The modern Indian project to lift a billion people out of poverty is truly monumental. There is an opportunity for TAFE NSW to be part of it, providing training to hundreds of thousands—potentially millions—of Indians over coming years. TAFE has put a toe in the water, but should now dramatically increase its activities offshore in India and other places. Exporting its training expertise provides TAFE with the ability to earn a return that can then be invested in rebuilding the TAFE system for the people of New South Wales.

We live in a period of dramatic change. Asia is driving economic growth, and its growing middle classes expect access to high-quality services. This is the Asian century. New South Wales should be perfectly positioned to take advantage of the Asian century. The Productivity Commission has an inquiry underway into promoting the export of services. What did the Baird Government do about the growth prospects of our State's largest industries? It did nothing. It did not even bother to lodge a submission to the Productivity Commission. Instead it has assaulted our skills and training system. There are 2,600 fewer staff in TAFE today than there were in 2011 and there are 80,000 fewer students enrolled in TAFE today than there were in 2012 because this Government does not believe in TAFE.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The noise in the House is coming from Opposition members at the moment. They are not assisting the Leader of the Opposition at all.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** This Government is making it even harder for people to retrain and get new skills, and it is not only the young. With an ageing population, governments have an obligation to give people a chance to find a new career. But it now costs \$8,190 a year for an older worker to retrain as an air-conditioning mechanic. This is not acceptable. We should be equipping people young and old with the skills to respond to a dynamic global economy full of promise. People do not need increasing fees and a failing computer system; they need a chance to better themselves. The thousands being impacted by the TAFE crisis are not statistics; they are real people hoping to create a better life for themselves and for their families. The Government has forgotten the training system was created to train people. The Government has forgotten that the education system is about our future.

Any new thinking on the delivery of public services should include public housing. In 1912 Jim McGowen, Labor's first Premier, established the Housing Board of New South Wales. Public housing was great Labor reform, and thousands of people rely on it for one of life's essentials: a place to call home. But today the public housing system needs reform. The Auditor-General has told us that public housing is increasingly not fit for purpose and that current arrangements are not meeting contemporary demands. New South Wales currently has 140,000 social housing dwellings. Of these, 111,000 have the New South Wales Government as landlord, while not-for-profit community housing associations act as landlords for the other 29,000.

These associations include organisations such as Compass Housing Services, Evolve Housing, Bridge Housing and St George Community Housing, which have proven records as providers of affordable housing. We should build on their success and transfer more of the Government stock to the community housing sector. The transfer should include titles to the properties to empower the associations with the leverage they need to fund the construction of new and additional affordable housing stock. As a first step, 20,000 existing public housing dwellings should be transferred from the Government to community housing associations. The associations are already there, keen to do more. Let us give them the chance to succeed.

Existing tenants, the users of social housing, will benefit because the associations are closer to them and avoid the characteristics of old-style monolithic bureaucracies. This is an area of public policy where I believe the not-for-profit sector will do better than the State. Over time, all of the State's public housing should be transferred to not-for-profit community housing associations. They are more responsive and they are best placed to lift the quality and quantity of social housing stock. The provision of social housing is central to Government's responsibility to its community. It delivers dignity for all. The opportunity to do better exists now.

Governments must plan for the future. The digital age is upon us. The digital age is a disruptive one, an age where connectivity and commerce will increasingly trump command and control. For decades this has been the case with knowledge. It is now the case for goods and services. We must embrace this change, not resist it. In New South Wales, as elsewhere, people are finding new ways to share goods and services. People can now easily buy, sell or share everything from books to bedsits. This is not a new concept, just a digital version of a good friend or garage sale. But smart technology has undeniably changed the nature and extent of this relationship. The sharing economy is creating jobs, driving innovation, increasing productivity and reducing waste. It continues to change our State, but the State has not kept pace with this change. Embracing the sharing economy is part of my vision for our State's economic future. There is huge economic potential here.

It is time for Government to engage with this collaborative economy by creating a framework for its use, and we should start with ridesharing. A year ago the Treasurer, the then Minister for Transport, said that the Government was considering how these new services could be addressed. A year ago the Government announced it would take action, but nothing happened. The time for talk is over. Ridesharing has already been regulated in more than 24 jurisdictions around the world, and it is time for New South Wales to join that list. I will introduce a private member's bill this year to regulate ridesharing in New South Wales. People are voting with their feet. Hundreds of thousands of people used Uber last year.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Keira is not helping his side.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** The public should be free to choose the services they want without fear of retribution from Government. Once again, Labor's starting point is clear: The public interest comes first. The Parliament should regulate to protect consumers and drivers by putting in place some basic standards. We should have a race to the top, not to the bottom when it comes to customer standards and, indeed, driver pay. We must find ways to encourage and facilitate the sharing economy. It makes economic and environmental sense by enlisting a whole suite of assets that otherwise lay idle. On this issue, like many others, this Government is behind the times.

One of the most significant challenges we face is the mismatch between the location of people and jobs. It is an issue for regions such as the Illawarra and Central Coast, which have tens of thousands of people commuting to Sydney every day. Forcing people to travel long distances to work and home again is a drain on productivity and comes at a cost to public health, communities and the environment. Government should focus on creating jobs where people live. The issue is acute in Western Sydney. Creating several hundred thousand new jobs in Western Sydney over the next 25 years is perhaps the single most important thing we can do to help our State's productivity and sustainability. There is a labour market gap in Western Sydney of approximately 200,000 jobs.

As the region's total population grows to nearly three million in 2031, this gap will increase. The Centre for Western Sydney estimates there are 70 local jobs per 100 Western Sydney workers. Fewer local jobs mean longer commute times, more cars, more congestion and a lower quality of life. The fact is that the job gap in Western Sydney is not just about the number of jobs; it is about the access by workers in Western Sydney to those jobs. Child care, adequate public transport and a raft of other social support services are needed to spread the State's surplus equitably.

Western Sydney has been closing the gap on Greater Sydney, but disparity at the top remains—32 per cent of Greater Sydney households earn more than \$2,000 a week. Only 27 per cent of Western Sydney households make that figure. More than double the number of households in Greater Sydney earn more than \$5,000 a week than do households in Western Sydney, and those figures hide pockets of more serious disadvantage in accessing Greater Sydney's prosperity. In 2011 the labour force participation rate in Greater Sydney was 61.7 per cent; in Bankstown it was 52.9 per cent; in Auburn it was 53.4 per cent; and, in Fairfield, it was just 50.8 per cent.

The health of Western Sydney also shows the effects of poor access to essential preventative services. Campbelltown's rate of high body mass related hospitalisations exceeds the State average by 41 per cent. The Hawkesbury has a 29 per cent higher rate of alcohol-related hospitalisations than the State average. Blacktown has a 40 per cent higher incidence of smoking-related hospitalisations. Linking the State's fastest-growing population to the opportunities on its doorstep will require more than new roads. In this century, connectivity and communication are the keys to economic success. That is why Labor believes the Western Sydney Airport will be the single most important jobs generator in the west. Labor has championed the Western Sydney Airport and will continue to do so.

But building an airport is about more than laying a runway. The new airport should not be a spill over for Mascot. It should be Australia's finest; a place that connects Western Sydney with the world. Labor's vision for the new airport combines commercial and industrial land with the new service industries of this century. Universities and TAFEs should be provided with space near the airport to underpin employment in training, research and development. The people of Western Sydney should have access to jobs on their doorstep in everything from retail to biotech research. The Western Sydney Airport must have a rail connection. The Federal Government must ensure that the airport is serviced by rail and the Government of New South Wales must fight for this.

Western Sydney airport—like Adelaide, Darwin and Cairns airports—should not be artificially hindered by the restrictions imposed by bilateral air services agreements or Australia's four designated gateway airports. It should enjoy exemptions from these restrictions to stimulate its growth. Giving it the freedom to grow will make it more attractive to international airlines and support it quickly becoming a thriving airport and major job generator. Turning airlines away because of the fine print in restrictive air services agreements is an unacceptable threat to Western Sydney's economic future. Our State is Australia's most attractive and important tourism destination. International visitors spend \$7 billion in our State each year. Giving Western Sydney's airport the right to grow will benefit all of New South Wales.

The future of Bankstown airport also needs to be considered. In future decades, as the new Western Sydney airport grows and becomes the flourishing aviation centre that Western Sydney deserves, airspace requirements will mean that the operation of Bankstown airport will become increasingly problematic. Planning and consultation around developing it as an employment centre need to be initiated now. Part of this process will involve resolving where Bankstown's air traffic will go. Some of it, of course, can be relocated to the new airport. The Bankstown site is situated between the M5 and the Hume Highway. With the right planning, investment and infrastructure it can be a major employment zone for jobs of the future in south-western Sydney. Our global economic corridor cannot be limited to Sydney's north and east.

We must stretch the global arc to Sydney's south and west. It is easy to imagine Bankstown as the next Macquarie Park or Norwest Business Park, full of tens of thousands of high-wage jobs and providing employment opportunities for local people in Sydney's south and west. There is a better way for New South Wales. Labor understands that government should defend the public interest against vested interests. Labor understands that health and education are not potential budget savings but essential public services. Labor has new ideas for the delivery of our public services. Labor has a plan to spread prosperity beyond Sydney's CBD to the regions, towns and suburbs of this State. Labor is excited by the opportunities of the sharing economy and engaged with this Asian century. Labor is focused on the future and on a sustainable economy able to deliver opportunity for all.

**Question—That these bills be now read a second time—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion agreed to.**

**Bills read a second time.**

### **Third Reading**

**Motion by Ms Gladys Berejiklian agreed to:**

That these bills be now read a third time.

**Bills read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council with a message seeking its concurrence in the bills.**

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS**

### **Financial Year 2015-16**

**Motion by Ms Gladys Berejiklian agreed to:**

That this House take note of the Budget Estimates and Related papers for 2015-2016.

**Pursuant to resolution debate adjourned and set down as an order of the day for a later time.**

## **VISITORS**

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** Order! I welcome to the Parliament student leaders from New South Wales high schools who are attending the Secondary School Leadership Program conducted by the Parliamentary Education Unit.

**Pursuant to resolution general business notices of motions (general notices) proceeded with.**

## **MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE BOATING PROJECTS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD** (Myall Lakes) [11.36 a.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the Government's investment of \$1.89 million on 11 key boating projects in the Manning and Great Lakes regions as part of the Boating Now program.
- (2) Notes that each boating project aims to boost safety and accessibility for all boaters in regions where recreational boating is a very popular pastime.
- (3) Recognises that the Boating Now program is about giving boaters in the Myall Lakes electorate better quality facilities and continual improvements in safety and accessibility.
- (4) Acknowledges the work of the Minister for Roads and Freight in ensuring the department has worked closely with recreational boaters, local councils, sporting organisations and other key community groups to ensure key issues in the region are identified and projects tailored to meet the needs of boaters in the Myall Lakes electorate.
- (5) Notes that all projects in Myall Lakes will be delivered by the end of 2017 and commends all stakeholders for being within the existing maritime budget.

Myall Lakes—which includes the Bombah Broadwater in the south Myall Lakes, Wallis Lake, Smiths Lake and the mighty Manning River, with 156 kilometres of navigable water ways and the only delta formation in the Southern Hemisphere—is internationally renowned as one of Australia's water playgrounds. Only a half-hour drive away is Ellenborough Falls, the longest single-drop waterfall in the Southern Hemisphere. Myall Lakes has been listed as one of the top 10 destinations in New South Wales. It has almost 200 kilometres of pristine beaches, many of which have been used as sets for famous Australian movies. The mighty Manning River contains numerous islands, as does Wallis Lake. Myall Lakes is a perfect place for boating and other water pastimes. I am pleased that this Government is delivering for the electorate of Myall Lakes by providing programs that cater for those pastimes.



Tourism is very important to the electorate of Myall Lakes. By increasing the number of tourists to Myall Lakes we can boost the economy. To do so, we need the facilities that will make tourist visits more pleasurable. Many visitors to Myall Lakes enjoy boating and recreational fishing and in this regard funding provided as part of the Better Boating project is extremely important. In total there is \$37.5 million for the Boating Now program across New South Wales. Over 200 priority projects across the State will benefit from those funds. The boating project aims to boost safety and accessibility for boaters across the State. The Government has worked extremely hard to get it right. The Government has worked very closely with all stakeholders—boaters, councils, sporting organisations and other community groups—in order to identify the key issues in each of the regions. One of the hallmarks of this Government is its ability to communicate with communities, listen to what people have to say and their concerns, find solutions and then implement those solutions.

In my community of Myall Lakes funding has been provided for 11 extremely important upgrade projects, including the upgrading of the boat ramp and parking amenities at Endeavour Place in Taree, the site of the sailing club and the rowing club. Each January the rowing club hosts the State championships for rowing. Members could easily imagine the number of boats and people involved in the State championships as well as the obvious need for space in which to park cars and boat trailers. Endeavour Place also hosts the Australian speedboat championships and the aquatic festival. Both events attract powerboat enthusiasts from all over Australia who compete on the mighty Manning River. Once again, members could imagine the number of people and boats involved. The upgrading of this amenity is a very high priority for the Greater Taree City Council.

Funding also is provided for upgrading of the boat ramp, parking, and installation of pontoons at Bohnock. Those of us who are fortunate to know the area will know that Bohnock is just before the bridge to Oxley Island. The Manning River has a number of islands, including Oxley Island and Mitchells Island. Just before the bridge on the right-hand side there is a car park and a boat ramp from which many boaters and fishermen launch their craft. The upgrading project for Bohnock is a high priority for the Greater Taree City Council and for people who enjoy boating and fishing activities. This Government is delivering on those projects.

The Government also is providing funds to the Greater Taree City Council to investigate the relocation of the boat ramps at Manning Point, Croki and Cundletown, which have been in place for a long time. As time passes, rivers change and siltation builds up with the result that boat ramps are not in the best location to meet present needs. The Government is providing funds to the Greater Taree City Council to conduct studies and determine the best location for the boat ramps and for the boaties. Funding has been provided for replacement of the jetty as well as installation of a pontoon and improved parking at the Pacific Palms Recreation Club. Funding also has been provided to improve boating access at Coomba Park and for the construction of a passive craft launching area at Browns Creek, Taree.

I commend the Browns Creek committee, which has worked tirelessly over a number of years to improve the amenity and environment of Browns Creek. Many years ago Browns Creek was a bit of a sludge because the excess flow from a sewage treatment works discharged into the creek. The creek flows into the Manning River. The committee has worked extremely hard with members of its community to improve the environment of Browns Creek, and I congratulate committee members for doing so. Funding also has been provided for upgrading the boat ramp, parking, and the installation of passive craft access as well as storage at the Smiths Lake foreshore.

**The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser):** Order! I welcome to the Parliament student leaders from schools in regional New South Wales, particularly from the North Coast and more especially from Coffs Harbour—Coffs Harbour High School, Toormina High School, Coffs Harbour Senior College and Orara High School. I hope you have a great morning at Parliament and enjoy your visit to Government House.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) [11.44 a.m.]:** It is a pleasure to join in debate on the motion moved by the member for Myall Lakes, which acknowledges key boating projects in the Manning and Great Lakes regions and examines new boating programs. I note a look of bewilderment on the faces of Government members. They are probably wondering why the member for Fairfield is debating the motion. As members know, among the avid anglers and boaters of this great State I declare that I am the son of a New South Wales fisherman. I come from a long family lineage of boaters, which I have declared in this House. When issues concerning boating and primary industries are discussed in this House, I take a keen interest.

The key waterway to the Fairfield electorate is Prospect Creek. In the 1800s, the creek was used in south-western Sydney by residents for boating activities and bathing. Times have changed and that is no longer the case. However, it would be good for that part of south-western Sydney to be revitalised to cater for boating activities. I inform the House that I have visited the Myall Lakes area and I am familiar with the different types of aquatic activities that occur there.

**Mr Stephen Bromhead:** Oh.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI:** Yes, I took out my passport and ventured onto the freeway. I agree that the Myall Lakes area is very beautiful—one of the jewels in the New South Wales crown. As the shadow Minister for Tourism, I urge Sydneysiders to more often venture southwards and northwards to visit our great lakes. Certain risks are associated with boating. People such as recreational fishers and people who have rowing, sailing or speedboating vessels or engage in windsurfing need infrastructure to enable them to enter and exit the water—off and on the ramp—safely.

As the member for Myall Lakes pointed out, changes in currents and weather conditions expose boating infrastructure to the risk of deterioration. The motion moved by the member for Myall Lakes is welcome because it places emphasis on safety and on the provision of infrastructure such as ramps, parking for boats and trailers, and signage. People must be aware that they should be courteous at all times when entering or exiting ramps. As we know, significant road rage occurs near ramps in peak periods during summer.

**Mr Geoff Provest:** Ramp rage.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI:** As the member for Tweed put it, ramp rage. It is important for adequate signage to be in place. We all recognise the importance of safe access to jetties and pontoons. Because I know the member for Myall Lakes has a passion for his community and visitors to the Myall Lakes region who use the waterways, I support the motion. I note the presence in the Chamber of the member for Drummoyne who, like me, has a keen interest in and passion for boating activities and no doubt will support the motion. I know that he enjoys taking the tinnie out to Lilli Pilli for squid jigging every now and then.

**Mr Christopher Gulaptis:** Could you explain that?

**Mr GUY ZANGARI:** I will not explain that because I would need another two minutes to do so. The Opposition supports the motion. I commend the member for Myall Lakes for moving the motion. I point out to the member for Myall Lakes that while I do not always support the motions he moves, this is a motion I will support. When motions are moved that benefit our entire community, those of us who are recreational fishers and boaters recognise that governments of all political persuasions must invest in infrastructure so that people can safely enter and exit boating facilities.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST** (Tweed) [11.48 a.m.]: I support the motion moved by the member for Myall Lakes, which acknowledges the Government's commitments to the Boating Now program by the allocation of \$37.5 million to 200 priority projects across the State. Each project aims to boost safety and accessibility for all boaters across the State. The Government has worked very hard to get this program right. I compliment the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight and his staff and Maritime Services staff. They do an excellent job of keeping our waterways safe. I have had the pleasure of accompanying those officers on a number of occasions as they go about their daily duty. Their duties include not only compliance monitoring but also boating safety. Although the funding referred to in the motion relates to the Myall Lakes area, most areas on the North Coast will benefit from these programs in the near future.

Myall Lakes is a lovely area. The member for Myall Lakes takes an active interest in boating. I have had the pleasure of visiting Forster and hiring a houseboat at Bulahdelah to cruise on the Myall Lakes. I am led to believe that during the recent floods houseboats were washed up trees and onto banks. The member for Myall Lakes has been active in gaining assistance for those small businesses, the houseboat operators. I have had a boat licence for just under 40 years. I respect the waterways and I have had a lot of enjoyment on them. Recently I have modernised and I now own a stand-up paddleboard. It is a great way to enjoy the waterways in an eco-friendly manner. Anyone who has not tried paddleboarding should give it a go. It is the new rage and provides a lot of enjoyment.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Paddleboard rage.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST:** As the member for Fairfield and the member for Myall Lakes said, this is all about giving boaties greater access to boat ramps. I have witnessed ramp rage on several occasions. We need to not only create better boat ramps but also improve boat safety. Unfortunately, every year, particularly in summer, we see tragedies occasionally on our waterways. In relation to safety compliance, I want to compliment the Minister. Earlier this year the exchange life jackets program was run in our electorates. That program enables people to exchange life jackets for new, modern types at a reasonable cost. I encourage everyone to check their life jackets. Boaties have a tendency to shove life jackets under the bow, where they sit forever and a day. They should regularly pull out their life jackets and have a look at them to ensure they work.

In particular, boaties in coastal areas should ensure that the EPIRB, emergency position indicating radio beacon, works before they go out to sea. This is all about trying to keep people safe. I compliment the Government and Marine Rescue NSW, which has volunteers up and down the coast. The Marine Rescue volunteers are prominent in Myall Lakes. The Commissioner of Marine Rescue, Stacey Tannos, does an excellent job of keeping the volunteers informed and trained. The Government has a significant program for providing Marine Rescue with first-class vessels so that it can carry out its valuable work. I commend the motion moved by the member for Myall Lakes to the House.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS** (Clarence—Parliamentary Secretary) [11.52 a.m.]: I support the motion moved by the member for Myall Lakes relating to the Boating Now program and the benefits that it delivers to Myall Lakes. Of course, Myall Lakes is not the only boating region in New South Wales. Indeed, the whole eastern seaboard is one boating paradise and that includes the Clarence electorate. The Clarence River is the largest river on the eastern seaboard and it comprises about 100 islands. The river is utilised by a fishing fleet and recreational boaters as well as the average family on a weekend simply having a bit of fun and using all sorts of craft from canoes to power boats and stand-up paddleboards, as mentioned by the member for Tweed. Some people still use skidoos. The Clarence River is well utilised.

Improvements in infrastructure throughout the Clarence electorate include ramps at Evans Head and a ramp and a pontoon at Brushgrove in Cowper. Similarly, Almira, Yamba and Iluka have benefited from infrastructure, such as boat ramps, provided by the Roads and Maritime Services and the Minister to improve safety for people using our waterways. Not only has safety improved but more terrific opportunities for tourists and holidaymakers have been created. Use of the river has also increased. We certainly want to see more people using the river. We want to see the river used safely and we want people to have the opportunity to explore and utilise the natural resources provided by God in his creativity.

*[Interruption]*

Thank you, the member for Fairfield, you heathen. I suggest that he take a leaf out of Reverend Nile's book on this matter.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Where are you going now? This is about boating.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** I am referring to Noah and his ark. I am sure that Noah could have used better boating facilities back in his day. The Clarence electorate appreciates the facilities that have been provided by this Government. The beneficiaries of those facilities are not only the local community but also the tourists who visit the Clarence. The number of people using the river is increasing and the number of fatalities has reduced. I commend the member for Myall Lakes for bringing the motion to the House.

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD** (Myall Lakes) [11.56 a.m.], in reply: I note that the Opposition supports the Government's investment of \$1.89 million in 11 key boating projects in the Manning and Great Lakes regions and the Boating Now program. I thank the member for Fairfield, the member for Tweed and the member for Clarence for their contributions. I note that the member for Fairfield is a keen Fairfield boater. I encourage him and his constituents to visit the mighty Myall Lakes electorate more frequently; they should spend as many nights there as possible so that they can explore the waterways and the new, better facilities being implemented by this Government. When the member for Fairfield and his constituents visit the area and see what the Government is doing in regional New South Wales they will be proud that the Government is looking after and caring about that part of New South Wales.

The member for Tweed spoke about the improvements in his electorate. He referred to a number of important boating issues such as ramp rage and how better boating facilities help to alleviate the problems of frustration and anger that sometimes show on boat ramps and in car parks. He said that the Boating Now

program is about the importance of better boating safety. He also referred to the Government's life jacket exchange program, which is popular in the Myall Lakes electorate. Recently when I was in the Great Lakes area I saw hundreds of people queueing to exchange their life jackets. The program is important because we know that life jackets save lives

The member for Tweed spoke about the important contribution of Marine Rescue to protect people up and down the coast. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Marine Rescue at Forster and the fantastic job it does. Recently I attended the launch of Marine Rescue's new boat, a Steber craft. Steber is the premier boat building company in Australia. Steber boats are sold all over the world not only for recreational use but also for use by fisheries, customs and the defence forces, and Steber is based in Taree. I thank the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, the Hon. Duncan Gay of The Nationals, for his tireless work for regional New South Wales and in relation to this program. The member for Clarence spoke about infrastructure throughout his electorate, which has benefited from the Better Boating Program in places such as Evans Head where pontoons are being constructed.

There are also pontoons at Yamba and Iluka. The Clarence electorate is beautiful, second only to the electorate of Myall Lakes which is internationally renowned as Australia's water playground. It is good that the Government of New South Wales is looking after regional areas. The Government knows the importance of tourism and its efforts have increased the number of tourist visitations, especially in regional areas. These extra dollars create jobs and opportunities and boating infrastructure is an important component of this. I commend this motion to the House.

**Question—That the motion be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion agreed to.**

#### **INNER WEST TRAIN LINE**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK** (Bankstown) [12.01 p.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) Condemns the Government and the Minister for Transport for removing the Inner West (also known as Liverpool via Regents Park) train line from the Sydney Trains timetable.
- (2) Notes that since the removal of the Inner West train line, commuters from Chester Hill, Sefton and Villawood need to change up to three times when commuting to the city via the Inner West for what was previously a direct journey.
- (3) Notes that commuting travel times have increased significantly.
- (4) Calls on the Government to review the timetable and restore the Inner West train line.

I have moved this motion to highlight an issue that has caused great stress, concern and inconvenience for many rail commuters in my area. The changes to the Sydney Trains timetable were introduced on 20 October 2013 without public consultation. These changes might have been celebrated by some commuters but they were not celebrated by rail commuters in south-western Sydney who have experienced turmoil and distress as a result of the changed service. Without any public consultation the Government decided to remove the entire train line, informally known as the Liverpool via Regents Park line, and express services from Yagoona station, cutting direct services to the city that my community has relied on for more than 70 years.

This has more than doubled travel times for commuters from Chester Hill, Sefton and Villawood who are forced to change trains at Birrong and then at Lidcombe for what was formerly a single journey to the inner west and city. Commuters travelling from Carramar, Villawood, Chester Hill and Sefton to Strathfield or Burwood have no option but to disembark at Birrong and wait for a train from Bankstown, which now terminates at Lidcombe station. They then have to transfer to another service to continue their journey to Homebush, Flemington, Strathfield or the inner west. The irony is that other services have also been affected by this change and commuters travelling to Homebush have to get a train from Lidcombe to Strathfield, where they disembark and get a service that backtracks to Homebush. This is very inconvenient and many longstanding residents of Chester Hill have told me they have not experienced a timetable change as bad as this for 30 years.

I am astounded that this Government is proud of its public transport record when it has taken this step backwards. The Bankstown area has a growing population. There is no doubt that suburbs like Chester Hill,

Sefton, Villawood and Yagoona are attractive options for both young families and working professionals for lifestyle reasons, their close proximity to the central business district, Parramatta, Liverpool and the inner west, and particularly good public transport services. As I have already outlined, the removal of the inner west train line has meant that residents and commuters must change trains up to three times when they are travelling to the inner west from Sefton, Chester Hill or Villawood, which is very inconvenient for working professionals having to start work at a set time.

I have written to the Premier as well as the former and current Ministers for Transport to ask them to review this situation, at the very least. There was no public consultation prior to the timetable change and there still has been no public consultation. I believe there has also been no review of the impact of the change. It is sad that this Government boasts about improving infrastructure in the State and making New South Wales number one again when important regions like south-western Sydney are being denied a pivotal public transport option. This area does not have public buses and therefore trains are the only public transport option for residents of that part of Sydney.

I want to highlight the experience of a local resident who contacted my office. Mariah is a 23-year-old former student who lives a two-minute walk from Chester Hill station. On one occasion, Mariah was almost 30 minutes late for a job interview because of the confusing changes to the inner west train line. Before the changes, her usual route to her workplace in Drummoyne would be a direct train from Chester Hill to Burwood and then a bus to Drummoyne. Now, no matter the time or the day, Mariah must catch a train from Chester Hill to Birrong, then from Birrong to Lidcombe, then Lidcombe to Burwood, then a bus to Drummoyne. Mariah said to me, "Tell me these changes are not frustrating." On some occasions, it takes Mariah almost 3½ hours just to get home from work using public transportation.

Is this an example of how this Government is making New South Wales the number one State? I think this Government should be ashamed that it is making young working people like Mariah have a 3½ hour commute. She gave too many examples of how the changes have affected her for me to share them all. She told me how much worse the commute is when there is track work. Other commuters have shared their experiences with me including constituents who have injured themselves when running up stairs in their rush to change trains. I have written to the former Minister giving her these examples on many occasions and I always get the same stock-standard response. This Government should be ashamed of the effect of this change to the timetable and it should restore the inner west train line.

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI** (Drummoyne—Parliamentary Secretary) [12.08 p.m.]: The Government does not support this motion and I am happy to explain to the member for Bankstown what makes New South Wales the number one State again, which is the \$8.3 billion Sydney Metro Northwest, the \$14.9 billion WestConnex, the \$3 billion NorthConnex and redevelopment right across the State including for the Sydney Metro high-capacity rail line that will provide a second harbour rail crossing for more than 100,000 commuters per hour across the city as well as much-needed road projects. In October 2013 this Government introduced the biggest timetable change in a generation, restructuring weekday services to better align to customer needs. The rail network is the backbone of the transport system and its services need to be designed to efficiently and effectively deliver a large number of customers to their destinations.

The benefits of the 2013 timetable were significant and involved more than 1,000 additional services per week, including 230 additional peak services to provide additional capacity where it was needed most, and improved off-peak frequencies. The timetable is simpler and easier to understand and has removed about 250 stopping patterns. It provides regular clock-face departure times for stations closer to the city, removes some inconsistent and long service gaps, and allows customers to memorise their departure times. These benefits have been an element in sustained improvement in satisfaction levels for Sydney Trains customers. The majority of customers are noticing improvements to their service.

The timetable also brought into regular operation the \$102 million Lidcombe and Homebush turn-backs, thereby implementing one of the last stages of the rail Clearways program. By using this new infrastructure, including additional track and platforms at Lidcombe and Homebush, a key pinch point on the rail network has been removed. Previously, inner west and Bankstown line services were heavily integrated and had to merge onto the main western corridor at Lidcombe, which also carries western and south line services. As a result of this, timetables for the west and south Bankstown and inner west lines had to be written together to account for all the services merging and sharing tracks around Lidcombe. That is a demonstration of the previous timetable's focus on operations as opposed to customers. Using these new turn-backs, the inner west line is able to operate more independently between Homebush and the city because it no longer has to integrate with western line and Bankstown line services.

The Government can now reliably provide a minimum 15 minute service frequency to inner west line stations consistently across the day from 6.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. on weekdays. Under the previous timetable there were some service gaps of up to 24 minutes during this period. The Bankstown line is also now completely separated from this corridor, operating independently from Lidcombe to the city via Bankstown, providing more reliable and consistent services. In addition, the capacity of the busy main western line, which supports western and south line services, has been reliably enhanced. Some customers now have new interchanges to deal with to complete their journey as a result of these changes, but as Sydney grows we need to ensure that our transport network does not remain static and continues to meet the challenge of keeping Sydney moving.

The 2013 timetable and, in particular, changes to the inner west and Bankstown lines have enhanced the capacity and reliability of one of the busiest commuter rail corridors on the network while improving the customer experience for the vast majority of customers. This Government promised to fix the trains and it is delivering. It has improved security, introduced Opal electronic ticketing, and upgraded stations, and is delivering a new fleet. It is getting on with the job it said it would do by delivering the Sydney Metro. That project will transform Sydney by delivering more trains and faster services for the entire city.

**Mr RYAN PARK** (Keira) [12.14 p.m.]: It is timely that we are debating this important motion. I acknowledge Roydon Ng in the gallery. Roydon has raised this issue with me and other members. I also acknowledge the work that the member for Bankstown has done over a number of years in advocating on behalf of her community about this issue. The current member for Auburn, the Leader of the Opposition, the former member for Auburn, Barbara Perry, and the member for Bankstown made a commitment during the election campaign to restore this rail line. That decision is critical to the large community which the member for Bankstown and the current member for Auburn now service and which the previous member for Auburn once represented. It is ridiculous that people as close to the city as outlined by the member for Bankstown are faced with long and difficult train journeys.

This Government provides well-written speeches for backbench members to read during debates on these motions. However, I urge those members to take care when they are given speeches to make by ministerial officers. It is interesting that the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure is not in the Chamber. He is happy to send his Parliamentary Secretary or backbench members to participate in these debates. It is not wise for backbench members to accept simply being sent a speech, pressing print, and then reading it in this place. That is dangerous and stupid. It would be prudent of them to tell the ministerial officer, "If you want this read, get your Minister to do it." It is not smart for backbench members simply to nod when a senior ministerial officer presents them with a speech to give on behalf of their Minister about an area that is extremely poorly serviced. The member for Fairfield has raised this issue with me and has also been an advocate on behalf of his community, which has also been impacted by this ridiculous decision.

Let us be clear: the Labor Party took a clearly different policy from the Government's prior to the 2015 election. We will continue to advocate on behalf of residents of the inner west; we will continue to represent our communities in this place; and we will continue to examine ways to enhance the train timetable. Some of the things that members opposite spoke about will not become available for decades. What we are talking about now is the Government undertaking a review of what it has done wrong. It is the same approach that I have been advocating on the South Coast. Thousands of commuters are stranded every day and face difficulties similar to those being faced by people in the inner west that have been outlined articulately today by the member for Bankstown. It is time that this Government paid attention to strong community advocates like the member for Fairfield, the member for Bankstown, and the member for Auburn and his predecessor who have been raising this important issue—that is, provision of a railway line to service their communities.

**The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser):** Order! The member for Bankstown will have an opportunity to speak in reply on her motion. I ask her not to interject, especially when I am about to give the call to a member from her side.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI** (Fairfield) [12.18 p.m.]: I support the motion moved by the member for Bankstown. The member for Bankstown and I share this infrastructure in south-western Sydney. Carramar and Villawood stations are in the electorate of Fairfield. Following the electoral boundary redistribution, Chester Hill and Leightonfield stations, which were in Fairfield, are now in the electorate of Bankstown. There is a big difference between a review and glossy pictures and computer graphics. This Government is good at producing glossy pictures and computer graphics. The motion of the member for Bankstown states that people using the former inner west train line must now catch three or four trains to get to their destinations. Constituents of mine who work in Homebush and retirees living in Carramar who visit family on the Central Coast will now need to catch the train at Carramar and travel to Birrong.

When they get to Birrong, they then change and catch the train to Lidcombe. Following that, they either go to the sprinter platform to get to Homebush Bay or they can go to Strathfield and catch the connecting train to the Central Coast. I note that the member for Drummoyne, for whom I have a lot of respect, spoke this morning. In true New South Wales Baird Coalition fashion he simply repeated and regurgitated the same things this Government repeats every day. He spoke about projects that are not happening now—they might happen decades from now—but he did not speak about the real issue; that is, constituents experiencing difficulty getting from point A to point B because they have to catch three to four trains.

This Government is good at pitting the haves against the have-nots. One need only look at the rollout of the Easy Access Program for train stations in south-west Sydney that adjoin the electorates of Cabramatta, Fairfield, Bankstown and Auburn. In this day and age, there should be no excuse whatsoever for our constituents—the Government calls them "customers"—not to access the train. At the moment this Government is not encouraging people to form public transport habits, to get off the roads and to get onto trains. If commuters had the option of a train journey of two to three hours would they take that option? I am sure they would not; they would get in their cars and drive to wherever it was that they needed to go.

The member for Bankstown is calling for a review of the former Inner West train line, which raises questions about the Government's commitment to the people of south-west Sydney. In a few moments the Government will vote against this motion and that will make it clear to the people of south-west Sydney that it does not care that they spend most of their time commuting on the train rather than spending quality time at home.

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY** (Riverstone) [12.22 p.m.]: I oppose the motion moved by the member for Bankstown. We are talking about a timetable change that happened under this Government in October 2013, but I should mention the one that happened before that under the Labor Government and then contrast the two. The Labor Government's rearrangement of the timetable cut services across the network. Labor's rationale, its way of solving the problem of on-time running—the fact that it could not keep the trains to timetable—was to reduce the number of trains, reduce the number of services, and reduce the number of seats available for people to get where they needed to go. Labor's solution was to make the rail system look efficient by reducing the service—to cut out the trains. In October 2013 this Government took a different approach and introduced more than 1,000 additional services.

**Mr Mark Coure:** How many services?

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY:** This Government introduced more than 1,000 services. More than 600 of those were express services in peak hour across the network, and 230 were peak services to and from the city every week. That increased the number of seats available for passengers by 20,000 to the city every morning peak period. It reduced journey times for many customers across the network, especially for those travelling longer distances, including many on the intercity services. Those changes in 2013 improved the travel experience for vast numbers of travellers and commuters across the network. It was a massive change and had impacts across the system. One can always find fault if one is looking at the big picture, but this Government attempted to encourage public transport use by making it better for many thousands of people. That was the practical effect of the changes in 2013. The wording of the motion of the member for Bankstown is a little misleading.

**Ms Tania Mihailuk:** How is it misleading?

**The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser):** Order! The member for Bankstown will have an opportunity to respond.

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY:** I will tell the member for Bankstown why it is misleading. It states that people need to change trains up to three times when commuting to the city, which is not true. I looked up the Sydney Trains network timetable to see how I would get from Villawood to the city if I wanted to travel by train. If I left Villawood at 7.16 a.m. I would arrive at Town Hall at 8.06 a.m. That is 56 minutes on a direct service to Town Hall and 53 minutes to Wynyard. There are four such services an hour, 15 minutes apart. They are direct services to the city for people travelling from Villawood to Sydney.

Vast numbers of people in Villawood, Chester Hill and Sefton benefited from that timetable. Even if some did not because their travel patterns were different, let us be honest: This timetable change helped many thousands of people. It made the travel experience better. It increased the number of services across the network. It reduced travel times for hundreds of thousands of people commuting long distances. This Government is

serious about trying to help people who are travelling to work. It is trying to improve services. It adds to the number of services; it does not cut them like Opposition members did when they were in government. We have heard Opposition members speaking about the problems but we have heard no solutions. There is no commitment to do anything: no money, no new services and no commitment. All that those opposite did was to cut services; they have not said anything different.

**Ms JENNY LEONG** (Newtown) [12.26 p.m.], by leave: I thank the member for Bankstown for moving this important motion. The Greens NSW have a genuine commitment to maintaining and improving public transport infrastructure and services in this State. We believe that people have the right to inexpensive, efficient, accessible and safe public transport and that we should not be put in a situation where services in one area need to be weighed up against better services for people in other areas. That is a false argument that is being put by a Government that is willing to spend billions of dollars on more polluting tollways that will not solve Sydney's congestion challenges.

If Government members are asking for a solution The Greens are happy to offer one. Some of those billions of dollars that are being spent on WestConnex should be put into public transport. I encourage Opposition members also to consider the idea of immediately halting their support for WestConnex so that some of this money is put into public transport. The Greens transport spokesperson—

*[Interruption]*

**The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser):** Order! The member for Newtown is entitled to be heard in silence.

**Mr John Sidoti:** Did you catch public transport this morning?

**Ms JENNY LEONG:** This morning I walked from my electorate of Newtown. Yesterday I caught the train, but today I decided to enjoy the nice Sydney air and so I walked. Greens transport spokesperson Dr Mehreen Faruqi expressed support for the campaign to restore the inner west line. When we are improving and increasing public transport we must not make it more difficult for people to access and use our public transport systems. We must make sure that we do not increase travel times for people, increase interchanges, decrease service frequency or add to congestion at stations. We must look holistically at how to address Sydney's congestion problems—and that is not by spending billions of dollars on new and polluting motorways.

We must address the needs of disadvantaged people travelling on the inner west line and consider constraints in the current rail system that are being addressed through improvements and investment in technology, such as automated signalling. We should not be cutting services and making it harder for our communities. We know that people will use public transport when it is convenient, reliable and affordable. That is why The Greens are united with the community in requesting an investment of public money in public transport.

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK** (Bankstown) [12.29 p.m.], in reply: I acknowledge and thank the member for Keira and the member for Fairfield for their contributions in support of this motion. On behalf of the Opposition, the member for Keira, shadow Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, has signalled his commitment with our leader, Luke Foley, to restore the inner west train line. This is our commitment to the people of south-west Sydney. Patronage of rail services in my area has dropped significantly and the figures highlight the need for service on this line to be reinstated. For example, since the introduction of the new timetable patronage of services at Villawood station has dropped from 167,000 to 157,000. The member for Riverstone must know that the new timetable has impacted on commuters because their direct journeys have been affected.

When the member for Riverstone recited the train timetable, he failed to mention that he was talking about the Bankstown train service that runs from Villawood to Bankstown, which is not a train service that travels via the inner west. It does not assist people from Villawood to connect with areas such as Parramatta, Granville, Strathfield and Burwood. People from Chester Hill also travel to those suburbs for work. The member for Riverstone probably has never driven through Chester Hill or Villawood and that is why mistakes are made. He has no understanding of the train service to which I am referring.

For the benefit of the member for Riverstone, I will repeat that he is referring to the Bankstown train service that still exists. We know it still exists. We are talking about an entirely different train journey. Under Labor, that service was a direct journey from Villawood to Chester Hill, Sefton and Regents Park. The train



service along the Inner West line no longer exists. I am delighted that the member for Drummoyne did not even attempt to look at the train timetable. He gave us his usual stock standard rhetoric about what the Government is doing for transport in this State—it bypasses the south-western Sydney region.

I remind members that there is no doubt that journey times in my area have been affected. As the member for Newtown has highlighted—and I welcome her contribution that The Greens support the restoration of the Inner West train service—this issue is about encouraging people to use public transport. These figures show that people in my area are reverting to driving instead of using public transport, and that is a sad situation for New South Wales. I ask the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to restore the inner west train line and I ask members to support the motion. The Minister has a new Clark Kent look so I hope that means there will be changes to public transport.

**Question—That the motion be agreed to—put.**

**The House divided.**

*[In division]*

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** I remind the member for Newtown that members are not to speak to people in the public gallery.

**Ayes, 35**

Ms Aitchison	Mr Harris	Mr Park
Mr Atalla	Ms Harrison	Mr Parker
Mr Barr	Ms Haylen	Mr Robertson
Ms Burney	Mr Hoenig	Ms K. Smith
Ms Car	Ms Hornery	Ms T. F. Smith
Ms Catley	Mr Kamper	Mr Warren
Mr Chanthivong	Ms Leong	Ms Washington
Mr Crakanthorp	Mr Lynch	Ms Watson
Mr Dib	Dr McDermott	Mr Zangari
Ms Doyle	Ms McKay	<i>Tellers,</i>
Ms Finn	Ms Mihailuk	Ms Hay
Mr Greenwich	Mr Minns	Mr Lalich

**Noes, 47**

Mr Anderson	Mr Grant	Mr Provest
Mr Aplin	Mr Gulaptis	Mr Roberts
Mr Ayres	Mr Hazzard	Mr Rowell
Ms Berejiklian	Mr Henskens	Mr Sidoti
Mr Brookes	Ms Hodgkinson	Mrs Skinner
Mr Conolly	Mr Humphries	Mr Speakman
Mr Constance	Mr Johnsen	Mr Stokes
Mr Coure	Mr Kean	Mr Taylor
Mr Crouch	Dr Lee	Mr Tudehope
Mrs Davies	Mr Maguire	Ms Upton
Mr Dominello	Mr Marshall	Mr Ward
Mr Elliott	Mr Notley-Smith	Mr Williams
Mr Fraser	Mr O'Dea	Mrs Williams
Mr Gee	Mrs Pavey	<i>Tellers,</i>
Mr George	Mr Perrottet	Mr Bromhead
Ms Goward	Ms Petinos	Mr Patterson

**Pairs**

Mr Daley	Mr Baird
Mr Foley	Mr Piccoli
Mr Mehan	Mr Toole

**Question resolved in the negative.**

**Motion negatived.**

**SHELLHARBOUR HOSPITAL**

**Mr GARETH WARD** (Kiama—Parliamentary Secretary) [12.42 p.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Government on committing to a \$251 million upgrade of Shellharbour Hospital.
- (2) Condemns the Opposition for its announcement of only \$30 million towards Shellharbour Hospital.
- (3) Thanks the Minister for Health for supporting this project.
- (4) Commends Professor Dennis King, the Chair of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Health District, for his dedication to improving the health care needs of Illawarra and Shoalhaven region.

I could not have been prouder when I stood with the Minister for Health during the election campaign to announce that a re-elected Baird Government will commit to the \$251 million upgrade of Shellharbour Hospital. I should tell those who have not come to the southern Illawarra that we have a growing population—one that needs to be serviced by a large health facility. Shellharbour Hospital, under the hub-and-spoke model as proposed by the health district, needs to be expanded and upgraded to provide a new range of services to our community. I am very pleased to make this announcement. It will make a huge difference in the lives of the people of the region. It services my electorate of Kiama, as well as the neighbouring electorate of Shellharbour.

This plan came about because, as a candidate in 2011, I stood for election on a platform of funding for planning to upgrade Shellharbour Hospital. That formed part of the clinical services plan for the region, and I could not be prouder of that commitment. As I have outlined, the first part of this motion acknowledges the commitment of the Minister for Health. I also commend the Minister for Health for the work that is happening around our region. We are about to finish the Wollongong Hospital upgrade, and there are upgrades happening in Shellharbour in the Medical Ambulatory Care unit, of which I am most proud, as well as further upgrades to come at Shellharbour Hospital.

Paragraph (2) of the motion condemns the Opposition for its announcement of only \$30 million towards Shellharbour Hospital. I was waiting in trepidation during the campaign for an announcement that would blow everybody's socks off. I waited and I waited. Time marched on, and we did not see the sort of commitment that I expected, given the noise that had been made by the member for Shellharbour and the Opposition in relation to this hospital. I was expecting a big announcement but it was not made. So members can imagine how pleased I was that this announcement was made. The people of Shellharbour Hospital and Kiama do not really mind who delivers this upgrade. The main thing is that it gets done. And I am absolutely committed to seeing that through.

The third paragraph of the motion appropriately thanks the Minister for Health for supporting this project. There is no doubt that she should be thanked, as well as all of the people who have signed petitions supporting this project and those who have written letters and supported the campaign. It would be remiss of me not to commend Professor Dennis King, the Chair of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Health District, for his dedication to improving the healthcare needs of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region. Professor King is a colorectal surgeon by profession. He has shown leadership in our region with respect to the new health districts that were established by this Government to ensure that people have a role in making decisions about the healthcare needs of their region. I thank Professor King most sincerely for his dedication and I thank all of his staff, including the new Chief Executive, Margot Mains, who is doing an outstanding job in our region, and all of her staff.

This Government's track record when it comes to health is impressive. We are recruiting 3,400 more full-time equivalent nurses—more than 48,000 total headcount—including more than 1,800 new graduates this year, and 1,400 more doctors since 2011. We are reforming health. More patients are being treated on time. We are increasing organ donation rates, increasing aeromedical coverage across the State, increasing access to palliative care for all people in New South Wales and investing a record amount of money in medical research. As the Minister for Health said in question time yesterday, this Government has delivered a record budget for Health in New South Wales, of which I am sure everyone can be proud.

Our first term has been marked by a \$4.8 billion hospital building boom—from Bega to Blacktown and Wagga Wagga to Westmead. We are now seeing work done in Wollongong, and the Shellharbour Hospital upgrade will start in this term. And we will now spend more than \$5 billion to build and upgrade more than

60 hospitals and health services over the next four years, bringing the total spend on health infrastructure to almost \$10 billion since the 2011 election. Put simply, we will spend more in eight years than Labor spent in the entire 16 years it was in government.

One of these capital projects is a major redevelopment of Shellharbour Hospital, as I mentioned. The Liberal Party and The Nationals have committed \$251 million for this important redevelopment. This will expand emergency department capacity; double the operating theatre size; add an intensive care unit and provide for increased acute inpatient, surgical, aged care and rehabilitation beds; and expand outpatient and primary/community health services. This is in addition to the Medical Ambulatory Care work that is already underway at that hospital. This commitment represents a new era for Shellharbour Hospital and will ensure patients receive world-class care in a world-class facility.

I refer to the Bureau of Health Information [BHI] results. I welcome the latest quarterly results for January to March 2015, which show that New South Wales hospitals are providing timely access to care for record numbers of patients. Today's BHI figures for that quarter show that 75 per cent of patients left New South Wales emergency departments within four hours, and elective surgery performance was strong, despite increased volumes. Compared to the same quarter last year, more than 17,000 extra patients visited our emergency departments, more than 9,000 extra patients were admitted, and more. Looking at these results for Shellharbour Hospital, one can see a substantial increase in performance since we came to government in 2011. The percentages for the Shellharbour Hospital emergency department waiting times of under four hours in January to March 2015 was 72 per cent; in January to March in 2014 was 69 per cent; in the year before that, 2013, it was 57 per cent; in 2012 the figure was 55 per cent and in 2011 it was 53 per cent.

This is a government committed to investment in health and committed to improved performances. This commitment of \$251 million to Shellharbour Hospital is evidence of the Government's commitments. Our improvements in hospital performance are also evidence of this commitment. I am proud to be part of a Government that is investing in health care and I look forward to working with everyone across the Illawarra to continue to achieve the investments we need. This will make a real difference in the lives of people in our region and I commend this upgrade to the House.

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) [12.49 p.m.]:** I move the following amendment to the motion:

That the motion be amended by leaving out paragraphs (2) and (3) with a view to inserting instead:

- "(2) Notes that the Ministry of Health has not yet endorsed the business case for the upgrade following the election announcement.
- (3) Calls on the Government to outline a precise timetable for the upgrade of Shellharbour Hospital, including the start and finish of construction.
- (4) Notes that the Government's commitment will be funded from the existing health budget".

I welcome the Government's commitment to upgrade Shellharbour Hospital. The member for Kiama and I both campaigned on the need to upgrade Shellharbour Hospital at the 2015 election. I note that the member for Kiama is critical of Labor's commitment at the election to start the upgrade process with \$30 million in funding. I said at the time that Labor's commitment was a modest start to the upgrading process within our overall health budget, which was fully costed by the independent Parliamentary Budget Office. I made no secret of it in my electorate during that election. The member for Kiama neglects to mention that Labor also pledged \$47 million towards health research at the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute, which is based at the University of Wollongong. I also achieved a funding commitment to establish a new healthcare centre at West Dapto.

I remind the member for Kiama that I was re-elected with a 9 per cent primary vote swing to me whereas his party suffered a 5 per cent swing against it. Labor's commitment to Shellharbour Hospital is indisputable. After all, we built it under the premiership of Neville Wran. Over 16 years in Government until 2011, Labor provided new services to the Shellharbour Hospital in every single budget. The member for Kiama is fond of asserting that Labor cut services, including the maternity unit, at the Shellharbour Hospital. The facts are, as usual, a little bit different. I need only refer to the answer provided to me by the Minister for Health in question 6116 to disprove the assertion of the member for Kiama. I happily lay it on the table for the information of members. The Minister quite clearly stated:

When obstetricians and anaesthetists withdrew their services from Shellharbour Hospital in December 2003, birthing services at the hospital ceased in the interests of patient safety.

Birthing services were consolidated at Wollongong Hospital to enable a greater number of women in the Illawarra to safely deliver their babies.

The factors that contributed to the consolidation of birthing services to Wollongong Hospital remain relevant.

They are not my words; they are the words of the Government's Minister. Interestingly, however, despite the member for Kiama repeating his claim, members should note that in four years his Government has not reinstated the maternity unit service, which he asserts was cut. This is the second of the member for Kiama's love notes to himself. However, he refuses to lay out a precise timetable for the delivery of the Government's commitment to the upgrade the Shellharbour Hospital. The Minister has confirmed that, despite the election promise, the Ministry of Health has not yet endorsed the business case for the upgrade.

The only thing my constituents want to know is when the upgrade starts and when it finishes. It is for this reason that I have moved an amendment to the member for Kiama's motion. My constituents want to know that this upgrade will reduce their waiting times in the emergency department. They want to know that elective surgery waiting lists will decrease. They want to know that the rates of unplanned readmission, which are still among the highest in the State, will be dealt with. These are the key issues that people want to know about. My amendment also notes that the Government's commitment of funding comes from the existing Health budget, which raises the immediate question: If this funding could be found eight days after Labor announced its commitment to upgrading the Shellharbour Hospital at the election, why could the Government not have found it during the past four years?

The Government instead let emergency waiting times increase. It was happy to let elective surgery waiting lists blowout by nearly 100 days. The Government was happy to do that, yet the funding upgrade for Shellharbour Hospital could have been found at any time over the past four years. That is the plain fact of it. One of the other reasons I want the Government to outline a precise timetable for the upgrade is that it has form on making misleading election commitments. We saw this exposed by the *Daily Telegraph* on 1 May 2015 over the promised \$300 million upgrade to Campbelltown Hospital. The headline screamed:

\$300 million Campbelltown Hospital upgrade uncertain: New South Wales Premier Mike Baird reneges on election promise.

Now this is a serious matter, especially as the *Daily Telegraph* was the organ-grinder that made the monkey dance during the election. My parliamentary colleagues the member for Campbelltown and member for Macquarie Fields know the story of their hospital's upgrade promise very well. What their constituents get is planning of the upgrade over the next three years. They do not get the actual \$300 million upgrade that was promised. The *Daily Telegraph* reported:

It is disappointing that the minister's office provided us with a 'spin doctored' response to questions that everyone wants answered.

That was spot-on. I want straight answers from the Government too. The member for Kiama's love letters to himself through silly notices of motion are a dime a dozen in this place. Unless he and his Government can precisely outline a timetable for the Shellharbour Hospital upgrade, they are paper tigers worthy of nothing but disregard. My constituents will be very disappointed if the member for Kiama refuses to accept my amendment—which actually may prevent him from being shafted by his own Government.

**Mr MARK COURE** (Oatley) [12.55 p.m.]: Today we have heard about the results of 16 years of inaction from Labor, as well as many years of inaction on the part of the current member for Shellharbour. The Government is getting on with the job of rebuilding the Shellharbour Hospital. The budget that was presented this week will deliver \$21 billion to boost front-line care, of which \$1.4 billion will be spent on the capital program in 2015-16 to take the total Health budget to \$21 billion. I convey my thanks and appreciation to the member for Kiama for achieving the building of the Shellharbour Hospital once and for all.

After 16 years of inaction from hopeless as well as tired Labor governments, this Government is getting on with the job once and for all. Like Shellharbour Hospital, the St George Hospital also was forgotten during 16 years of Labor governments. In the previous term and during this term, the Government has been getting on with the job of rebuilding both hospitals once and for all. This Government's total spend on health infrastructure will amount to almost \$10 billion since the 2011 election, which is more than Labor spent on health in 16 years.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** It was cheaper when we were in. It was cheaper under us.

**Mr MARK COURE:** In spite of all that this Government has achieved, all that you can do is interject. You should support the motion.

**ACTING-SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** Order! I direct the member for Oatley to direct all his comments through the Chair.

**Mr MARK COURE:** The member for Shellharbour should be supporting the motion. The Opposition should be thanking the Government for rebuilding this hospital once and for all. It is very important to note that the Government is reforming health so that more patients are being treated on time, organ donation rates are increasing, aeromedical coverage across the State is increasing, and access to palliative care is increasing, et cetera. The Government's first term was marked by a \$4.8 billion hospital build. This Government, led by a great Premier and, more importantly, a great Minister for Health, Jillian the Builder Skinner, will build hospitals from Bega to Blacktown and Wagga Wagga to Westmead.

Put simply, the Coalition Government will spend more in eight years than Labor spent during its entire 16 years in government. One of the Government's capital projects is a major redevelopment of the Shellharbour Hospital, which the member for Kiama can claim as one of his biggest achievements. The Liberal-Nationals Government has committed \$251 million to fund this important redevelopment, which will result in expanded emergency department capacity, double the operating theatre size, an additional intensive care unit and provision for increased acute inpatient, surgical, aged care and rehabilitation beds. In conclusion, I make the point that this Government is getting on with the job whereas Labor members did nothing for 16 years.

**Pursuant to sessional order business interrupted and set down as an order of the day for a future day.**

**Pursuant to sessional order orders of the day (committee reports) proceeded with.**

## **LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 1/56**

**Question—That the House take note of the report—proposed.**

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN** (Upper Hunter) [1.00 p.m.]: It is with great pleasure that I address the House today as the new chair of the Legislation Review Committee for the Fifty-sixth Parliament. Before I comment on the committee's first digest for this Parliament, I will comment on the important role of this committee and how I will lead it throughout my term as chair. As members know, the Legislation Review Committee scrutinises all bills introduced into Parliament according to the criteria set out in section 8A of the Legislation Review Act 1987. The committee also scrutinises all regulations set out under section 9 of the same Act.

As chair of this committee I will ensure that we will only comment on specific issues as set out under the legislation—no more, no less. The committee's scrutiny will allow all members to be aware of the rights and implications of legislation, enabling members to make informed and considered decisions regarding legislation. Under section 8A of the Legislation Review Act 1987, the committee will consider whether bills introduced into Parliament trespass unduly on personal rights and liberties and whether they make rights, liberties or obligations unduly dependent upon insufficiently defined administrative powers or non-reviewable decisions. The committee will also consider whether bills inappropriately delegate legislative powers or insufficiently subject the exercise of legislative power to parliamentary scrutiny.

The committee will review regulations according to section 9 of the Legislation Review Act 1987 and consider issues such as whether a regulation trespasses unduly on personal rights and liberties, whether it has an adverse impact on the business community and whether it has been made within the general objects and spirit of the legislation under which it was made. As members can see, the committee's work is no mean feat and is set out clearly, specifically and fully by the relevant legislation. I look forward to chairing this committee throughout the Fifty-sixth Parliament—and I am pleased to have Acting-Speaker (Mr Lee Evans), the member for Heathcote, as the deputy chair—and to reporting to the House in the future on its exacting work.

I turn now to the committee's first digest, which was tabled on 23 June. The committee started with a punch, reviewing 18 bills, commenting on 14 of them, and reviewing 176 regulations, commenting on seven of

them. As members can see, a great deal of work has already been done, and I will highlight some of the bills on which the committee reported. In relation to the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill I will discuss the key points brought to the fore by the committee. Statute law bills have featured in most sessions of Parliament since 1984. They are an effective way of making minor policy changes by amending various Acts, repealing redundant legislation and correcting drafting errors.

In its report on the latest statute law bill, the committee noted that the bill includes two retrospective provisions. The committee will generally comment when provisions in bills are drafted to have retrospective effect. This is because retrospectivity is contrary to the rule of law, which allows people knowledge of the law to which they are subject at any given time. The first retrospective provision in the bill provides for the Health Care Complaints Commission to notify the Health Secretary of details of complaints involving a possible breach of the Assisted Reproductive Technology Act 2007.

This amendment is extended in the bill to include complaints received by the commission prior to the commencement of the amendment. The second retrospective provision provides that certain amendments made by the bill, including amendments correcting errors in technical provisions and rectifying minor drafting errors, will be taken to have commenced on the date to which the amendments relate. Notwithstanding these retrospective provisions, the committee noted that the retrospectivity was limited—the provisions did not create any new offences or penalties and related only to procedural matters and things such as the correction of minor drafting errors.

As a result, the committee made no further comment on this issue. The committee also commented on the inclusion of a Henry VIII clause in the bill. The committee noted that this clause would enable the Governor, by proclamation, to revoke the repeal of any Act that had been affected by the bill when it became law. To foster appropriate parliamentary oversight, amendments to primary legislation should be affected by Parliament and not by proclamation or other delegated legislation. Therefore, the committee referred the matter to Parliament for further consideration.

The Crimes (Appeal and Review) Amendment (Double Jeopardy) Bill potentially widens the circumstances under which a person can be retried for certain offences of which he or she has been acquitted. It thereby impacts on the double jeopardy rule. The double jeopardy rule is intended to prevent the State, with its considerable power and resources, from making repeated attempts to convict an individual for an alleged offence, thereby subjecting him or her to a continued state of uncertainty. [*Extension of time agreed to.*]

The committee noted the scheme of checks and balances that must be satisfied under the relevant legislation before a retrial can be ordered. Nonetheless, given the impact on double jeopardy, the committee referred the matter to Parliament for consideration. The final bill is the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Child Sex Offences) Bill 2015. The bill increases the maximum penalty for sexual intercourse with a child under 10 years from 25 years imprisonment to life imprisonment. The committee noted that this is a significant increase. However, it further noted that the increase does not interfere with the discretion of the court to impose a lesser sentence in appropriate circumstances. Similarly, given the gravity of the offence, the committee concluded that the increase was reasonable in the circumstances. I commend the digest to the House in the firm knowledge that it will assist members to contribute to comprehensive debate on matters of importance to the people of New South Wales.

**Question—That the House take note of the report—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Report noted.**

[*Acting-Speaker (Mr Lee Evans) left the chair at 1.07 p.m. The House resumed at 2.15 p.m.*]

## VISITORS

**The SPEAKER:** I welcome all visitors in the gallery this afternoon. First, I welcome Arthur Inglis and Dennis Furini, guests of the Parliamentary Secretary for Communities, and member for Parramatta. I also welcome Anne Perrottet, the mother of the member for Hawkesbury, guest of the Minister for Finance, Services and Property, and member for Hawkesbury. I acknowledge and welcome 35 students and their teacher visiting the House as part of the Hornsby High School Leaders program and guests of the Parliamentary Secretary for Treasury, and member for Hornsby. I also welcome 60 students and their teachers from Fort Street High School, guests of the member for Newtown. I welcome Ben Conolly, the son of the member for Riverstone and guest of the member for Riverstone.

**MR LUKE SIKORA**

**The SPEAKER:** Order! It is with some considerable sadness that I announce to the House that today is effectively the last day in the New South Wales Parliament for Mr Luke Sikora. Luke has been my executive assistant in Office of the Speaker for the last four years and an electorate officer since 2007. I note that most members in this House and, indeed, of the other House have had cause to come into contact with Luke on many occasions, as have the staff of the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Council and the Department of Parliamentary Services, and I am certain that all of you have been impressed with his courtesy, cooperation, intelligence and ability to resolve conflict and defuse potentially very difficult situations which arise from time to time in this place and beyond.

Luke has a vast knowledge of the system in which we all work and provides timely and appropriate advice to all members irrespective of their politics, and I am sure all members would agree with this observation. He liaises with senior staff and managers across the Chambers and with our LA staff in particular, bringing the same level of professionalism as he brought to his work in the South Coast electorate office. He has a real ability to deal with difficult people, including from time to time the member for Kiama and very rarely the member for South Coast.

**Mr Troy Grant:** He needs a medal.

**The SPEAKER:** He certainly does. Luke is intelligent, good-natured, funny and yet tenacious, determined and sometimes stubborn when he is standing up for what is right. He is a young man with great honesty and integrity and, needless to say, I will miss him terribly as will many members in this place. There will be a number of farewells for Luke in the next few days and weeks and many more good things will be said about this great young man whom I have come to rely on in many ways over the last eight years. Although perhaps I should not say who Luke's new employer is, he is taking up a fantastic career opportunity with John Brogden—John Brogden, thanks for poaching Luke. I know that John will come to value Luke Sikora as I do. Luke, please come back to see us. All of us will miss you; please stay in our lives.

**REPRESENTATION OF MINISTER ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS**

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I advise the House that the Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education will answer questions in the absence of the Minister for Education.

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE**

**The SPEAKER:** I report the receipt of the following message from His Excellency the Governor:

DAVID HURLEY  
Governor

Government House  
Sydney, 23 June 2015

General David Hurley, AC, DSC (Ret'd), Governor of New South Wales has the honour to inform the Legislative Assembly that he has re-assumed the administration of the Government of the State.

**QUESTION TIME**

*[Question time commenced at 2.22 p.m.]*

**PUBLIC HOUSING**

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** I direct my question to the Premier. Will the Government transfer 20,000 public housing dwellings to community housing associations to allow the not-for-profit sector to improve the quality and quantity of social and affordable housing in New South Wales?

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on making a terrific start in his speech on the budget. He said, "Madam Speaker...", and from there it went off course. We have a new term: Lukenomics. There are many things I could say about that. The Opposition has twigged to the fact that the Government is implementing a housing policy.

**Ms Linda Burney:** No, you stuffed it.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** No, we are implementing it and, as the Minister said, that and a lot more. I am glad the member is paying attention. We are wrapping around State Government services to ensure that we can provide the best opportunity for people in social housing to get ahead and to be independent. That is exactly what a responsible government should be doing. The Government is implementing that feature of the Leader of the Opposition's speech. However, I note that that is not entirely endorsed by his team because the member for Bankstown said—

**Ms Linda Burney:** You have had to scrabble for this.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** Did I really?

**Ms Linda Burney:** Yes.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** Okay. In speaking about handing public housing to community providers—which is the Government's policy and now also the Leader of the Opposition's policy—the member for Bankstown said, "Well, the Government simply can't hand overall responsibility to the non-government sector and walk away."

**Ms Tania Mihailuk:** I was talking about child protection.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** Stay calm. Does the member support the Government's policy?

**Ms Tania Mihailuk:** I was talking about child protection.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I do not know where to start with the Leader of the Opposition's speech. Bankstown airport is not a bad start. The Labor Party has moved on to asset recycling. The only difference is that they want to use other people's assets. I love the fact that the Leader of the Opposition wants to shut down the airport and move it to Badgerys Creek. I can imagine the A380s banked up and in front is Jimmy in his Cessna. He cannot see the A380s because he is underneath them. I can hear him, "Where did that come from? I just want to learn to fly. Get them out of here!"

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: I assume the Premier knows there are Cessnas at Mascot airport.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Is that the member's point of order? The member will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** It is spectacular. No matter what policy the Leader of the Opposition turns to, he gets confused. He has a concept about ride-sharing, and the Government is working with industry on that issue. The great thing about the Leader of the Opposition is that he comes out with a policy and then all of a sudden—

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

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** When we scratch below the surface a little and ask him to explain how it will work he replies, "I don't know." When we ask whether he has any idea, his response is, "I have no idea. I don't know." He has gone from being "Dr No" to "Dr Don't Know". That is the way members opposite formulate policy; they have no idea how to get this State moving.

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

## STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I address my question to the Premier. How is the Government transforming New South Wales with new infrastructure?

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** That is a lovely question. I thank the member for his question. He is interested in building infrastructure—something those opposite are not. They are not interested in infrastructure. We have a very stark difference. The budget brought down by our Treasurer this week is one that will transform the State. It is very different than it would be otherwise. And we crack on it. We are doing exactly what we said we would. Not only that, we are getting on with it. If we can do it more quickly, that is exactly what we will do, and that is what was in this budget: money brought forward to ensure that we are building more and doing it as quickly as we possibly can.



Members opposite stood in the way of progress. We all remember the election campaign. We remember that they said if there was an infrastructure project, they wanted to cancel it. We all remember that. They did not want to fund it. We all remember that. The good news for the people of New South Wales is that we have their trust and we are getting on and delivering for them. That is exactly what we are doing. We know some of the challenges that are there. Our train system will reach capacity between 2017 and 2024. We said we did not want to leave that problem or challenge for someone else to deal with. We said, "We have to deal with it." So the way to do it is to fund a second harbour rail crossing and build the Sydney Metro. That is underway under this Government. We fought for it and we funded it. The Opposition did not fund it and were not interested. That is the stark choice.

We are the Government of public transport. We support public transport. The Leader of the Opposition in his reply to the budget did not mention public transport. For those on the M4 and the M5, we have a simple message: Help is on its way. Because you sit there in congestion, we are going to take away that congestion by improving the roads and building the rail. That is what this global city needs. Also, the Pacific Highway duplication will be very close to completion as we come to the end of the term of government, and that is long overdue. The Newell Highway, the spine of New South Wales, is finally getting the upgrade it deserves. Water projects across regional New South Wales are finally underway under this Government. And on hospitals this year alone, under Jillian the builder, we are spending \$1.4 billion. The economy is moving, jobs are coming, the State has got its mojo back and we are very proud. I note that the budget has been endorsed by the member for Keira. He is very happy with this. He says:

I'm very pleased that finally after many years we're seeing some funding allocated to Bulli Hospital.

Well done, member for Keira. And it does not stop there. The member for Wyong was ecstatic. He welcomed key road projects, especially the upgrade plan for the link road at Warnervale. He was excited by the budget. And the member for Summer Hill was so excited we could hardly get it all down. She said in relation to the budget and Ashfield commuter car park, something that we are determined to deliver:

This is a great win for the Ashfield community ...

It was the number one issue for commuters and will make it so much easier for people to get out of their cars and onto the train.

They are finally waking up. They are finally getting it that this Government is doing a job that needs to be done. So, thank you, member for Summer Hill; thank you, member for Keira.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** What does the CWA think?

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** Thank you, member for Swansea. I know you love it. Even the *Illawarra Mercury*, for heaven's sake, is backing it, and so it should. The member for Wollongong cannot believe her luck, because she fought against the Albion Park Rail bypass. She fought hard against it, as did the member for Keira. But the good news is we are delivering, and Illawarra is very happy. We are proud, as a Government, to be delivering a budget that has surpluses increasing over the forward estimates, that has debt coming down, that has infrastructure going up, and that has the State economy moving. Under this Treasurer and this Government, that is the job you will get from us. We will continue to work for the people of New South Wales, and we are very proud to deliver.

## REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr ANDREW FRASER:** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. How is the Government investing in infrastructure to boost regional economies and create jobs?

**Mr TROY GRANT:** I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for his excellent question. He is a strong and tireless advocate. This is one of The Nationals' regional members who fought long and hard to get infrastructure into their community that was vital for the safety of their community and the whole of New South Wales—it also had the additional benefit of creating hundreds of jobs—called the Pacific Highway. We will be always in your debt for your advocacy on that issue, member for Coffs Harbour. That is a clear example of the fact that when we invest in infrastructure in the regions, the jobs flow and the economies grow.

The jobs flow and the economies grow when regional New South Wales has the investment that it deserves. We understand our communities need and deserve this investment, whether it is roads, health or education, or critical infrastructure to support our emergency services and our police. That is why we are

spending a record \$4.4 billion, which is going straight to the key major upgrades of our fire, ambulance and police stations, hospitals and local roads in regional New South Wales. Jobs and communities need to be connected by safe and productive roads. That is why we are spending a record \$4.1 billion on regional roads, maritime and freight in New South Wales.

For the gallery, those opposite do not have a single bit of interest in regional New South Wales—not a single bit. They starved our communities for 16 years, and this is the legacy inherited by this Government. We now have a record of delivery and a plan of future investment, because those opposite—the motley crew that is Labor—denied the investment to regional New South Wales communities.

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

**Mr TROY GRANT:** They broke the hearts of regional New South Wales for 16 years.

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

**Mr TROY GRANT:** We have a record of investment and now we have plans for the future. Grafton prison is another example.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I am having difficulty hearing the Minister. I ask Opposition members to cease shouting and interjecting. That is the final time I will ask nicely. Members will be removed from the Chamber without any further warning. Is the member for Keira listening? Clearly he is not. It might be his turn to jump next—I am warning him. The Deputy Premier has the call. The House will come to order.

**Mr TROY GRANT:** The Grafton correctional facility is another example whereby the investment into that infrastructure will treble the jobs in Grafton for corrective services. Another key example—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Fairfield to order for the first time. He will cease shouting and interjecting.

**Mr TROY GRANT:** When we reopened Kirkconnell, 60 jobs came with that decision. Our regions will be the beneficiaries and will win from the major construction materials to the tune of \$13 billion in projects across our State. Small businesses win out of this investment, and small businesses are the heart and soul of a lot of our regional communities. I am very proud of the efforts of everyone on this side for putting regional New South Wales at the heart of government. But at the same time I have to apologise to the House that I am absolutely furious that the Leader of the Opposition on this day, when he wants to give a vision for what those opposite want to do for this State, uses the word "region" to make himself look good. What did he offer us? We have an Opposition leader in this State who is all bottle and no sauce. He is a disgrace to his side of the Parliament. He used the word "region", and any reference to the regions was to the Central Coast and the Illawarra.

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

**Mr TROY GRANT:** That was it, Madam Speaker. I listened with hope—

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

**Mr TROY GRANT:** The former Leader of the Opposition did not mention once the word "region". Then the new guy comes in. We used to use the word "tomfoolery". Now we use "Lukefoolery". He is trying to fool the regions that he cares about them. I will have to send him a map. During the election campaign he made all the promises in the world.

**Ms Linda Burney:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Has the Deputy Premier completed his answer?

**Mr TROY GRANT:** No, I have more to say.

**Ms Linda Burney:** His time has expired.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister's time had not expired before the point of order was taken. What is the member's point of order?

**Ms Linda Burney:** I ask that the Minister be directed to refer to the Leader of the Opposition by his correct title.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I request the Deputy Premier refer to members by their correct titles.

**Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.**

**Mr TROY GRANT:** The Opposition leader is a joke. He has been starving regional New South Wales with his lack of vision.

**Mr John Sidoti:** Where is he?

**Mr TROY GRANT:** He is not even here. He has no interest. The question must be asked—

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

**Mr TROY GRANT:** Those opposite say, "We want to support and invest in regional New South Wales." Luke Foley says, "I love the regions. Labor is the best thing for regional New South Wales".

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I am unable to hear the Deputy Premier. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. Members who want to have private conversations will do so outside the Chamber.

**Mr TROY GRANT:** He says, "Regional New South Wales, trust in Labor. We will look after you." After the election campaign, in this place when there was a vote to deliver \$6 billion for regional infrastructure the Opposition said no. When the Jobs Action Plan legislation was introduced to invest in regional New South Wales and create more jobs the Opposition said no.

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

**Mr TROY GRANT:** The Opposition leader is a disgrace.

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

**Mr TROY GRANT:** The whole lot of you are a disgrace. You should hang your heads in shame.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Rockdale will cease shouting. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. The House will come to order.

**Mr TROY GRANT:** Over there is an alleged regional Labor member. I like the member for Cessnock; he is not a bad guy.

**Ms Noreen Hay:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Premier will resume his seat.

**Mr TROY GRANT:** The member for Wollongong is supposed to be for regional New South Wales.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Before I hear the point of the order, the House will come to order. The Deputy Premier will resume his seat.

**Mr TROY GRANT:** You are a disgrace. Hang your head in shame.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Premier will resume his seat.

**Ms Noreen Hay:** Sit down, Dubbo. That's the Deputy Premier. He's all class!

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order. I call the member for Kogarah to order for the third time.

**Ms Noreen Hay:** The Deputy Premier is addressing members across the Chamber and across the table, not through the Chair, and he is inciting interjections.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Premier has completed his answer. The House will come to order.

### **BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP**

**Mr RYAN PARK:** Madam Speaker—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the member for Keira continues to argue across the Chamber I will call on the next question.

**Mr RYAN PARK:** So it is just us? The Deputy Premier was arguing across the Chamber.

**Mr Michael Daley:** The Deputy Premier did not sit down when he was directed to. Is that okay?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maroubra never sits down when I ask him to.

**Mr RYAN PARK:** My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. How much is the Government paying the Boston Consulting Group to undertake a restructure of the transport department which he inherited from the current Treasurer?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Keira will resume his seat. Government members will come to order. The Minister for Family and Community Services will come to order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** What an amazing question from someone who used to be the Deputy Director General of the Department of Transport, a bloke who went from being a department liaison officer in a Minister's office to chief of staff to the Minister for Transport—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Keira will cease interjecting.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** —to deputy head of a department.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the third time. This is the last warning for the member for Keira.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** If the member for Keira wants to ask silly questions like this, I will look at what he spent on consultants when he was deputy director general. It will take a lot of time to work out that number. If he wants to talk about money well spent, he should look at a serious document called the New South Wales budget, which was delivered earlier this week by the Treasurer. It is interesting that the Leader of the Opposition's reply speech was missing a couple of items.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure will resume his seat.

**Mr Michael Daley:** The question was succinct: How much money is the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure spending on the Boston Consulting Group to restructure Gladys's department?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his answer. The member for Coffs Harbour will come to order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** As I was saying, the Leader of the Opposition in his reply speech to the budget missed three items. That much-heralded stamp duty deferral scheme that Labor announced during the election, which, of course, was cancelled—

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129. We are trying to help the current Treasurer.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The member for Keira will resume his seat.

**Mr Ryan Park:** We want to know clearly—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member will resume his seat.

**Mr Ryan Park:** —what was wrong with the department—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member will resume his seat. The Treasurer has the call. There is no point of order.

**Mr Lee Evans:** The real estate agent is on the phone—another unit.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Did I hear someone mention real estate agent to the member for Keira?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Keira for the last time that he is on three calls to order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The Leader of the Opposition in his reply speech to the budget missed out that Labor policy called the stamp duty deferral scheme. It missed out the Wollongong convention centre. Did the Leader of the Opposition mention public transport services in New South Wales in his reply speech to the budget?

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his seat.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** What a compliment to the Treasurer of this State—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his seat.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** —that the Leader of the Opposition did not mention infrastructure or public transport in his reply speech to the budget.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure will resume his seat.

**Mr Michael Daley:** The Minister's answer is nowhere near the question. It is public money. The public has a right to know how much money is being spent. Just give us a figure.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I do not need any further information. The Treasurer will return to the leave of the question.

**Mr Michael Daley:** He was the Treasurer. He's not the Treasurer now.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. He is a smart Alec.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Whilst the Government is getting on with the job of delivering thousands of additional services across the State and record expenditure for infrastructure and public transport, a former deputy director general of a Labor transport department is asking questions about—

**Ms Anna Watson:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129, relevance. We have been waiting the best part of four minutes for an answer. We want to hear the answer.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Ms Anna Watson:** We want to know how much money is being spent.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member will not argue. The member will resume her seat. The Minister will return to the leave of the question. This is just tactics.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I am sure the member for Shellharbour received permission from the member for Wollongong to take that point of order. The point I make is that I will go back and have a look.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Prospect will come to order. The member for Rockdale will come to order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** If the former deputy director general of a Labor Government wants to ask questions about consulting, I am happy to go back and look at their consultancies while he was the deputy director general of the department.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I will reinforce that the Government is delivering record expenditure for public transport and infrastructure. The Opposition built nothing.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Prospect will come to order. The House will come to order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** It is a bit rich, during budget week, for the Opposition to start asking questions that do not relate to the budget. Given the Leader of the Opposition in his reply speech made no mention of infrastructure, public transport or the Wollongong convention centre, Labor members should hang their heads in shame.

### **SCHOOLS LEARNING MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS REFORM PROGRAM**

**Mr JIHAD DIB:** My question is directed to the Premier. Premier, have any schools in New South Wales had their electricity and store accounts cut off as a result of late payments through the Learning Management and Business Reform [LMBR] system?

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I do not know the circumstances around the specific question. If there are specific concerns about specific schools I am happy to deal with them outside the Chamber. I am very happy to do that. The member should not ask such a specific question without giving the details of the school and the circumstances. I am just helping him.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister for Family and Community Services will come to order.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** There are over 2,000 schools in the State.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the Minister for Family and Community Services to order for the first time.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** The Government is very proud of what we have done for Education in this budget. The Opposition should be standing up and clapping us for what we have done for Education in this budget. The Government members are clapping.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Government members will come to order.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** In the public gallery we have many future leaders from the Hornsby electorate. They are the future of this State. In our education system we are doing everything to bring leaders forward.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Kogarah that he is on three calls to order.

**Ms Linda Burney:** Point of order—

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** In terms of the overall budget, to which I think the question was aimed—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will resume his seat.

**Ms Linda Burney:** My point of order relates to relevance. The Premier could give a commitment to finding out about any school that has lost its electricity.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member will resume her seat. The Premier is answering the question.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I am happy to get the details and work on them. I cannot be any clearer on that. I have just explained Education in terms of the context of the budget, which was delivered this week. The

alternate response has us all worried. I will refer briefly to the Leader of the Opposition's speech in the context of the budget, which this question relates to. I noted in the speech that a little bit of Lukenomics came to fruition. The shadow Treasurer could have pointed this out. The Leader of the Opposition said, "By the way, in terms of the proceeds of the poles and wires, we think you should not spend it all on infrastructure. You should make sure that you save some to pay wages." Hang on, to pay wages. So the Opposition says we should sell assets to pay wages.

**Ms Anna Watson:** Capital expenditure.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I will get to that. That is Lukenomics at its best.

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

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** The Leader of the Opposition says that he wants to lease, sell or do whatever to assets and he wants to put that into wages. On top of that, the Leader of the Opposition said in relation to ports—I think there is a new policy coming—that he now sees no compelling need for the State to even own ports.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about the LMBR system.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I heard what the question was about. The member will resume his seat.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I am just pointing out to the member for Lakemba that, in terms of capacity, his leader put together an economic blueprint to provide funding for the budget. The Opposition needs to understand that if they are going to lease or sell assets—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Premier has answered the question. He said that he did not know, so I am not sure—

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

**Ms Jodi McKay:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the Premier has answered the question, then the member for Strathfield does not have a point of order.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** The Premier is now not being relevant.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member will resume her seat.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** The Premier has answered the question, so he should sit down.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. I have asked the member three times to sit down. The Premier has the call.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I do not know what the Leader of the Opposition stands for. He has said that he is now happy for the ports to be sold, even though in the upper House he said, "No, no, no." In the other Chamber he says no but as the Leader of the Opposition he says yes. He now wants to sell the ports; he does not want to lease them.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. There is a secondary school in this State that has had its electricity cut off.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Lakemba does not need to go on about it. The member will resume his seat.

## STATE ECONOMY

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI:** My question is addressed to the wonderful Treasurer and Minister for Industrial Relations. How is the New South Wales Government transforming New South Wales and cementing our position as the nation's number one economy?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I thank the wonderful member for Drummoyne for his question.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I know the member for Drummoyne is very pleased with the budget because it is delivering for his community. On Tuesday this Government delivered a budget that showed strong financial management, record service delivery and record investment in infrastructure. The budget confirmed New South Wales as the number one State in the nation. There are record amounts in Health, \$21 billion; in Education, including early childhood and schools, \$12.8 billion; and in Transport and Roads, \$16.5 billion. The strong position of this State now is a far cry from what we inherited from those opposite.

When they were in Government expenses were out of control, the State was about to lose its triple-A credit rating and infrastructure projects were being cancelled. Perhaps most disappointing is that the Leader of the Opposition kept saying, "Labor has changed," but today his reply speech has shown that nothing has changed. Today he reiterated to us that Labor is as bad as ever. What does the great reformer the Leader of the Opposition have to offer the people of New South Wales? Unfortunately, not much. I am not sure what budget the Leader of the Opposition was replying to but it was not the New South Wales budget. He failed to acknowledge how far—

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. The member for Drummoyne should have taken this point of order because the Treasurer is not answering his question regarding the Government cementing its position as being number one in Australia.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member will resume his seat. There is no point of order. The Treasurer has the call.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In his reply speech today, what policy did the Leader of the Opposition offer for transport and roads? Nothing. What policy did he offer for hospitals and schools? Absolutely nothing. What policies did he offer for caring for the most vulnerable in our community? Absolutely nothing. What did the Leader of the Opposition have to say about creating jobs? Absolutely nothing, except for closing Bankstown airport—an innovative approach to asset recycling, given that the State government does not even own Bankstown airport.

I was waiting for the Leader of the Opposition to give details about his pre-election commitment to build an extension of the M4 motorway to Hyde Park, but it was not there. Opposition members say that they have read some serious reports but, unfortunately, I do not think the New South Wales budget was one of them. During his reply speech the Leader of the Opposition talked about creating jobs, yet when the Labor Party had the chance to support our Jobs Action Plan legislation it opposed the bill.

For the past week the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer have been talking to anybody who cared to listen about how the Government is not doing enough for housing affordability. The Leader of the Opposition did not even mention the words "housing affordability" in his reply speech, let alone offer a solution. The response to the budget by the Leader of the Opposition and Labor was to outline details of travel diaries. I wish he would give us his diary. According to the Leader of the Opposition, the number one issue in New South Wales is not hospitals, schools, transport or family and community service. He reckons that the number one issue in New South Wales is ridesharing. That is what he thinks. Every Labor member is shaking his or her head and thinking, "What are we going to tell communities about what we're doing?"

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will cease shouting at the Treasurer. Members will come to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** During the presentation of the budget on Tuesday, we said that this Government wants to take this State to the next level.

**Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.**

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** On Tuesday we said that we would be taking the State to the next level. On that note, I am pleased to announce that the New South Wales Government is today calling for expressions of interest [EOI] for the lease of TransGrid. The EOI for TransGrid is the first step in the 49 per cent lease of the State's electricity networks and comes ahead of the EOIs for the partial lease of



Endeavour Energy and Ausgrid. The poles and wires transactions will unlock \$20 billion, which will be invested in new rail, roads, hospitals, schools, new sports and cultural facilities, and vital water infrastructure in our regions—things that matter to the people of New South Wales.

This transaction shows that the Government is wasting no time in honouring its election commitments. In March we promised to transform New South Wales and we are getting on with that job. This Government wants to keep New South Wales number one in the nation for the future of this State and the future of the good people of New South Wales. After the reply by the Leader of the Opposition to the budget, let us hope that Labor never returns to the government side of the House.

### STATE BUDGET AND EDUCATION

**Ms PRUE CAR:** My question is directed to the Treasurer. Given the commitment made by the former Treasurer the day before the election, on Friday 27 March, that "a Jordan Springs primary school will be completed in the next term of a Baird Government", and the subsequent letter I received from the Minister for Education dated 26 May 2015 confirming that commitment, where exactly are the words "Jordan Springs primary school" in the budget papers?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order. I am sure the member for Londonderry would like to hear the answer.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I thank the member for Londonderry for her question and reiterate that the Government will keep every election commitment it has made—every commitment.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Rockdale will come to order. The member for Londonderry will come to order. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time. Opposition members would do well to cease arguing and shouting. It does not get them anywhere.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I tend to not like being personal, but the member for Londonderry received her apprenticeship from a former Premier, Bob Carr, who we know was the king of spin. We know that Labor is very good at announcing but not at delivering. The member for Londonderry may be assured that when the Government says it is doing something, it is doing something.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Londonderry will cease shouting. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the second time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** When we say we are providing an additional 27 per cent increase in infrastructure for schools, we mean it. When we say we are providing extra money for hospitals, we mean it. When we say we are providing extra infrastructure for the people of this great State, we mean it. We know that Labor members do not read the budget papers, so I will read a bit for them.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** This year we not only did the budget papers under budget overview but also did the "Budget Statement", which is a worthwhile document. I suggest that Labor members read it. It has a section entitled "Election Commitments" and I will read out very clearly what it states under "Education".

**The SPEAKER:** Order! All members will come to order. The member for Rockdale has learned quickly that taking a glass of water is quite the thing to do. It is very distracting. Well done! The member for Rockdale will resume his seat.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The member for Rockdale disappoints me: I thought he wanted to take a point of order.

**Ms Prue Car:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! It hardly can be possible for the member for Londonderry to have listened to the answer because of the shouting. I am sure the member for Londonderry is interested in the answer. Members will come to order.

**Ms Prue Car:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. My question specifically related to the budget papers, not the Government's dodgy election commitments.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The member for Londonderry will resume her seat.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** What did I say? I said that the member for Londonderry took her lessons from the king of spin. Labor members do not worry about the budget papers or election commitments because they do not care.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I issue a final warning to the member for Kogarah. All members who are on one or two calls to order are now deemed to be on three calls to order. The noise in the Chamber is unacceptable. All members will come to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In "Election Commitments 2015-2019", under "Education" the document states:

Construct a new primary school to service the community of Jordan Springs—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Treasurer will wait until Government members come to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Madam Speaker, this is wasting my time.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Treasurer's time can be reinstated, if necessary.

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I inform Government members that I will hear the point of order.

**Mr David Harris:** I seek clarification of whether that document was released by Treasury.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** It is a public document.

**Mr David Harris:** Is it from Treasury? It is not part of the budget papers.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Madam Speaker, as I said—

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

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I will not accept any points of order until the House comes to order. The level of noise is unacceptable.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The document states:

Construct a new primary school to service the community of Jordan Springs, with planning and construction to begin in this term of government.

I suggest that during the parliamentary recess, all Labor members read the budget.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Treasurer will resume her seat.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Did Treasury put that out? It is not a budget paper.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** It is a public document.

**Mr Michael Daley:** You said, "budget papers". The question was about budget papers.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat.

**Mr Ray Williams:** Point of order: I request that another question be asked by the member for Londonderry.

**SERVICE NSW**

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** My question is addressed to the Minister for Finance, Services and Property. How is the Government transforming New South Wales by bringing service delivery into the twenty-first century?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the member for Kogarah to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of one hour.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Kogarah left the Chamber at 3.09 p.m.]*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the member for Rockdale to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of one hour.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Rockdale left the Chamber at 3.09 p.m.]*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Prospect will be next. The Minister has the call. I had warned the member for Kogarah several times.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: Respectfully, why was the member for Kogarah ejected from the Chamber when the member for Castle Hill can abuse the processes of the House without a mention?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. The Minister has the call.

**Mr Anthony Roberts:** Madam Speaker, I draw your attention to the time. The Minister has not commenced his answer—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Are you asking me to reinstate the time?

**Mr Anthony Roberts:** Yes.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will have his full five minutes to answer the question.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I state at the outset that I am proud to be part of the most progressive, innovative and forward-looking Government in the nation. When people think progress they think of the New South Wales Liberal Party. Let me list the ways in which we have liberated the State from the dark ages of New South Wales Labor—

**Mr Troy Grant:** And The Nationals.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The Nationals are a little behind but they are in front of Labor.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The behaviour of Government members this afternoon is unacceptable.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We have liberated the State from the dark ages of New South Wales Labor and transformed service delivery in New South Wales. First is Service NSW. The member for Maroubra has some issues with Service NSW at the moment. We inherited his mess—a mess of fixed line telephones, paper forms and fax machines; 100 call centres, 400 shopfronts, 1,000 websites and 8,000 different phone numbers, 7,000 of which were diverted to Unions NSW. We had to fix that mess.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order: Under Standing Order 130, this is not a debate. The question was direct and specific. The Minister is clearly debating the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The point of order is far-fetched. The Minister is answering the question. The Minister has the call.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Unlike members opposite, we realise that government is about serving people, so we have put the citizen at the centre of government. We have created an innovative network of one-stop shops that are the envy of the world. We have a 24-hour phone number that people can call and one

website where everything is conveniently located. As I announced this week, a mobile app has been downloaded more than 500,000 times. People can check the waiting times at each centre in real time before they leave home. That is a new level of convenience. Indeed, I can monitor the wait times at Service NSW centres from a screen in my office. Our customers and citizens love it; it has a 98 per cent satisfaction rating.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** But we have not stopped there. I am pleased to say that we are taking a customer first approach to other government services as well. Labor left our workers compensation scheme in a mess, with a \$4.2 deficit, business premiums to rise by 28 per cent and 12,000 jobs at risk.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Bankstown will come to order. The member for Prospect will come to order.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Most importantly, workers across New South Wales were missing out under Labor.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** In just under four years we have fixed the scheme.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I place the member for Prospect on three calls to order. He will cease shouting.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The scheme is financially sustainable and, importantly, it can be fair. The most seriously injured workers are getting more benefits, and we are looking to do more for them.

**Ms Kate Washington:** Retrospective pain.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** This morning I spent an hour with injured workers, hearing firsthand their stories and their struggles. The learnings from these sessions will inform how we change the workers compensation scheme going forward.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Unlike members opposite, who met only with union officials to inform policy, we meet with ordinary people. The Government believes in the dignity of the worker. We are also transforming the way the Government runs its services to deliver better value for New South Wales taxpayers. We have reduced the size of our car fleet and we have trialled car sharing for public servants. We are equipping our public servants with the latest in technology by improving back-office processes. And we will save more than \$400 million through the procurement reforms announced by the Treasurer in this year's budget. That \$400 million could be invested in front-line services—more teachers in schools, more nurses in hospitals, and more police on the frontline.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maitland will come to order. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Nowhere is the difference between our two parties more pronounced than on the question of technology and putting customers at the centre.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We have a Customer Service Commissioner, Mike Pratt, who is doing a terrific job. We have a new Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, who is doing a fantastic job.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members will come to order. They will cease shouting and arguing.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Later this year we will be the first Government in the nation to roll out digital licences, the simple ones first and the more complex ones later.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** It is sad to see the Labor Party trying to play catch-up.

**Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.**

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We saw the opinion piece by the Leader of the Opposition this morning. Clearly he did not write it; he has Daniel Mookhey writing his pieces. The Leader of the Opposition gets excited by the term "sharing economy". To the Labor Party, "sharing economy" means the redistribution of wealth. Good old Labor—always leading from behind. But there is a light shining through the fog on the hill and that is the member for Cessnock. The member for Cessnock is in charge of Labor's information technology [IT] policy. He is charged with bringing Labor into the twenty-first century and he is doing a great job.

**Ms Linda Burney:** Point of order: Under Standing Order 129, how can the Minister talk about technology when people cannot enrol a child in TAFE?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The member for Canterbury will resume her seat.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The member for Cessnock is charged with Labor's IT policy. In a sign of good faith—

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: If the Minister does not want to answer the question, that does not give him the right to transgress Standing Order 73. He is launching an attack on the member for Cessnock.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! No, he is not.

**Mr Michael Daley:** The question has absolutely nothing to do with the member for Cessnock. The Minister should stick to the question or sit down.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I am not sure that the Minister has launched an attack. If he does so I will take action against the member for Cessnock.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I asked the member for Cessnock to send me a soft copy of Labor's IT policy and here it is. New South Wales Labor's IT policy is a floppy disk. Some call the member sloppy; we call him floppy.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: We should stop the student politics.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If there were a standing order relating to student politics many more members would be taking points of order.

#### **CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL PROJECT**

**Mr JAMIE PARKER:** Is this the last day of school?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! It is the last day of school for a while. It is just as well the member for Balmain is always well mannered. The member for Balmain has the call, and will be heard in silence.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER:** My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Considering the widespread support for light rail and its important role in our public transport network, will the Government seriously investigate extending light rail along the disused goods line into White Bay, as well as extending the network along Parramatta Road?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I thank the member for Balmain for his sensible question and confirm that the Government will give consideration to an extension of light rail. The bottom line is—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I cannot hear the answer from the Minister. The Minister has the call.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I will be working closely with the Minister for Planning on the transformation of the base precinct being led by UrbanGrowth NSW. I can confirm we have commenced a transport study to identify a preliminary package of accessibility options in the base precinct and all travel modes are being considered. Turning to Parramatta Road, I assure the member for Balmain that the Government will investigate options for rapid on-street public transport. That may include bus rapid transit and we will consider a future light rail extension. In the budget the Treasurer outlined moneys for examining and ramping up bus rapid transit routes across Sydney, including for Parramatta Road. Whilst on the subject of light rail I thank The Greens for their support for the Government's light rail plan. There is no doubt that the central business district [CBD] will be transformed by the light rail project in George Street.

**Ms Noreen Hay:** They love you too.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** They do love me. It is important that members are informed about a number of important documents relating to light rail. I note that those opposite have decided to cancel the CBD light rail and replace it with a bus tunnel between Wynyard and Town Hall. When the shadow Minister for Transport was the deputy director general of the Department of Transport some work was done on this issue which confirmed that constructing a Sydney CBD bus rapid transit system would create construction challenges and that a bus tunnel would be inappropriate. Transport's advice since then has been very clear in that constructing a tunnel between William Street and Town Hall was considered unfeasible due to the limited number of underground corridors available at appropriate depths. The report states:

Complications associated with ventilation, access, incidence management, fire and life safety constitute very real threats to viability.

Those opposite want to cancel the light rail and build a bus tunnel which will put people at risk. I urge them to get back on board with light rail, given that it is a sensible transport option for the future. When Labor announced its great policy for constructing a bus tunnel it was reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and there were some interesting online responses. One read: "They really are mad. ALP will be in 3<sup>rd</sup> place to Greens and Liberals in the next election." Another online reader wrote: "They've just lost my vote." The *Sydney Morning Herald* article went on:

But Mr Foley changed tack last week, arguing the line would be a disaster even when built and would form a "Berlin Wall" through the city.

A reader's response was that this was "possibly one of the dumbest things ever muttered". There are pages of responses. Labor needs to get on board with light rail.

## JOBS GROWTH

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY:** My question is addressed to the Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy. How is the Government driving industry and jobs growth in New South Wales and related matters?

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** I thank the member for Riverstone for his question and acknowledge his commitment to relieving the burden of energy costs for his constituents. One of the responsibilities of any government is to provide an economic climate that encourages jobs and eases burden on families. Those opposite spent some 16 years taking from the people of New South Wales. We as a government believe in serving the people of New South Wales. This Government, under Premier Mike Baird, is not only developing hope for New South Wales following 16 long years under a Labor storm cloud but also providing real opportunities for people and businesses of this great State. Upon entering office in 2011, New South Wales was ranked last in economic performance according to CommSec's State of the State report, and that includes employment.

Those opposite have "Lukenomics" and we on this side of the House have "Mikenomics". That has changed this State dramatically. We now proudly lead the nation in every economic indicator. There is a saying: give assistance not advice in a crisis. It is obvious from the budget that this is exactly what we are doing. We are assisting the families of New South Wales following the crisis of 16 years under Labor. We are assisting families with a 2015-16 budget of almost \$70 billion, without the use of Labor's well-worn credit card. This means many billions being spent on better medical and health facilities, better roads and transport, a better equipped police force and more land released for housing.

This means more funds to promote our world-class primary industries, tourism and major events and the arts. It means record investment in the regions. All of these were badly neglected by the Labor Government, despite the \$4.3 billion black hole it left us. This budget, with its \$10.3 billion infrastructure investment, means something else. It means jobs and more jobs. What was Labor's plan to provide families with jobs? It was to establish a koala park about which Labor released a press statement saying:

The creation of the great Koala National Park is an Australian first—and is modelled on China's internationally famous panda reserves.

Those opposite did not have any other plans, but this budget ensures New South Wales will remain number one. It delivers for the State in so many ways including providing, yes, more jobs. "Mikenomics" has helped make New South Wales number one on every economic indicator and it has provided the climate to ensure that this is the nation's jobs State.

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

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** And it does not get any better than that. The superb economic management of this Government also means we can provide a record commitment to energy rebates of more than \$1 billion over the next four years. The 2015-16 New South Wales budget will have more than \$250 million available for energy rebates this financial year, an increase of more than 11 per cent on the figures for the past year. Compare that to Labor's 2010-11 budget for energy rebates of just \$160 million. Given that Labor delivered electricity price increases of more than 60 per cent, one would think it would have been a bit more generous, but of course it was not. That money was reserved for its union mates.

The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government understands the pressure on many households from energy bills. Family budgets were squeezed under the Labor Government's years of double-digit energy price increases. We on this side of the House are working each and every day to ease that burden. The Baird-Grant Government continues to reduce strain on families, with more than \$250 million committed this financial year to assist more than 900,000 households with their energy bills. We have allocated more than \$196 million to low-income household rebates. That is \$50 million more than those opposite committed in their last budget.

More than \$13 million has been allocated for the Family Energy Rebate, which received more than 130,000 applications in the last financial year alone. The Family Energy Rebate did not exist under the Labor Government. This is fantastic news and this budget shows the New South Wales Government is ensuring that it leaves no-one behind, particularly those on low incomes. Our new \$90 gas rebate will be available to an estimated 290,000 customers who meet the same eligibility criteria as the low-income household rebate. From 1 July the rebates for life support equipment increase by an average of 85 per cent to assist an estimated 32,000 people to cover the cost of electricity for their life support equipment. Last year someone requiring a ventilator received a rebate of \$605. Next financial year they will receive \$1,120.

**Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** That is an increase of more than \$500. Last week I had the great honour of visiting Ferguson Lodge at Lidcombe. It is run by ParaQuad and is a fantastic rehabilitation centre for sufferers of spinal cord injuries. I spoke with the wonderful staff and residents about the Government's expansion of the Life Support Rebate to assist some 6,000 quadriplegic customers with the cost of powering their electric wheelchairs, something that did not exist under the Labor Government. The Government will ensure that from 1 July eligible retirement village residents, residential communities and households within embedded network strata schemes will have access to every New South Wales energy rebate. The Government is also providing help to households in emergency situations by allocating nearly \$16 million this financial year to the Energy Accounts Payments Assistance Scheme to support households facing disconnections.

Thanks to the responsible economic management of the Baird-Grant Government, we have been able to allocate more than \$253 million this year to energy rebates. Not only could the Leader of the Opposition not fund his transport election commitments, he could not even fund our new energy rebates program. However, it gets even worse—and this is what saddens me—he could not even afford the cornerstone of his election campaign, his very own koala park in northern New South Wales. It comes as no surprise that we received in the post today a message from the koalas of the North Coast saying, "You can have your sign back and jam it."

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: It has taken to this point in the Minister's answer for Standing Order 129 to be an issue. He has done quite well.

**The SPEAKER:** He has done very well.

**Question time concluded at 3.31 p.m.**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL 2015**

### **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2015**

### **APPROPRIATION (BUDGET VARIATIONS) BILL 2015**

**Messages received from the Legislative Council returning the bills without amendment.**

**RHYS HAYNES**

#### **Ministerial Statement**

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN** (Willoughby—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) [3.31 p.m.]: I acknowledge that Rhys Haynes is leaving my office after three years of dedicated service to the Government. I wish him well for the future.

### **INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES**

#### **Report**

**The Speaker** tabled, pursuant to section 16 of the Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2012, the report of the Inspector of Custodial Services entitled "Making Connections: Providing family and community support to young people in custody", dated June 2015.

**Ordered to be printed.**

### **INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**

#### **Report**

**The Speaker** tabled, pursuant to section 78 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled "Investigation into the conduct of a university manager and others in relation to false invoicing", dated June 2015.

**Ordered to be printed.**

### **PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICE**

#### **Report**

**Mr Bruce Notley-Smith**, as chair of the Public Accounts Committee, tabled, pursuant to section 15 (3) of the Parliamentary Budget Officer Act 2010, the report of the Parliamentary Budget Office entitled "2015 Post-Election Report", dated 11 June 2015, together with an extract of the Public Accounts Committee minutes of 24 June 2015.

**Report ordered to be printed.**

### **STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS**

#### **Chair and Deputy Chair**

**The SPEAKER:** I advise the House, pursuant to Standing Order 282 (2), that on 25 June 2015 Mark Joseph Coure was elected Chair and Jai Travers Rowell was elected Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics.



## PETITIONS

**The Speaker announced that the following petitions signed by more than 10,000 persons were lodged for presentation:**

### **Plastic Bags Ban**

Petition calling on the Government to introduce legislation to ban single-use lightweight plastic bags at retail points of sale in New South Wales to reduce waste and environmental degradation, received from **Mr Bruce Notley-Smith**.

### **Pacific Highway Upgrade Koala Protection**

Petition requesting an alternative route for the upgrade of the Pacific Highway to protect the koala population of the Blackwall Range area, received from **Ms Jodi McKay**.

### **Nursing Homes**

Petition requesting the Government to retain the legislative requirement of having a registered nurse on duty at all times and the appointment of a director of nursing to provide quality care in all nursing homes in New South Wales, received from **Ms Trish Doyle**.

**Discussion on petitions set down as an order of the day for a future day.**

**The Clerk announced that the following petitions signed by fewer than 500 persons were lodged for presentation:**

### **Sydney Electorate Public High School**

Petition requesting the establishment of a public high school in the Sydney electorate, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **WestConnex**

Petition requesting the Government to halt the tender and construction processes for WestConnex, initiate a parliamentary inquiry into the project and release its full business case, received from **Ms Jenny Leong**.

### **Palliative Care Services**

Petition requesting sufficient palliative care services to meet demand and additional funds to support training of palliative care workers, received from **Mrs Shelley Hancock**.

### **Inner-city Social Housing**

Petition requesting the retention and proper maintenance of inner-city public housing stock, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Same-sex Marriage**

Petition supporting same-sex marriage, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Pet Shops**

Petition opposing the sale of animals in pet shops, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Slaughterhouse Monitoring**

Petition requesting mandatory closed-circuit television for all New South Wales slaughterhouses, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Container Deposit Levy**

Petition requesting the Government introduce a container deposit levy to reduce litter and increase recycling rates of drink containers, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**The Clerk announced that the following petition signed by more than 500 persons was lodged for presentation:**

### **Hunter New England Local Health District**

Petition requesting the Government to ensure that the Hunter New England Local Health District continues to provide funding for the Wallsend After Hours Medical Service, received from **Ms Sonia Hornery**.

**Pursuant to sessional order government business proceeded with.**

## **PUBLIC HEALTH (TOBACCO) AMENDMENT (E-CIGARETTES) BILL 2015**

### **Consideration in Detail**

#### **Consideration of the Legislative Council amendments.**

*Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 24 June 2015*

#### **No. 1 Govt no. 1 [c2015-027]**

Page 3, schedule 1 [1]. Insert after line 3:

Omit "and non-tobacco smoking products" from section 3 (2) (a).

Insert instead ", non-tobacco smoking products and e-cigarettes".

#### **[2] Section 3 (2) (b)**

#### **No. 2 Govt no. 2 [c2015-027]**

Page 3, schedule 1 [1], line 4. Omit "from section 3 (2) (b)".

#### **No. 3 Govt no. 3 [c2015-027]**

Page 3, schedule 1. Insert after line 39:

#### **[4] Section 8A**

Insert before section 9:

#### **8A Application of Division to e-cigarettes and e-cigarette accessories**

- (1) This Division applies in relation to e-cigarettes and e-cigarette accessories in the same way as it applies in relation to tobacco products and smoking accessories, respectively.
- (2) For this purpose:
  - (a) each reference in this Division to a tobacco product is to be read as including a reference to an e-cigarette, and
  - (b) each reference in this Division to a smoking accessory is to be read as including a reference to an e-cigarette accessory.

#### **No. 4 Govt no. 4 [c2015-027]**

Page 4, schedule 1. Insert after line 25:

#### **[10] Part 3, heading**

Insert "and e-cigarettes" after "tobacco products"

**[11] Section 15A**

Insert before section 16:

**15A Application of Part to e-cigarettes and e-cigarette accessories**

- (1) This Part applies in relation to e-cigarette advertisements and e-cigarettes in the same way as it applies in relation to tobacco advertisements and tobacco products, respectively.
- (2) For this purpose:
  - (a) each reference in this Part to a tobacco advertisement is to be read as including a reference to an e-cigarette advertisement, and
  - (b) each reference in this Part to a tobacco product is to be read as including a reference to an e-cigarette, and
  - (c) the reference to otherwise than by smoking in section 21 (1), in its application to e-cigarettes, is to be read as including a reference to otherwise than by inhalation of an aerosol or vapour.
- (3) In this section, an *e-cigarette advertisement* means writing, or any still or moving picture, sign, symbol or other visual image or message or audible message, or a combination of two or more of them, that gives publicity to, or otherwise promotes or is intended to promote:
  - (a) the purchase or use of an e-cigarette, or
  - (b) the trademark or brand name, or part of a trademark or brand name, of an e-cigarette.

but does include anything of a kind excluded by the regulations.

**No. 5 Govt no. 5 [c2015-027]**

Page 6, schedule 1. Insert after line 9:

**[20] Section 30 Smoking in motor vehicle prohibited if juvenile present**

Insert in alphabetical order in section 30 (8):

*smoke* includes using an e-cigarette to generate or release an aerosol or vapour.

**No. 6 Govt no. 6 [c2015-027]**

Long title. Insert "to regulate the sale, packaging, advertising and display of e-cigarettes and" after "*Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008*".

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT** (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Corrections, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) [3.35 p.m.]: I move:

That the House agree to the Legislative Council amendments.

We can all agree that e-cigarettes are not products that children and young people should be using or have access to. E-cigarettes have grown in popularity internationally in recent years, which is why the Government has acted on this issue. There is considerable debate and concern in the community regarding how best to regulate these products and whether they represent a new opportunity to help smokers to quit or are a danger to our efforts to reduce smoking rates in New South Wales. New South Wales governments, both Labor and Liberal-Nationals Governments, with the assistance of the crossbenchers, have made great strides in reducing smoking rates and preventing the uptake of smoking by young people.

The smoking rate among secondary school students in 2011 was at an all-time low of 7.5 per cent. This is a dramatic reduction in the rates of smoking from when this matter was first addressed. This is an impressive achievement that demonstrates the effectiveness of our tobacco control efforts in New South Wales. We must protect these gains at all costs. In the United States we are seeing a sharp rise in the use of e-cigarettes by children and young people. We do not want children in New South Wales to travel down this path. That is why the Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment (E-cigarettes) Bill 2015 was introduced, which banned the sale of e-cigarettes to minors.

The amendments so far have banned the sale of e-cigarettes to minors and extended the current restrictions on tobacco vending machines to e-cigarette vending machines. Further amendments moved in the other place yesterday will apply the current restrictions relating to the display, sale and advertising of cigarettes to e-cigarettes. The restrictions on display, sale and advertising will assist in ensuring that children do not have access to e-cigarettes. It will also apply to e-cigarettes the current ban on the use of cigarettes in cars while a person under 16 is present.

I acknowledge the work of the Opposition, The Greens and the Christian Democratic Party in relation to this bill. They have all raised their concerns about e-cigarettes and contributed to the debate on this bill. The bill represents a major shift in relation to the regulation of e-cigarettes, which will now be subject to strict regulation relating to sale, display and advertising of product, and their use around children in cars. Further, the Ministry of Health will continue to monitor the evidence regarding potential benefits and harms associated with e-cigarettes and if further regulation is required it can be brought before the House. I thank members for their support of the Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment (E-cigarettes) Bill. I commend the amendments to the House.

**Question—That the motion be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion agreed to.**

**Legislative Council amendments agreed to.**

**Message sent to the Legislative Council advising it of the resolution.**

## **STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2015**

### **Consideration in Detail**

#### **Consideration of the Legislative Council amendments.**

*Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 24 June 2015*

**No. 1 Govt no. 1 [c2015-024A]**

Page 11, schedule 1.20 [3], lines 28-32. Omit all words on those lines.

**No. 2 Govt no. 2 [c2015-024A]**

Page 11, schedule 1.20, Explanatory note, lines 34-39. Omit all words on those lines.

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON** (Vaucluse—Attorney General) [3.38 p.m.]: I move:

That the House agree to the Legislative Council amendments.

I note that the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2015, which we are considering in detail, continues the statute law provision program that has been in place for more than 30 years. Bills of this kind are a good method by which we make some minor policy changes, repeal redundant legislation and maintain the quality of the New South Wales statute book. The Government accepts the amendments to remove the provision from the bill that is proposed and commends the bill to the House as amended by the Legislative Council.

**Mr PAUL LYNCH** (Liverpool) [3.39 p.m.]: The Opposition agrees with the Legislative Council amendments to the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2015.

**Question—That the motion be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion agreed to.**

**Legislative Council amendments agreed to.**

**Message sent to the Legislative Council advising it of the resolution.**

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE REGULATION OF BROTHELS****Appointment and Membership**

**Motion, by leave, by Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO agreed to:**

That:

- (1) A select committee, to be known as the Select Committee on the Regulation of Brothels, be appointed to inquire into and report on the regulation of brothels in New South Wales.
- (2) The committee is to examine and report on:
  - (a) appropriate local and State Government regulatory and compliance functions for brothels;
  - (b) the demarcation in local and State Government roles and responsibilities; and
  - (c) possible reform options that address the social, health and planning challenges associated with legal and illegal brothels.
- (3) The inquiry should consider:
  - (a) the current extent and nature of the brothel industry in New South Wales;
  - (b) current regulation of brothels in New South Wales and other states;
  - (c) penalties and enforcement powers required to close illegal brothels;
  - (d) options for reform including a scheme of registration or licencing system for authorised brothels;
  - (e) the protection of sex workers, including issues around organised crime and sex trafficking;
  - (f) options to maintain the high level of public health outcomes;
  - (g) residential amenity and the location of sex services premises;
  - (h) any legislative changes that may be required; and
  - (i) any other related matters.
- (4) The committee consist of seven members, as follows:
  - (a) four Government members, being Mr Alister Henskens, Mrs Melinda Pavey, Ms Eleni Petinos and Ms Melanie Gibbons;
  - (b) two Opposition members; and
  - (c) one Independent member, being Mr Alex Greenwich.
- (5) Mr Alister Henskens shall be the Chair of the committee.
- (6) The Opposition members shall be nominated in writing to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly by the Opposition Whip by 25 June 2015. Any changes in membership, including the Independent member, shall also be so notified.
- (7) The committee will have leave to sit during the sitting or any adjournment of the House.
- (8) The committee is to report by 12 November 2015.

**Message sent to the Legislative Council advising it of the resolution.**

**CENTENARY OF ANZAC**

**Debate resumed from 24 June 2015.**

**Ms KATRINA HODGKINSON** (Cootamundra—Parliamentary Secretary) [3.43 p.m.]: Every year on Anzac Day we gather to remember the sacrifices made by Australian service men and women in the defence of our nation. In 2015, 100 years on from the Gallipoli landings, record numbers of Australians gathered at a record number of locations around New South Wales, Australia, New Zealand, Turkey and across the world to commemorate Anzac Day and that nation-building military disaster. The Anzacs left us with an inspiring heritage of mateship, courage, fortitude in adversity and helping others even at the expense of their own lives.

In my electorate of Cootamundra, towns and villages swelled as people flocked in from far and wide to attend services. Every local paper recorded unprecedented attendances at services, a sure sign that the Anzac Day spirit is alive and well and that the service and sacrifices made by our forebears and those who serve today are not forgotten. I was honoured to be invited to be in Cowra this year for Anzac Day to take part in two major services. I was proud to watch the veterans, serving military, local dignitaries, men and women, and boys and girls march to commemorate this truly auspicious occasion and to lay a wreath in remembrance.

I also took part in the rededication of the Cowra Locomotive Depot memorial fountain and the unveiling of an interpretive sign. The restoration of the memorial fountain at the locomotive depot and the installation of the interpretive sign commemorating five railway workers who enlisted for World War I from the Cowra Locomotive Depot were made a reality through a NSW Office of Veterans' Affairs Community War Memorials Fund grant. I refer to the history, albeit brief and rather sad, of one of the soldiers mentioned on the sign. Private Sidney Bryant Marsden was an original Anzac who landed at Gallipoli as part of the 3rd Battalion, Service Number 501, on 25 April 1915. Tragically, Private Marsden was killed at Lone Pine about six weeks later, in June 1915. He was only 21. It was fitting that, 100 years to the day after Marsden landed on the beach at Gallipoli, his service and that of his fellow Anzacs was commemorated with the restoration and unveiling of that beautiful fountain and signage at the Cowra Locomotive Depot.

Private Marsden enlisted in Cowra in September 1914. Sadly, his photo is the only one not on the sign. Rather, a Dead Man's Penny is what we see—a harsh and solemn reminder of what this memorial fountain is all about. Marsden was either an orphan or illegitimate. Perhaps a clue to his family heritage lies in his middle name, Bryant, which is a common name even these days in Cowra. There were no records of Private Marsden to be found in Cowra. The discovery of Marsden's Dead Man's Penny was a result of some serious sleuthing by railway expert and local author, the wonderful Lawrance Ryan.

Lawrance advertised in the *Sydney Morning Herald* several years back, looking for more information about Private Marsden, and was delighted when his search was rewarded with some information. Private Marsden started working at the Cowra railway about 11 months before he enlisted. As he had no next of kin, after he died the Dead Man's Penny was presented to his betrothed, a young lass he had promised to marry upon his return from his great adventure. This penny is now in the proud possession of a descendant of that young girl who waved farewell to her sweetheart with such pride and optimism. It was this descendant who contacted Lawrance.

In the last century more than 100,000 Australians gave their lives and many hundreds of thousands more were wounded, incapacitated or afflicted in defence of our freedoms. On Anzac Day, this year and always, we remember the sacrifices made by so many—sacrifices that are still being made to maintain the freedom that we as Australians enjoy but which we so often take for granted. Australia's service men and women of today are the inheritors of a proud tradition stretching back even before Australia became a nation in its own right. More so than many towns in Australia, the twin centres of Harden and Murrumburrah can lay claim to playing an integral role in Australia's military heritage since the earliest of days.

As the New South Wales member of Parliament representing those towns, it was one of my predecessors, the member for Boorowa from 1895 to 1899, Major General James Alexander Mackay, who was instrumental in raising the 1st Australian Horse. He chose to raise the first troop of this regiment in his own electorate. In November 1897 the first half squadron of the 1st Australian Horse Regiment was formed in Harden Murrumburrah. The Australian Light Horse Memorial stands proudly in Murrumburrah today. From an initial 60 local recruits, eight troopers from Harden Murrumburrah were amongst the 143 members of the 1st Australian Horse contingent that served in the Boer War from December 1899 until March 1901 before returning to Australia later that year.

Although only small in number, the service and heritage of these troopers from the Australian Horse and, after Federation, the Australian Commonwealth Horse, laid the foundation for the famous Australian Light Horse regiments. On Anzac Day this year, the Murrumburrah Harden Light Horse re-enactment troop attended the Anzac Day services in the towns of Wombat, Harden and Murrumburrah. Attendances were high. There were more than 300 people at the dawn service in Wombat, a village that has a population of only 100. It is poignant to note that three members of this troop are direct descendants of local men from the Australian Light Horse who fought at Gallipoli: Wal Bradford, Kevin Maher and Peter Beal, the grandson of Military Cross recipient Captain Ronald Beal.

Captain Ronald Beal was wounded at Gallipoli and later discharged on medical grounds. He then went on to re-enlist in the British Army and fought on the Western Front, where he was awarded the Military Cross. Another sign that the Anzac spirit is alive and well in the next generation and in the electorate of Cootamundra

is that Harden men Robert Head and Simon Pavitt rode with their daughters Jessica and Amelia in the troop. I have had the honour of addressing the Harden and Murrumburrah Anzac ceremonies and seeing those men proudly mounted on their horses is a sight to behold.

The First World War is the bloodiest conflict Australia has ever fought. From a population of less than five million, 416,809 Australian men enlisted—nearly 10 per cent of the population. Of these men, 60,000 were killed and 156,000 were wounded, gassed or taken prisoner. On Anzac Day this year, the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landing, I stood in front of the memorials for those men and women. They are memorials to the sacrifice and service of their forebears and following generations. There are many memorials like those across the length and breadth of Australia. In New South Wales there are more than 2,200 documented war memorials bearing the names of 190,000 service men and women. They range from the magnificent edifices on Anzac Parade in Canberra and Martin Place in Sydney to the small, humble stone obelisks in country villages.

The Returned Services League believes there may be hundreds more in forgotten localities. Every now and then one is found, restored and celebrated with great pride by its local community. Recently I was successful in securing State Government assistance to restore one such memorial at Woodstock, which is a little village near Cowra. The Woodstock memorial commemorates the sacrifices made by more than 60 men during the First World War. Sadly, it had become little more than an overgrown cement slab. The restoration of the Woodstock memorial is a sign of enduring gratitude, acknowledgement and recognition by the New South Wales Government of the terrible sacrifices that so many men and women made.

Whether memorials are proudly maintained like those in Cowra, Wombat, Harden or Murrumburrah, or temporarily forgotten like the one in Woodstock, all these cenotaphs tell a terrible and tragic story. The World War I obelisk in Harden records hundreds of names of fallen soldiers and many are the same. There are eight Smiths, seven Williams, six O'Maras, six Murphys and five Edgeworths. It is almost certain that many of these men with the same surname were related in some way. The Edgeworth family's sacrifice is particularly compelling and sad. Four of the five Edgeworths were brothers. Leonard Desmond, aged 22; Walter Daniel, aged 26; Charles Henry, aged 21; and Reginald Ignatius, aged 27 were the sons of John Edgeworth, who lived in Iris Street, Murrumburrah. The fifth—William Henry Edgeworth, aged 26—was the son of Mrs Edgeworth of Galong. Leonard, Walter and Charles were all light horsemen and fought at Gallipoli.

Walter was wounded at Gallipoli on 14 July 1915 and was sent to England for hospitalisation. He was then transferred to the 56th Infantry Battalion and served in France. He was gassed in 1917, but finally returned to Australia for discharge in 1919. Leonard received a gunshot wound to the neck at Gallipoli and returned to active service in France, but his wound eventually caused him to be discharged as medically unfit in 1918. Charles was killed in action at Gallipoli on 9 November 1915. The final brother of the four, Reginald, was killed in action in France on 20 October 1917.

William Henry Edgeworth was posted to the 18th Infantry Battalion and was killed in action in Belgium on 20 September 1917. There were only five soldiers with the surname of Edgeworth who served overseas in the Australian Army during the First World War. They were all born in Murrumburrah and Galong. Three were killed in action and the other two were wounded—one seriously enough to be declared unfit for further service before the end of the war, so this must have been a terrible burden for the extended family and would have been a great loss to their local community. The most horrific aspect is that this was not unique.

In the little village of Springdale in the heart of the Cootamundra electorate, 34 men were farewelled from the Springdale Hall on three separate occasions with great pageantry as they set off for World War I. On Anzac Day this year I attended the Springdale Hall Memorial Dinner, which was crammed with 250 people. We dined on the same menu of Springdale lamb and trimmings, which was served when those heroes were sent off to war. Tragically all 34 soldiers were either killed or wounded. These people were tenacious and resilient. In true Anzac spirit, the memory of the sacrifice and service of their forebears lives on. The enormous heart of this little community belies its tiny size.

Most Australians look upon 25 April 1915 as the day on which Australia gained its own sense of identity as a nation and its sense of patriotic spiritual being. We often refer to this as the Anzac spirit. Anzac Day is a day of commemoration unlike any other major observance on our calendar. Easter and Christmas come from our Christian traditions and heritage, and Australia Day defines our citizenship and sense of place in the world. Even Remembrance Day celebrates a victory on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month—the end of a hard struggle. To many people it still has connotations of the celebrations of the end of the First World War.

In its historical context, Anzac Day came just nine months into the First World War and, by any measure, was an absolute disaster. The Gallipoli campaign was a costly, bloody and useless failure but it showed us the first beginnings of what has become known as the Anzac spirit. It was amongst the mud and horror of the Western Front that the Anzac spirit was moulded and transformed into the idea that we cherish so dearly today. I believe that the Anzac spirit evolved from the early pioneer days. When a rumour of trouble was heard, people would saddle their horses and ride off to help. The early pioneers also had a strong sense of right and wrong, and a willingness to stand up and confront injustice even when the lawful government perpetrated it.

The Eureka Stockade is perhaps the most widely known example of a semi-rebellion against arrogant authority. Couple a willingness to help your mates with the sense of freedom, independence and self-reliance felt by the early pioneers, add in a readiness to stand up against injustice, and you have a rich ore waiting to be smelted. But then there was violence and bloodshed, and pain and suffering that characterised the Gallipoli campaign and the even worse conditions on the Western Front. It was in this terrible cauldron of war that the Anzac spirit was forged. During the campaign Australians displayed immense courage in impossible situations; endurance in the face of hardship; initiative that often achieved success, despite incompetent British leadership at times; self-discipline and, of course, mateship.

We now call these qualities the Anzac spirit that today we invoke in times of stress, hardship and danger. The Australian troops were a massive shock to the more staid and biddable soldiers of the British Empire. Due in no small measure to the forceful nature of Sir John Monash, the Australian divisions were eventually formed into an army corps under the command of an Australian General. The Australian soldiers on the Western Front were noted for their lack of respect for British officers who believed respect was a right of the rank they held. The Australian sense of fighting injustice also showed through in the refusal of the Australian commanders to execute soldiers who deserted because they had seen too much. It also shows through in the fact that a large majority of the soldiers serving on the Western Front voted against the referendum seeking the introduction of conscription.

In action, their independence and initiative made them one of if not the best and most successful fighting forces the world has seen. On 29 September 1918 at the Battle of St Quentin Canal under the command of Sir John Monash, it was elements of the Australian Corps that made the first full breach of the supposedly impenetrable Hindenburg line. It is a sad but proud reflection of the effectiveness of the Australian troops that on a per capita basis they suffered the highest losses—about 60 per cent—of all of the British Empire forces. The Australians were so good that they were used as the shock troops whenever they were available.

The Spirit of Anzac is difficult to define but easy to feel. It makes us want to pitch in when there is trouble. It calls on us to fight against injustice to give everybody a fair go. It encourages us to be free and to respect the freedom of others. Australians have donned their country's uniform and travelled overseas to fight on too many occasions, but they have never fought for an oppressor or in support of a tyrant. Their military actions have always been in the defence of the freedom of others, never in the pursuit of an imperialistic or territorial gain. When we observe Anzac Day, we do not celebrate or glorify war. War is a terrible thing that scars people for life. It takes sons and daughters from their mothers and fathers, spouses from their wives and husbands, and parents from their children and families. War is something that we should avoid, but it is something to which we must sometimes commit when it is necessary to defend our freedoms or the freedoms of others.

The Spirit of Anzac is invincible. It is the flame that burns in the heart of every true Australian. On 25 April during marches across New South Wales, we see it pass on from grandfathers to sons and daughters, from sons and daughters to their sons and daughters, from friends to friends, and from community to community, who will carry it as proudly and as worthily as their forebears. Today we stand safe and free, clad with all the privileges and rights of citizens in this great country of Australia. We owe our privileges, rights, liberty, security and opportunity to the men and women who have fought, endured, suffered and died for us and for their country. Their deeds, the hardships they faced and the sacrifices they made have given us the Anzac spirit.

Much has been written about the original Anzac troops and of the Australian soldiers in the First World War. A lot of it has been cast in a very heroic mould. I believe it is very important to remember that they were mainly young men. They were very young men who were probably not much different from the young people of today, but stripped of their mobile phones and computers. In today's world, most of those young men would barely be off their P-plates. They were simply young men who were asked to do an impossible task, and in doing that task they set the bar very high. They created a tradition that has inspired future generations, a tradition that this nation has adopted and developed—the famous and proud Anzac spirit. [*Extension of time agreed to.*]



Thanks to these young men and women, and the men and women who have followed in their tradition, we enjoy freedoms that are the envy of many countries throughout the world. We enjoy an open and tolerant society, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of movement and freedom of religion. This is the legacy left to us by those who served, fought and died in defence of those freedoms. We should always remember that war is a terrible and destructive thing.

Armed conflict is devastating to those who have been touched by it, both physically and emotionally. We should never forget the terrible costs that secured the freedoms that we enjoy today. We often talk about mates and mateship on Anzac Day. In Australia today the word "mate" has many meanings and is used in many different ways. But what is real mateship in the context of the Anzac legend? In his 2006 Anzac Day address, the former RSL national president Major General Bill Crews said:

Mateship is at the heart of what we refer to as the ANZAC values: it drives loyalty, courage, endurance and sacrifice. It is a compelling reason for most acts of heroism, and the suffering so often experienced by our servicemen and women: for not letting down the team is a powerful motivator in our nation's psyche.

There is little written about what actually defines mateship in the context of the Anzac legend. Anybody who has served Australia in uniform would know what it is, although many might struggle to put it into words. I have read many Armistice Day, Remembrance Day and Veteran's Day speeches by people such as Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Prince of Wales, President Franklin D Roosevelt, General Omar Bradley and many others. These speeches, from across the English-speaking world, contain many common themes such as the defence of democracy, courage, self-sacrifice and service. I have yet to find one that refers to any virtue approaching mateship. Mateship is a uniquely Australian virtue. Mateship means an acceptance of your mate, your colleague, without conditions. A decade ago Prime Minister John Howard famously said:

I don't abandon mates just because they make mistakes.

That prolific Australian author Ion Idriess served during the First World War in the 5th Light Horse Regiment. He saw action in Gallipoli, Palestine, the Sinai and Turkey. In his book *The Desert Column* he described how absolute trust between mates would develop and how vital this trust was to the way the Australians operated and fought. The very Australian concept of mateship has brought a much deeper meaning to our commemoration of Anzac Day. On Anzac Day this year, as well as commemorating the legacy of the Anzac spirit and all it encompasses and remembering the service and sacrifices of those thousands of brave boys and men like Private Marsden, the Edgeworth family, Captain Ronald Beal and their enduring legacy, we must also remember the many Australian service personnel serving overseas or at home who are working in differing ways to build peace and to protect our way of life. They are entitled to our enduring gratitude.

Currently, there are approximately 2,750 Australian Defence Force personnel deployed to 14 operations overseas and within Australia to protect Australia and its national interests. Australians are engaged in operations in Afghanistan and are contributing to peacekeeping and reconstruction operations in Egypt, Iraq, Israel and adjoining Arab countries, the Solomon Islands and south Sudan. They are assisting with humanitarian aid after disasters in Nepal and Vanuatu and on anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean, as well as in border protection. These men and women are carrying on the traditions of Anzac for the next generation. We all thank them for their dedication and sincerely hope that they will return safely to their families and friends. The Kangaroo March will take place from September through to late October this year. It commemorates the first drive that came through from Wagga Wagga up to Campbelltown and into Sydney. The country people who joined the march were marching towards the defence of our nation. I ask people to acknowledge the Kangaroo March and support it in whatever way they can. Lest we forget.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI** (Fairfield) [4.04 p.m.]: This afternoon I make a contribution to the commemoration of the Centenary of Anzac. World War I was a defining time in Australia's history. Occurring only 13 years after the Federation of Australia, it was the first national conflict our nation was involved in. On 1 November 1914 the first convoy of Australian and New Zealand troops left Albany in Western Australia for the battlefields of World War I. On 25 April 1915, Australian and New Zealand troops landed on the beaches of Gallipoli, and the events that followed would spawn the legend of the Anzacs for the following century. Of the 416,809 men who enlisted to fight for Australia in World War I, over 60,000 were killed and 152,000 were injured.

As many members are aware, this was an incredibly bloody battle with the Anzac troops fighting, literally, an uphill battle. As history has pointed out, the Anzac troops landed in the wrong position, giving the Turkish troops high-terrain advantage and a distinct tactical advantage. Shortly thereafter, the Anzac and Turkish troops could not gain any ground and dug in deep. While the Anzac forces faced a barrage of artillery and gunfire from the steep hills above, they did not falter. The Anzac troops fought by each other's side, faced fear head on and stood their ground until 20 December 1915, when the evacuation of Anzac forces began. Bravery, perseverance, sacrifice, endurance and mateship are what bind the Anzac spirit. For their deeds, we will be forever grateful.

The spirit of Anzac commemorations began in 2014 and will continue through to 2018. Throughout this time a number of significant historical milestones in Australia's history will be recognised. As the shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs in this State, I had the honour and privilege to attend many commemorations that were held last year. The commemorations held on every Anzac Day are a solemn time of reflection to honour all men and women who have served our country and fought for the rights and freedoms we cherish today. We should never forget that. This year I am proud to say the residents of Fairfield attended Anzac Day services in record numbers.

Many members have related in speeches in this House that similar attendances occurred in their own electorates. A large number of schools, associations, community groups and families were present in Fairfield on Anzac Day and at the commemorations in the weeks leading up to 25 April. People from all walks of life and all ages paid their respects to the men and women, both past and present, who put their lives on the line serving our nation. In 1915, our Anzac soldiers paid the ultimate price for the Australia we live in today.

In 1915, Fairfield had a total population of approximately 9,000 people and resembled a small country town, with dirt roads and scattered businesses and houses and farms populating roadsides. This was an era in which the majority of townsfolk knew each other personally and most houses had names rather than street numbers. From this small town, 192 brave men enlisted to fight for king and country for the duration of the war plus four months. Not all of those men made it back home. Though time shall pass, we will never ever forget them, and they will never ever be forgotten in Fairfield. It is our duty to continue their legacy to ensure that our communities know the true meaning of the Anzac spirit.

One story of a local who served in the Great War concerns Thomas Sinclair, who was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1889. Thomas held strong ethics, patriotism and a strict religious discipline. Thomas migrated with his family to Fairfield in 1914. After living in Australia for less than a year; Thomas felt a sense of duty to his new country and enlisted to serve on 28 August 1914. Thomas was assigned to the 4th Infantry Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force and landed on the shores of Gallipoli on 30 April 1915 where he was wounded. Tragically that happened only five short days after the first Anzac landing. Following a recovery from his wounds, Thomas continued serving on the front lines for another 3½ months. Unfortunately, Thomas was reported as missing in action on 6 August during the Anzac attack on Lone Pine.

It was later discovered that Thomas Sinclair fell in battle from an enemy gunshot in no-man's-land while bravely serving his new country. Thomas Sinclair was the first Fairfield resident to fall in the Great War, but he would not be the last. Alongside his fellow countrymen, Thomas's name, his legacy, is proudly etched into the Honour Avenue Anzac memorial in Fairfield. This is just one of the many stories of courageous men from our local area who served. It is a story that echoes the story of thousands of Australians who gave their lives so that tomorrow—our today—we could have our freedom. To all the Aussie troops who have served or are still serving in the Armed Forces today I say: the members on both sides of this House thank you for your service. Lest we forget.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON** (Tamworth) [4.12 p.m.]: I participate in debate on this motion to pay tribute to the members of the Tamworth RSL Sub-Branch and their efforts to pay respect to the Centenary of Anzac 1915-2015. The Tamworth RSL Sub-Branch came up with an idea to showcase and highlight a way of commemorating the Centenary of Anzac that is quite separate from Anzac Day itself. They spoke to members of the Tamworth theatrical society and decided to stage a musical to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac, in partnership with the Tamworth Regional Council. They chose a musical to commemorate 100 years of the Anzac spirit and Australians involved in World War I. That Anzac spirit lives on.

It was decided that there was only one man in Tamworth who could pull something like that together: That go-to gentleman is Mr Bill Gleeson. He wrote and composed the musical and he was also the executive director, the musical director and the pianist for *Let's Never Forget*. I was fortunate enough to be in the audience

at the town hall with my wife. The town hall was packed, with close to 1,000 people present. The musical brought everyone to their feet. I will record the welcoming address by Bob Chapman, the President of the Tamworth RSL Sub-Branch, because an event that commemorates 100 years of Anzac should be recorded for posterity so that people can look back and remember. The welcoming address by Bob Chapman states:

Welcome Tamworthians and guests, to this special "one-off" event to commemorate the Centenary of ANZAC and to pay tribute to the more than 1100 men and women from the Tamworth region who served in World War I.

*Let's Never Forget* was conceived and written by Mr. Bill Gleeson OAM. A true friend of the Tamworth RSL Sub-Branch, Bill has loaned his considerable talents to our membership on a number of projects over the years and, when approached, he immediately accepted our invitation to do something special to commemorate the Centenary of ANZAC. The result is this musical. Bill not only wrote the script and most of the songs but he is also the Executive Director, the Musical Director and the piano player. His versatility knows no bounds. The Tamworth RSL Sub-Branch offers Bill our heartfelt thanks for his enormous contribution to the community of Tamworth and to our sub-branch in particular. We wish him peace and happiness in his retirement, however long it may last!

Thanks also go to the Director, Jason Palmer, who, too, has previously appeared in a Bill Gleeson production for the Tamworth RSL Sub-Branch. Jason and Bill have drawn together a cast of young actors and singers who have selflessly turned up for two rehearsals a week since January to put on a show for one night only! That is true dedication and we offer them our sincere appreciation.

This musical has been largely sponsored by [the] Tamworth Regional Council through the Community Grants Scheme. The Tamworth Sub-Branch wishes to acknowledge the support and assistance that we so readily received from the Council; not just for this event but also for many other projects and commemorations held throughout the year. Finally, I wish to extend a huge "thank you" to our Vice-President, Mrs. Sandra Lambkin, who embraced the challenge to make tonight a reality. In her role as Producer of *Let's Never Forget*, Sandra has worked hard alongside Bill Gleeson and his team to ensure that this is a successful and memorable occasion.

On behalf of the Tamworth Sub-Branch of the Returned and Services League of Australia, I invite you all to sit back and enjoy the show. We also hope that, tomorrow, you will find the time to share with us the honour of commemorating our war dead.

Thank you for coming, one and all.

Bob Chapman  
President  
Tamworth RSL Sub-Branch

The musical was simply outstanding and transported us to Gallipoli in World War I. The gentleman who wrote and composed for the musical and who was the executive director, the musical director and the pianist, Mr Bill Gleeson, OAM, certainly deserves to be recognised. Bill Gleeson needs no introduction to Tamworth audiences because he has been performing on Tamworth stages for more than 60 years. He is well known as a pianist, singer, actor, director and musical director and has performed as an accompanist to great Australian singers such as June Bronhill, Toni Lamond, Annaliese Kerrigan and Peter Cousins. Bill has been involved with some 150 productions on stage, many of which he wrote himself. He is a life member of both the Tamworth Musical Society and the Tamworth Dramatic Society and is the current convener, conductor and arranger for the Tamworth Singers.

In the year 2000 Bill was named Tamworth's Citizen of the Year. In 2001 he was awarded the Queen's Millennium Medal. In March this year he was named Tamworth's Senior Citizen of the Year. Bill was further recognised for his services to the community through music when in 2008 he was awarded an OAM, Order of Australia Medal. Bill tells us that "*Let's Never Forget—The Musical*", written and performed to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac, will be his final theatrical composition, but he may be seen occasionally in small roles at the Capitol Theatre. We thank Mr Bill Gleeson, OAM, and the Tamworth RSL Sub-Branch for their production of the musical as part of the celebration of a Centenary of Anzac—1915 to 2015.

**Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Christopher Gulaptis and set down as an order of the day for a future day.**

**Pursuant to sessional order community recognition statement proceeded with.**

## COMMUNITY RECOGNITION STATEMENTS

### DIGGERS BALL

**Mr JAI ROWELL** (Wollondilly) [4.20 p.m.]: I commend Mr Tim Bennett-Smith, President of the Picton-Thirlmere-Bargo Returned and Services League, his wife, Kelly, and all the members of that RSL club

who were integral to the success of the recent Diggers Ball. The Diggers Ball is a historical annual event in Wollondilly, with the first being hosted by the Thirlmere RSL in 1934. The Diggers Ball gradually attracted more service men and women as well as community members, with one of the largest balls being held in 1946 as a welcome home to local diggers who served in World War II.

The tradition continued through to 1954 until its revival in 2015. Sixty-one years later, the Diggers Ball was again an important event on the Wollondilly social calendar, with many community members attending to enjoy an evening of music, dancing and, most of all, commemoration of the service men and women who have given their all for our nation. I thank Mr and Mrs Bennett-Smith, the Picton-Thirlmere-Bargo RSL, the Wollondilly community and everyone else who assisted for making the 2015 Diggers Ball possible. I hope to see the tradition carried on for many years to come.

#### **THELMA SPENCER 108TH BIRTHDAY**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY** (Swansea) [4.21 p.m.]: I speak this evening to wish my friend and constituent Thelma Spencer a happy 108th birthday. Born on 14 June 1907, Thelma has witnessed a lot in her 108 years. Thelma was born in the same year as the first telephone call between Sydney and Melbourne, and in the year that the Bondi Surf Bathers' Life Saving Club was formed at Bondi Beach—the first of its kind in the world. Thelma was seven years old at the outbreak of World War I and remembers the Great Depression well.

Thelma today is truly remarkable. At 108, she is no shrinking violet. She is tough, funny and has a sense of humour that is up there with the best of them. I first met Thelma when I was doorknocking in Valentine during the election campaign. I almost did not believe it when she told me she was 107 years old. In fact, she excused herself as she had been out the back fixing her washing machine. Happy birthday, Thelma. I look forward to having a cup of tea soon to hear all about your party.

#### **WALK THE TALK EVENT**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH** (Terrigal) [4.22 p.m.]: On Sunday 21 June I attended the first Walk the Talk annual event in Gosford, accompanied by Mr Danny Sullivan, police superintendent of the Brisbane Water Area Command, and more than 300 local residents. This first annual Walk the Talk was held to highlight the unacceptable cases of domestic violence that have been on the increase in recent years. At the end of the walk, 45 candles were lit as a mark of respect and placed in the water in recognition of the 45 women who have lost their lives this year to this dreadful crime.

Two wonderful speakers addressed the event: Josie, a 13-year-old girl who has lived through the horror of domestic violence, having lost her mother this year; and Josh, a young man who spoke out against domestic violence and talked about how young men in our society need to stand up and speak out against this insidious, cowardly crime. I am proud to have taken part in this important event to recognise the scale of domestic violence against women. I will do my very best as the member for Terrigal to bring the crime of domestic violence to the attention of our local community.

#### **TAMIL STUDY CENTRE**

**Ms JODI McKAY** (Strathfield) [4.23 p.m.]: I speak this evening about the Tamil Study Centre, a local Tamil language and cultural organisation. The centre was established in 1987 and has nearly 40 volunteer teachers assisting 300 students. Its mission is to teach students the Tamil language and culture. It is a fantastic example of that uniquely Australian celebration of multiculturalism—embracing and intertwining two cultures. Every year students from the centre complete their Higher School Certificate exams in Tamil and every year students from the centre receive top band marks in the HSC. One of the proudest achievements of the centre's director was to see a former student re-join the centre as a teacher. This speaks to the deep passion the staff have for the education of their students.

I congratulate the founder, Bala Balendra, and the principal, Thiru Thirunanthakumat, who is a teacher and an active member of the New South Wales Federation of Community Language Schools. I congratulate also the following teachers for 20 years of service to the Tamil Study Centre: Ms Nirmala Dayalan, Mrs Malini Somaskanthan, Mr Saravanamuthu Thevarajah, Mrs K. Vadivetpillai and Mrs Krishnakumari Nadarajah. In an electorate as diverse as Strathfield it is fantastic to see young Tamil people celebrate their heritage and their home in such a vibrant way.

### CHAMPION EQUESTRIAN ZOE BUNTING

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD** (Myall Lakes) [4.24 p.m.]: I inform the House that Zoe Bunting from Burrell Creek in the Manning Valley recently won four championships, two reserve championships and finished in the top three in five other events at the Australian Appaloosa Championships held in Tamworth. This was the first time that the 17-year-old had contested the nationals, where she competed in several events in both the youth and open events. Zoe has been riding since the age of eight and rode her seven-year-old Appaloosa gelding named Frosty in the championships. Zoe is a member of the Wingham Pony Club where she and Frosty have received much coaching and training from a variety of instructors. Zoe also won the New South Wales State Championships in Sydney, where she took out the Grand Champion prize. She is hoping to represent Australia and knows she has plenty of work still to do to reach that goal.

### GILLIESTON HEIGHTS COMMUNITY

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON** (Maitland) [4.25 p.m.]: I recognise the Gillieston Heights community, who demonstrated resilience, determination and community spirit when they were isolated on "Gilligan's Island"—as it came to be known—during the April super storm. The community centre became a hub for the community, with people like Sandy Paul organising an Anzac Day ceremony; Sonia Gannon, Patricia Ling and their team helping to distribute the food and other items donated to them; and Kelly Mayall and many other people assisting with their boats at Testers Hollow. I thank Mark and Amanda Venz and Russell Schwarz from the community centre for assisting the emergency services personnel who were working out of the centre. I wish Mark all the best in overcoming his current health problems.

I was pleased to be able to nominate the centre for the National Australia Bank grant of \$10,000. The centre was successful in receiving the grant and I hope that it can put the grant to good use for community resilience building. I also take the opportunity to thank the emergency service workers and all the people on "Gilligan's Island" who worked together during a time of such adversity.

### LOWER CLARENCE MAGPIES RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS** (Clarence—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.26 p.m.]: I offer congratulations to the Lower Clarence Magpies Rugby League Club on celebrating 100 years of rugby league. I also offer my congratulations to the 17 players named as Legends of League: Raymond Laurie, Dick Ensbey, Garry Chapman, Ryan Binge, Bill McCarron, John Gahan, Gary Want, Steve O'Sullivan, Jimmy Hooper, Peter Horne, Wayne McCarron, Mark McIntyre, Gary Tobin, George Trudgett, Dale Randall and Bernie Plater, together with John Brown as coach. This is a wonderful achievement and I wish the club continued success.

### ZONTA YOUNG INDIGENOUS WOMEN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Mr GREG WARREN** (Campbelltown) [4.27 p.m.]: I ask the House to acknowledge Zoe Stewart of Campbelltown, who was recently awarded the Zonta Young Indigenous Women Achievement Award. Zonta is an international organisation working to advance the status of women through service and advocacy. The Zonta Young Indigenous Women Achievement Award is presented to one high school student in New South Wales who has a demonstrated commitment to advocating for the advancement of the status of Indigenous women.

Zoe is a student at the Campbelltown Performing Arts High School, and has an excellent academic record in addition to a thorough involvement in student leadership and Indigenous programs. In addition to this award from Zonta International, Zoe has received recognition for her work in Indigenous student leadership on many other occasions, including the opportunity to be master of ceremonies at the NSW Department of Education and Communities Nanga Mai Awards, which recognise excellence and achievement in Indigenous education in New South Wales. I feel sure members will join me in congratulating Zoe on her continued service to the Campbelltown community.

### CRONULLA-SUTHERLAND SHARKS LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAM

**Ms ELENi PETINOS** (Miranda) [4.28 p.m.]: This evening I celebrate the Cronulla-Sutherland Sharks Little League Baseball Team, which in Lismore earlier this month was crowned the Australian champion team for 2015 in the Australian Little League Championships. This is the first time in history that a New South Wales side will represent Australia at the Little League World Series, to be held in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

The Cronulla-Sutherland Sharks Little League Baseball Team operates under the auspices of the Cronulla-Sutherland Junior Baseball Association, and comprises representatives from the following clubs in the Miranda Electorate: Bonnet Bay Beavers, Jannali Comets, Illawong Marlins, St Pats Sutherland, and Taren Point Giants. Our championship-winning team consists of: Beau Bassett, Benjamin Andrews, Blake Cavill, Hayden Parker, Jake Burns, Keanu Cowley, Koby Roberts, Kyle Yeo, Lachlan Regan, Luke Krkovski, Mark Natta, Myles Chabi, Samuel Jagoe-Fisher and William Fullerton. An achievement of this nature is impossible without supportive parents and good team management. I congratulate head coach Darren Fullerton, assistant coaches Tony Krkovski and David White, and executive officer Mark Burns. I also congratulate everyone involved on this exceptional achievement.

#### **EASTLAKES FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE INC.**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON** (Charlestown) [4.29 p.m.]: I congratulate Eastlakes Family Support Service Inc. on its work. Eastlakes Family Support Service is a non-profit organisation supporting families and dependent children in the Lake Macquarie area. This longstanding organisation provides free and confidential support, counselling and parenting strategies to families and individuals in one-on-one or small group settings. Eastlakes Family Support Service receives funding through the Department of Family and Community Services and the Department of Fair Trading to provide early intervention support services, financial counselling and support for women experiencing domestic violence.

Partnering with the Samaritans, Eastlakes Family Support Service delivers the Brighter Futures Program, which supports families with children aged zero to eight years who have been identified as at risk of re-entering the child protection system. At-risk families are supported to develop positive relationships with their children and avoid re-entering the child protection system. I commend the hard work and ongoing success of all involved with the Eastlakes Family Support Service.

#### **TRIBUTE TO LUKE SIKORA**

**Mr GARETH WARD** (Kiama—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.30 p.m.]: This is the last formal opportunity I have to farewell Luke Sikora, who will be leaving the Speaker's office after eight years of service to the Parliament. Following his first vote and the successful election of Shelley Hancock in 2003, Luke joined the Liberal Party and has never looked back. He is universally regarded for his skill, ethics and effectiveness. But like a privileged few, I know the Luke Sikora who is warm, loyal and an incredible friend. A quiet dignity and principled resolve are only two of the character traits I admire the most. I simply would not be here today without Luke, who managed the State election campaigns and mercurial temperaments of both me and the member for South Coast for two elections. Luke has served our community and the Parliament with absolute distinction. While we celebrate an important step forward in his bright future, Luke should know that the Parliament is a much better place for his extraordinary diligence and exemplary service. Good luck, my friend; you have earned every accolade you receive and so many, many more.

#### **ELDER ABUSE**

**Ms TRISH DOYLE** (Blue Mountains) [4.31 p.m.]: June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. This day aims to raise community awareness and recognition of this largely hidden problem affecting older people living at home and in institutional settings. Elder abuse is the mistreatment of an older person by someone with whom the older person has a relationship of trust. It is a violation of human rights and is recognised as such by the World Health Organization. Elder abuse is a significant cause of illness, loss of productivity, isolation and despair. Elder abuse affects older women and men from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Older people are some of our most vulnerable citizens. Today I congratulate Blue Mountains carers and carer support services. I pay special tribute to Pru Hardgrove of Blue Mountains City Council and members of the Blue Mountains Community Care Forum who do so much to safeguard the human rights of older people in our community.

#### **HOLBROOK REPLICA SUBMARINE PROJECT**

**Mr GREG APLIN** (Albury) [4.32 p.m.]: Congratulations to Holbrook Miniature Railway Club, Holbrook Dads Army Golf Group and Holbrook RSL sub-branch on their initiative in supporting a project to build a submarine replica to be displayed at Submarine Park in Holbrook along with the existing Oberon class submarine, the *Otway*. The scale replica, which will be seven metres long and about six metres high, will be of the AE2, a World War I submarine whose commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander Henry Hugh Gordon

"Dacre" Stoker, was reputedly a close friend of Commander Holbrook. Additional funding has come from the Submarine Association Australia and through an Anzac centenary grant from the Australian Government. The actual AE2 can be found at the bottom of the Sea of Marmara near Turkey, which is regarded as a Gallipoli campaign battlefield site. On 25 April 1915 the AE2 was the first Allied submarine to penetrate the defences of the Dardanelles Strait, where it proceeded to wreak havoc. Five days later, after a violent battle with the Ottoman torpedo boat *Sultanhisar*, the AE2 was scuttled and the crew rescued.

#### **SCOUT MEDALLION RECIPIENT JAMES HULL**

**Ms JO HAYLEN** (Summer Hill) [4.33 p.m.]: I congratulate James Hull from Summer Hill who has become the first scout of the 3rd Summer Hill (Trinity Grammar) Scout Group to successfully complete the Australian Scout Medallion. The medallion is considered the pinnacle of scouting for 14-year-olds and recognises active leadership in scouting. The award is attained by only three per cent of all scouts, and recipients must complete the scout leadership course and achieve their Adventurer Level Cord. James was presented with the Australian Scout Medallion by Mr Peter Jamieson, Regional Commissioner (Scouts), at the recent south metropolitan region scout camp. A formal presentation will be made by the New South Wales commissioner when James returns from the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan. I congratulate James and his family on this significant and hard-earned achievement.

#### **SECONDARY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON** (Vaucluse—Attorney General) [4.34 p.m.]: Recently the Secondary School Leadership Program took place at New South Wales Parliament for school captains across the State. This excellent program introduces student leaders to our Legislature and allows them to hear from members of Parliament. It was great to have two schools in my electorate participating: Cranbrook School and Rose Bay Secondary College. I welcomed Alec Lesmond and Jack Fagan from Cranbrook in Bellevue Hill and Ben Munro and Amanda Spencer from Rose Bay Secondary College in Dover Heights. It is important that as community leaders we spend time with young people in our electorates and understand their views and aspirations for a society of which I am sure they will one day be leaders. I congratulate Alec, Jack, Ben and Amanda on their current achievements, and I wish them well in their Higher School Certificate and future studies and endeavours.

#### **FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE VESAK DAY CELEBRATIONS**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI** (Fairfield) [4.35 p.m.]: On 24 May I took part in the Vesak Day celebrations at the Ming Yue Lay Temple in Bonnyrigg, alongside the member for Cabramatta, the member for Wollongong and members of the Chinese Buddhist community. Vesak Day is celebrated by Buddhists around the world to remember the birth, enlightenment and passing of the Lord Buddha. I had the great pleasure of celebrating the day by taking part in the cultural traditions and the bathing of the Lord Buddha. I thank all those who were involved in the preparation and organisation of the event and the members in our community who attended the celebrations on the day.

#### **VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE OFFICERS JACK BARNES AND ALISON GRANSDEN**

**Mr ANDREW GEE** (Orange—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.35 p.m.]: I draw the attention of members to Jack Barnes and Alison Gransden from Eugowra who are volunteer ambulance officers. Recently Jack and Alison offered a rare insight into what being a volunteer ambulance officer is like in their local community through a video produced by Ambulance Service of NSW. Jack is a local farmer, running sheep and cattle on his property. He has lived in Eugowra his whole life. Thirty years ago he decided to become a volunteer ambulance officer. Alison has been a nurse for 36 years. Three years ago Jack and Alison ran into each other in the supermarket and Jack asked her whether she would like to become a volunteer officer. She did not hesitate. Every year Jack goes to the local school to give kids an insight into what to do in an emergency. The Orange electorate is lucky to have people like Jack and Alison. I commend them for their dedication to such an important job in our community, and I congratulate them both.

#### **HOLLEY SUMMERVILLE-KNOTT ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH** (Ballina) [4.36 p.m.]: I inform the House about the remarkable efforts of a young member of my electorate, Holley Summerville-Knott. Holly, who is just 11 years old, spoke recently at the United Nations World Environment Day event in Sydney, and last year she won the Youth Sustainability

Champion award at the Green Globe awards held in Parliament House. Her passion for the environment, particularly for keeping the northern rivers gas-field free, and demonstrating that through song is renowned in our region. We are proud of her efforts.

#### **KEVIN JOCHELSON AND FIESTAFY**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA** (Davidson—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.37 p.m.]: I acknowledge Kevin Jochelson, who is a young Sydney entrepreneur educated and living in the Davidson electorate. Kevin is helping to make art and culture available to the masses, especially through tourism. In 2013 Kevin founded Fiestafy, which is a free web app that allows everyday people to become entertainment experts anywhere in the world, allowing them to find the best major events in their own language. People are able to type in what city they will be in and what genres they like, and the app generates available and accessible world-class events.

Kevin has worked with many entertainment clients such as Bell Shakespeare, the Sydney Opera House and the Capitol and Lyric theatres, and launched publicly at the beginning of this year with events such as Sydney Opera's *Aida* and Chuck Close exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art. I note that the first ever New South Wales Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation will visit iCentral in Sydney's central business district tomorrow, where Kevin is one of 80 entrepreneurs who are part of a start-up community. I wish Kevin and his enterprise well for the future.

#### **ELOUERA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB AWARDS**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN** (Cronulla—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, and Assistant Minister for Planning) [4.38 p.m.]: Recently I joined members of Elouera Surf Life Saving Club at the annual presentation night. Congratulations to Ashley Flanagan and Tara Stortenbeker on being awarded the Gilchrist Family Outstanding Beach Competitor Trophy. Congratulations to Alex Clarke, who received the Constance Toll Male Outstanding Surf Competitor Trophy. Congratulations to Katie Conder for winning the Colin Toll Female Outstanding Surf Competitor Trophy. Congratulations to Paul Kasparian, who was awarded Most Outstanding Trainer. Congratulations to Patrol 11, captained by Garry Fleming, on being awarded Patrol of the Year. Congratulations to Karen Bryce, who was awarded Patrol Person of the Year. Congratulations to the David Chandler Junior Patrol Person of the Year, Kayla Pyett. Finally, congratulations to Darren Galea who was awarded the President's Trophy for Most Outstanding Club Person.

#### **SAINT SWITHUN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, PYMBLE**

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS** (Ku-ring-gai) [4.39 p.m.]: The electorate of Ku-ring-gai is blessed with many beautiful churches. One of those is Saint Swithun's Anglican Church in Pymble, which I was happy to visit this month. The day was dedicated to a service of Holy Communion called Blessed Assurance, especially designed for people living with dementia and mobility problems as well as their carers. I commend the caring work of the Rector of Saint Swithun's, Reverend Dr Roger Chilton, and coordinator of the seniors' ministry Christina Hollister. On the same day I was able to see another great initiative at Saint Swithun's, which is the everyday English classes.

Born from someone noticing several years ago that parents from other cultures were dropping their children at the nearby school but not interacting due to a lack of confidence in speaking the English language, Saint Swithun's acted. So successful have been the Thursday morning classes that they now attract not only the parents of students but also grandparents, workers on temporary visas and migrants. I congratulate the coordinator, Margaret Fullagar, Pastor Nigel Gray and Assistant Minister of Saint Swithun's John Forsyth on their fantastic spirit of community engagement.

#### **TRIBUTE TO NICHOLAS GILBERT**

#### **TRIBUTE TO JOSH WALKER**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD** (Myall Lakes) [4.40 p.m.]: I inform the House that Nicholas Gilbert, an under 15 athlete from Mitchells Island, won a gold medal at the 2015 Little Athletics Championships in Sydney. Nicholas is a member of the Old Bar Athletics Club and his gold medal is an outstanding achievement for him and for the club and is inspiring other young athletes in the Manning and Great Lakes region to take up this wonderful sport. The club recently opened its new Olympic standard long jump, triple jump, run-up and pit at Old Bar Reserve. With our new



run-up, who knows what Nicholas may achieve in the future. The Old Bar Athletics Club currently has 53 members, which is a testament to the dedication and hard work of its committee. It is worth noting that in comparison some Sydney clubs have more than 1,200 members.

I also inform the House that Josh Walker from Burrell Creek has been selected to represent Australia in the under-11 futsal competition in Hawaii in November 2015. Josh played at the Futsal Nationals in January as a member of the mid North Coast representative side. More than 300 players from across Australia were involved in the competition, from which Josh was selected. Josh will receive professional coaching during the 11-day tour to Hawaii and the Australian team will play various American representative teams. Josh is also a representative soccer player for the mid North Coast.

**Community recognition statements concluded.**

**Pursuant to sessional order private members' statements proceeded with.**

### **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

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#### **GRANVILLE TAFE STUDENTS AWARDS**

**Ms JULIA FINN** (Granville) [4.41 p.m.]: I bring to the attention of the House the great achievements of Granville TAFE students in the recent Student Achievement Awards for the South West Sydney Institute—achievements made in 2014 that are unlikely to be repeated following the crash in TAFE enrolments that has accompanied the introduction of Smart and Skilled this year. On 18 June I attended the awards ceremony at Bankstown Sports Club which recognised the achievements of TAFE students from across the region, which was clearly dominated by Granville TAFE students. Ten of the 21 award winners were from Granville TAFE, a stunning achievement for a great educational institution.

I particularly congratulate the TAFE NSW State medal winners from Granville TAFE: Kesya Bayu who completed a Diploma of Laboratory Technology (Pathology Testing) and Janini Vimalathithen who completed a Diploma of Laboratory Technology (Chemical and Forensic Testing). Both students have previously studied at university and wanted to complement their university education with more practical workplace skills. Janini was also awarded the Dr Ed Krajniak Memorial Award and was highly commended in the Student Achievement category.

Other award winners from Granville TAFE include Leonora Ruiz who was awarded the Institute of Public Accountants award for her Advanced Diploma of Accounting. Leonora previously worked as an accountant and a lawyer in the Philippines and wanted to update her skills to work in Australia. Beau Kupris was selected as one of three South West Sydney Institute students who will represent Australia and compete at the WorldSkills competition in Brazil following his achievements studying Certificate III in Refrigeration and Air-conditioning. The WorldSkills competition is the biggest vocational education and skills excellence event in the world. The competitors represent the best of their fields from each member country. Apprentice of the Year, Adrian Andrews, completed Certificate III in Meat Processing (Retail Butchery). Adrian said of his TAFE training:

I believe that the combination of on-the-job training and TAFE training is the best way to realise an apprentice's full potential. TAFE is a place where all the factors that hinder you from learning in the workplace are removed.

Adrian also told me that Granville college is "just the best". International Student of the Year Immanuel Njoroge, who completed a Diploma of Laboratory Testing (Pathology Testing) is a midwife from Kenya who wanted to improve his biomedical knowledge and skills. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year, April Sheppard, completed Certificate IV in Community Service Work. April wanted to improve her skills and understanding to help those who have experienced trauma to find a better and more fulfilling path in life, and to empower others within the Aboriginal community. Atheer AI Khmesi, another Granville student, won the Building and Construction Award following his Diploma of Building Design and is now studying architecture at Sydney University. And Kristen Moore won the Community, Health, Hospitality and Service Skills Award following her Diploma of Beauty Therapy. Kristen wants to open her own beauty salon and is now studying a Diploma of Salon Management to prepare for that.

I am sure that these motivated and high-achieving students will only go on to bigger and better things but I cannot say the same for their great vocational education institution, TAFE. The budget papers have shown

that TAFE enrolments have collapsed this year—the massive fee increases and cuts to courses are turning away possible students at a time of high youth unemployment. Enrolments at TAFE are down by 43,000 students across New South Wales this year following the introduction of Smart and Skilled, and there are 80,000 fewer students enrolled in TAFE today than there were in 2012. There are 11,500 fewer students with disabilities than there were in 2012, with enrolments dropping by more than 5,000 students in the past year. It is forecast that the number of Aboriginal students will drop by almost 3,000 between 2014 and 2015. There are 2,600 fewer staff in TAFE today than there were in 2011.

Youth unemployment in the Parramatta region, which includes Granville and surrounding suburbs, is around 18 per cent, far above the State and national average. In order to increase the employability of these young people we need to give them the opportunity to attain skills and qualifications, including quality vocational education. Destroying TAFE is not the way to do this. Similarly, recent graduates or people looking to change their career have for decades looked to TAFE to enhance their skills or provide new skills. If these people have an existing qualification, their fees are now exorbitant. Even if their previous qualifications and work experience were in an area made redundant by technological change, they face enormous barriers to retraining under Smart and Skilled.

The fine example of last year's stellar graduates from Granville TAFE and across the south-west Sydney region is as good an argument as any not to destroy TAFE. They come from a diversity of backgrounds and some of them have faced many obstacles and disadvantages and have achieved a lot. They are excited about applying their new skills in the workplace. I call on the Government to abandon Smart and Skilled and to restore TAFE to make sure that in future the people of New South Wales continue to have a great accessible and affordable vocational training provider in NSW TAFE.

#### **PREMIER'S VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARDS**

**Mr CHRIS PATTERSON** (Camden) [4.46 p.m.]: Tonight I will speak about a few special people in my electorate. Recently I had the privilege of presenting the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Awards to seven people who gave of their time for 40 or more years as volunteers. Ellen Cunningham, a compassionate and loyal volunteer for 42 years, takes pride in delivering meals to clients in Camden and develops personal relationships with those she helps through the wonderful Meals on Wheels. Ellen has been a member of the Camden Combined Probus, Quota Club and Apex Club. Even though she has had to cut down on her volunteering her passion is still there and she does what she can.

Recently I attended a Cobbitty Rural Fire Service meeting and issued some fantastic awards. Ed Gaunt commenced volunteering with the NSW Rural Fire Service [RFS] in 1990. Currently he is captain of the Cobbitty RFS and in 25 years he attended many fires and incidents. Andrew MacDonald has been a volunteer with the NSW Rural Fire Service since 1981 and received an award for 25 years service. Andrew is currently Camden group captain and has attended more than 1,000 local incidents. Andrew has been involved in the management of the NSW Rural Fire Service Regional and State Championships. Andrew is also a trustee of the NSW Rural Fire Service public donation fund. John Murray, the Mayor of Cobbitty, has been an outstanding member of the community for many years. John joined the NSW Rural Fire Service in 1985 and received an award for 25 years service. John held various positions over the years, including his latest role with the catering unit.

Peter Rabbidge commenced volunteering with the NSW Rural Fire Service in December 1968. Currently he is senior deputy captain at the Cobbitty RFS and has attended many local fires and major fires throughout New South Wales. He was recognised and received an award for more than 40 years service. Alf Raistrick has been a volunteer with the NSW Rural Fire Service since the 1950s. Alf is currently deputy group captain of the Macarthur zone and has attended hundreds of fires in his 40 years of service. Peter Rabbidge and Alf Raistrick received an award for 40 years service but they have both provided more than 40 years service to their local communities through the RFS.

Ron Usher joined the Cobbitty Rural Fire Service Brigade in 1980 and has been captain for the past 13 years. He has also been a great supporter of the Macarthur catering unit over his 25 years of service. Unfortunately volunteering is sometimes taken for granted. When there are natural disasters we often see our RFS or SES volunteers on television assisting people who have been devastated by an event that they would never have predicted or expected to find themselves in. Mother Teresa once said:

The miracle is not that we do this work, but that we are happy to do it.

I am sure that all those who volunteer and give of their time for someone else's benefit are more than happy to step up. Volunteers are all around us—such as those helping Salvation Army or Lifeline, our sporting organisations, our churches, our Rotary and Lions clubs, our Surf Life Saving, Probuss, Quota or View clubs as well as so many more organisations. I congratulate the seven people of Camden I have mentioned on their combined more than 250 years of service in volunteering. On behalf of the community of Camden, I thank them for their efforts. Doing something for someone else just because one can makes one feel good.

I encourage anyone with spare time to find an organisation and to offer help. As I have said before, we must thank volunteers because no level of government could afford to pay them for what they do. If we had to pay them, one of two things would occur: either the jobs would not get done or they would not get done to the wonderful standard to which they are currently done. I thank every volunteer in my community for making Camden and the Macarthur region the special place that it is.

### ORANGE ELECTORATE COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Mr ANDREW GEE** (Orange—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.51 p.m.]: Two wonderful community events recently occurred in the Central West. The first was the 2015 Parkes Coradgery and Diggers Picnic Races, held on Saturday 6 June when thousands flocked to Parkes. It featured catered marquees, live music entertainment from One Non Blond, catering by Parkes Quota Club and it was a great day out. The gates opened at 11.30 a.m. and a five-race program was organised by the Parkes Jockey Club. Melbourne Cup might feature Fashion on the Field, but it all happens at the Parkes picnic races with thousands of dollars in prize money ensuring this event is fashionista central for one day in June.

The judges were Andrew Cannon, owner of Andrew James Make Up and Millinery brand who grew up in Parkes; Jacob Foran, a Parkes local who has always been the go-to guy for the latest in fashion in Parkes and is manager at Byrne Clothing and Embroidery; and Debra Parish, milliner at Arhat Millinery. Categories included junior, teenager, best-dressed gent, most stylish couple, cutting edge, most elegant lady and millinery. The winners were: junior, Cooper Wright Mylan and Lillie Bell; teenager, Elizabeth Wythes and Mackenzie Baker; best-dressed gent, Victor White; and most stylish couple, Lucy Stevenson and Anthony Lock. The cutting edge category is special because the winner was none other than Ms Rosie Pritchard who happens to work in my electorate office.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Hear, hear!

**Mr ANDREW GEE:** Yes, it was a wonderful achievement. She was wearing millinery by Fiona Schofield, another Orange milliner. The most elegant lady was Rachael Sladden and millinery was won by Chloe Stone. Sarah Gillogly did not enter any category but was wearing a lovely hat crafted by Fiona Schofield. The committee consisted of Mark and Ann Olson, Tim Keith who is the president, Mick Craft, Krys and Lajos Szabo, Danielle Cartwright who is the Fashion on the Field coordinator, Robyn Hawke, Cathy Brown, and Gary and Christine Somers. At the event I bumped into old friends Gavin and Ellie Tom. It was a wonderful community event and I congratulate the committee and all the winners of Fashion on the Field, including Ms Rosie Pritchard whom I may have mentioned already. There was also racing and I ended \$2 up for the day, which was very satisfying.

The other important event is the Trundle Main Street Rejuvenation project that was commenced in 2011 as part of the Trundle Strategic Plan. Trundle boasts the widest street in New South Wales and the longest pub verandah in New South Wales. Sadly, in recent times some country towns have fallen into a state of disrepair as younger people have moved to the cities, but Trundle is a town that refuses to die and, in fact, it continues to grow. Since 2011, 85 volunteers have contributed 1,300 hours of labour to the Main Street Rejuvenation project and more than \$90,000 has been raised. I was in Trundle at the weekend to open new operations, including a new physiotherapist, a new Landcare office and a new Royal Far West shop. The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW backed the project with \$20,000 in funding and I congratulate the society.

I thank all the volunteers and in particular pay tribute to Andrew Rawsthorne, coordinator of the Trundle Main Street Rejuvenation project, and his extremely capable team. Andrew was backed by the Northparkes Mines—well done to the team as we love working with them—Royal Far West, whose facilities manager Michael Hawke was in attendance on Saturday; Royal Agricultural Society Foundation, whose executive officer Kate Ross was in attendance on Saturday; Parkes Shire Council, which is always on hand; Trundle Men's Shed; Trundle and District Progress Association, and I thank Peter Kelly; and the Trundle, Bruie Plains and District Landcare Group. Trundle is also the home of the ABBA Festival. Whilst

I attended the festival this year I did not participate in a musical sense or dress up. I have given the Trundle community the undertaking to be back next year for the busking section and I will dress up in appropriate ABBA gear.

**Mr Christopher Gulaptis:** As Frida or Benny?

**Mr ANDREW GEE:** Members heard it here first. I congratulate the communities of Parkes and Trundle on these wonderful community events and thank members for their clear interest.

### CHINESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION COUNCIL EISTEDDFOD

**Ms JODI McKAY** (Strathfield) [4.56 p.m.]: The Chinese Language Education Council [CLEC] is an apolitical and non-profit-making body representing 32 Chinese community language schools in New South Wales. Its main objective is to promote the learning of Chinese language in this State. Its premier event is the National Chinese Eisteddfod, one the largest Chinese language events outside China. It involves 2,500 students aged four to 21 years participating in a Chinese language poetry and recitation competition.

The most recent eisteddfod was held in my local community at Strathfield Girls High School. It has become an annual event that is enjoyed by the school and broader community. I was pleased to attend the eisteddfod this year and to give support to the CLEC and the students, parents and friends who took part in the event. I thank the council and its chairperson, Xue Feng Zhang, for inviting me. I witnessed the great benefit of the event. Many students read their poetry or prose passages with the pronunciation of a native Chinese speaker. All students were developing an appreciation of Chinese culture and enhancing their confidence to speak in public.

This year saw the largest participation of students and schools. The number of students increased notably, especially the number of non-Chinese background students and group teams from mainstream schools. It was fantastic to see this cross-cultural exchange in addition to the celebration and appreciation of cultural diversity. This success, however, did not happen overnight. For more than 25 years the eisteddfod has played a positive role in upholding the social harmony of not only the Chinese community but also the wider community, by ensuring young people learn not only English but also the Chinese language. Bilingualism and an appreciation for other cultures are crucial to the success of modern Australia. Chinese bilingualism acts as a bridge between New South Wales and our most important trading partner, China. It helps facilitate increased cultural and economic exchange, which strengthens our State. In many ways this is story of multiculturalism in Australia—building bridges between cultures.

This is one of the things I love about my local area. I can walk up Burwood Road and choose from a huge range of Chinese, Mediterranean, East Asian and South Asian cuisines. I can attend Homebush Boys High to watch a screening of a short film created and produced by the boys on multiculturalism. And once a year I have the pleasure of seeing more than 2,500 students from across Sydney celebrate the long and rich history of Chinese poetry and prose. This is what makes my electorate, and our State, strong. Australia is an example to the world of a successful and harmonious multicultural society. Critical to this success is an understanding in our community that multiculturalism is more than tolerance. It is, when at its best, a celebration of cultures. Thus it was with great dissatisfaction that I discovered the Government had failed to fund the 2015 National Chinese Eisteddfod. The Government refused a request for a small grant of \$2,000 to \$3,000 through the Community Relations Commission. The grant is used by the council to employ program coordinators, to hire venues, to pack boxed lunches for volunteers, and to hire a storage room at the venue. These are essential expenses.

To fund the most recent eisteddfod, the Chinese Language Education Council had to take funding from other services. It is now facing staff shortages. Staff at the CLEC are volunteering to help after hours and on weekends to ensure the eisteddfod continues unimpeded. This situation is not sustainable. It puts additional pressure on the already hardworking staff and leaders of the CLEC. We cannot have participation at the eisteddfod go backwards. Indeed, this event needs to continue to expand. We are fortunate in our State that so many students want to embrace the Chinese language. It builds our capacity to engage economically and culturally with our largest regional neighbour, and to seize the myriad opportunities this presents.

I congratulate the partners and sponsors of the eisteddfod for stepping up and providing support, including *Sing Tao Daily*, ABC Tissue Products, the Australian Chinese Charity Foundation, the Lions Club, and the Australian Chinese Community Association. Many more associations and community groups,

businesses, schools and individuals have also provided in-kind and monetary support. I also congratulate the staff and volunteers on their work, including the longest-serving volunteer, Phillip Ng. The Chinese language is spoken by billions and its learning needs to be a top priority for New South Wales and Australia. I call on the Government to end the uncertain funding situation in which it has put community groups and community events like the CLEC and the eisteddfod. Australia is an incredible success story of multiculturalism. We need to encourage celebrations that strengthen cultural diversity, rather than make these celebrations harder.

### DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

**Mr DARYL MAGUIRE** (Wagga Wagga—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.01 p.m.]: I draw the attention of the House to an issue I have relating to written communications with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions [DPP]. I have been in this place since 1999. On Saturday 8 April 2000 the headline in the Riverina's *Daily Advertiser* read "I would have kept killing". The article went on to state that they were the words of killer Matthew James Harris in a police interview. Matthew Harris is Wagga Wagga's worst mass murderer, having killed three people. The public regarded the sentence he received as deficient.

I wrote to then Director of Public Prosecutions Nicholas Cowdery on 14 April 2000 requesting that he lodge an appeal in the Court of Criminal Appeal on the basis the sentence was inadequate. I received a response indicating that the DPP had directed that there be a Crown appeal against the inadequacy of the sentence. Subsequent to that, the *Daily Advertiser* reported that Matthew Harris would die in jail. I then wrote to the DPP regarding the murderer Christopher Hoerler, who murdered baby Jordan Smith. My letter stated:

**I cannot and will not accept** the crushing of Baby Jordan's toes with a clamp, being punched with such force the baby's bottom teeth were smashed up into the top of his mouth and injuries including ten broken ribs, a torn liver, more than 50 bruises, damage to the pancreas and bowel could be described as "**not pleasant**" by Hoerler's Counsel.

This child was killed with injuries so horrific that hardened police officers' voices crack with emotion when describing the torture this tiny infant endured.

It would be reasonable for the community to expect your office to send a clear message that the sentence imposed is manifestly inadequate considering the maximum penalty that is available of 25 years.

I urge you to support the community's view and expectations by appealing immediately.

He replied on 7 April stating:

I refer to your letter...

I wish to advise that the matter is listed for a court hearing in the Court of Criminal Appeal on 17 May 2004.

I wrote again to Nicholas Cowdery asking why the lesser charge of manslaughter was accepted by the Crown, and dialogue between us ensued. He responded stating:

The accepted protocol for representations of this kind by Members of Parliament on behalf of persons involved in criminal proceedings is that they be made to the Attorney General. Accordingly, I am copying this correspondence to him to be added to other information that I have provided to him on this matter.

Notwithstanding the situation, I provide the following information to you directly.

He then proceeded to provide a detailed response. On 21 October 2011, I wrote to Lloyd Babb about an injury that occurred to Jordan Fiets. Mr Babb responded with a detailed letter on 2 November explaining that he would not appeal the sentence handed down to the offender because he thought it was appropriate. I wrote again to Mr Babb on 10 April 2015 about the murder of 74-year-old Rodney Willis, who was discovered beaten to death, asking that he appeal the charges because they were manifestly inadequate. However, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions replied stating:

The Director will write to you as soon as the report has been received and considered.

The DPP wrote again on 12 May, stating:

As per the long-established protocol, this Office does not communicate directly with Members of Parliament. Rather, any enquiries relevant to the functions of this office are forwarded via the Attorney General, the Hon G Upton MP.

I put it to the House that the DPP clearly should correspond with members of Parliament and individuals who want to raise issues such as the sentencing of these people being manifestly inadequate. The DPP's not

responding to members is a denial of the rights of the electorates we represent. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions must state its policy clearly. I have provided the precedent for correspondence between members of Parliament and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Why has this new policy been implemented? What is the policy? Will we be allowed to communicate with the DPP? Will the office respond to families who feel aggrieved about lenient sentences and will they be able to make representations?

### WOOLGOOLGA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

**Mr ANDREW FRASER** (Coffs Harbour—The Assistant-Speaker) [5.06 p.m.]: I draw the attention of the House to an extremely important issue relating to not only marine safety but also surf lifesaving and the citizens of Woolgoolga. Some years ago the roof was blown off the Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club, which is about 60 or 70 years old. Then Minister Sandra Nori paid for the repairs using her ministerial discretionary fund. Because of the recent storms and the age of the building, it is now in very poor condition. The viewing platform on the top of the building has had to be removed and the timber fire stairs do not comply with work health and safety regulations.

This is a fantastic club that has been operating from the site for many years, but plans to move it have been under discussion for some time. It is proposed that the Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club move to the Marine Rescue NSW headquarters, which are about 200 metres away, and that the Marine Rescue NSW headquarters move to a site at Arrawarra that was being utilised by the Department of Marine Sciences of the University of New England. Mr Deputy-Speaker, as you and I know, the Department of Marine Sciences has been transferred to Southern Cross University at Lismore. As an aside, I suggest that it should not be there; it should be in Coffs Harbour given that the National Marine Science Centre is in Coffs Harbour.

I have had discussions with Southern Cross University Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Lee about that. However, that is not the focus of my private member's statement. I have also spoken to Stacey Tanos and others about the Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club using the old Department of Marine Sciences facility at Arrawarra. But those at the University of New England at Armidale refuse to sign it back to the State. This building is on Crown land. I believe it is now only utilised for sabbaticals—and I use that word loosely—for professors and others from the University of New England.

**Dr Geoff Lee:** They are academics.

**Mr ANDREW FRASER:** They probably are academics. They duck down and have holidays in this particular unit. There is no research done. The university no longer has a marine biology school. We cannot shift Marine Rescue NSW to Arrawarra, and therefore cannot shift the surf club to the marine rescue site, until it is signed over. I have met with the Minister about this and spoken with Alison Stone, the Deputy Director General of the Department of Primary Industries, Land and Natural Resources. We are all waiting on the University of New England. It is their selfish actions that are creating a real risk to surf lifesaving and people's safety at the beach, because I do not believe the Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club will be able to utilise the premises it has now next summer. Marine Rescue NSW is desperate to get to its new headquarters at Arrawarra in order to continue to monitor vessels off the coast in times of high seas, as we have on the North Coast. They need to be able to go out and assist in any rescues.

I make an appeal in this Parliament today to those in charge of the University of New England to stop playing games and to assign this land back to the Minister so that it can be reassigned to Marine Rescue NSW. Both Marine Rescue NSW and the Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club are volunteer organisations. They provide their services and ensure the safety of the community at their own risk. They provide a fantastic service. To have a bunch of academics hiding in the ivy-covered halls in Armidale and refusing to cooperate with these two fantastic services, run by volunteers, is an absolute disgrace.

The Chief Executive Officer of Marine Rescue NSW, Stacey Tannos, the deputy director general of land and natural resources, the Minister for Lands and Water, I as the local member, and the head of Surf Life Saving NSW have all been left impotent by a group of academics at Armidale. It is absolutely disgraceful. I want everyone in this Parliament to support those volunteers at the Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club to ensure they can continue to provide their great services to the people of the North Coast.

### RAMADAN AND EID AL-FITR

**Mr JIHAD DIB** (Lakemba) [5.11 p.m.]: The month of Ramadan is the holiest month for people of Islamic background. During daylight hours Muslims fast as a form of religious observation. They abstain from

drink and food, and undertake good deeds where possible. It is a time of spirituality and reconnection with family and community. Importantly, it is a time to effectively walk a mile in the shoes of those much less fortunate. At the end of the month, Muslims celebrate with Eid Al-Fitr, which translates as "celebration of breaking the fast". Across the world, Ramadan is a very special time. It brings people together. The highlight is the sharing of iftar, or the breaking of the fast, with people with various religious and cultural beliefs. I acknowledge all those fasting this month and wish them all the very best.

It being Ramadan, I visited the night markets of Lakemba last Saturday evening. It was a kaleidoscope of colour. Haldon Street and its surrounds were abuzz with all the things that highlight our multiculturalism. At one of the stalls, I was served by a former student of mine, Hamzah. He had concocted a great chicken mix served in a roll and was doing his bit to eke out a living. At the Al Aseel stall I tried my hand at carving some shawarma. Al Aseel was recently visited by the food media personality Matt Preston. He, like me, sees the potential for a food hub in the area. I was so happy to see visitors to the area sampling other foods. I invite everyone to visit Lakemba during the month of Ramadan to get to know members of the community and to share a meal with people from all walks of life.

In my inaugural speech I spoke of the potential for the suburbs in my great electorate to become a tourist hub. Through proper planning, investment and a commitment to truly make a difference, we have the opportunity to engage a whole community, bring economic benefit and create avenues for people from all backgrounds to engage with one another. Imagine what it would look like to achieve our vision of the electorate as a food and cultural destination, brought to life through clever investment by the Government. Imagine the spin-off benefits if we allow ourselves to be a bit creative and think outside the box. Think about the way we can change the perception of the community, and increase opportunities for education, work and the establishment of microbusinesses by exploring the whole-of-society benefits we could achieve.

People in my electorate are crying out for opportunities. As I have said before, that is all they want—no more and no less. On Tuesday the budget spoke of rivers of gold. Unfortunately, it seems that those rivers did not directly flow to the electorate that has one of the highest unemployment rates in the State coupled with one of the lowest levels of income. It is fair to say that the people of Lakemba could rightfully feel that the Government's claim to be looking after the most vulnerable is a clear case of *verba non facta*—that is, words not deeds. I learnt a long time ago that you cannot just complain—you have to provide alternatives. So here are some options.

Why do we not build on the electorate's cultural diversity and have a serious conversation about how an electorate like Lakemba can access some of the \$127.6 million allocated to the New South Wales Visitor Economy initiative to make it a destination of choice for people from all parts of the State, and indeed the world, and tie that to a focus on ensuring students from my electorate receive some of the scholarships made available to disadvantaged youth through the Reskilling NSW program? Imagine if our youth have access to skills that will help them contribute to the workforce and we realise our vision of being a tourist hub that capitalises on our diversity through giving them skills in tourism, hospitality, marketing, customer service, business management and the like.

If the Government is genuine about wanting to govern for all and provide opportunities for all communities, let us think outside the box. Let us look at accessing some of the \$1.5 billion allocated to sports and cultural infrastructure as a way of making an investment that is serious enough that it will work. Let us not look to just drip feed here. Through the lease of the poles and wires and a windfall in land tax, the Government has the opportunity to make sure that all communities, especially those most vulnerable, feel they are being taken care of. Sadly, my constituents will look at the budget and feel they have been left behind—the rivers of gold do not seem to flow to the places that need them the most. Whilst I am in Lakemba this weekend, supporting my constituents having a go during Ramadan, I will think of the potential in my electorate and the possible solutions that will make changes for generations to come. We can do this. Let us be brave; let us be the change we say we want; and, above all, let us be fair and give opportunity to all.

**Dr GEOFF LEE** (Parramatta—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.16 p.m.]: I commend the member for Lakemba on his private member's statement about Ramadan and the importance of Ramadan to sections of the New South Wales community. I also commend Premier Mike Baird and the Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon. John Ajaka, for hosting the annual ifta parliamentary dinner. I know the member for Lakemba attended, along with some 200 people. It was wonderful to see so many people come together in a spirit of tolerance and harmony to celebrate our diversity—which is one of our strengths. I was also at the dinner and saw it as a great place to celebrate the diversity of New South Wales as one of its strengths.

### COOTAMUNDRA ELECTORATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

**Ms KATRINA HODGKINSON** (Cootamundra—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.17 p.m.]: The Cootamundra electorate is an extraordinary electorate, boasting beautiful scenery; productive land; a wealth of innovative and successful industries, including farming, mining, forestry and small businesses; and a strong and proud heritage. But by far above everything else, its greatest asset and the biggest jewel in its crown is its community. Each town, village and farming area possesses a great sense of community. At the core of this sense of community is a strong and proud tradition of volunteering—of working for the benefit of others and for the greater good. This sense of high altruism—of putting others and community first and giving a great deal of time, effort and talent above and beyond the call of duty—is illustrated by this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List and the wealth of recipients from Coolamon, Harden, Temora, Cootamundra, Junee Reefs, Junee, Young and Narrandera.

Young's internationally renowned author and former Grenfell Public School student Valerie Parv has been made a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia—an AM—for significant service to the arts. She is a prolific author and a role model and mentor to young emerging writers. It is an outstanding achievement, and is indeed well deserved. Ms Parv has sold over 29 million copies of her books. They have been translated into many languages and been published as a manga version. I am pleased to say that, despite her resounding international success, Ms Parv still lives in Young and is actively involved in mentoring local writers and participating in the district's events and festivals.

Harden local Brian Dunn, a justice of the peace, has been recognised for his services to the community of Harden with a Medal of the Order of Australia. Mr Dunn was a founding member of the NSW State Emergency Service in 1969 and has made significant contributions to health care and aged care in Harden. He is also on the board of the Australian National University Clinical School. Mr Dunn's list of committees and involvement includes the local Meals on Wheels and blood bank, Demondrille Rural Fire Service, the Harden Murrumburrah Arts Council, the Australia Day awards, the kite festival, the local freemasonry, Harden Hunting Club, Murrumburrah Harden Show Society, the local nursing home, and fundraising for cancer. He was also involved with the establishment of the local Men's Shed and the mobile breast screening van, and he was a founding member of the local Light Horse troop.

Ian Saunders from Cootamundra was honoured with a Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] for his service to the families of 43 Australian soldiers declared missing in action in the Korean War. Mr Saunders' contribution to the families of soldiers missing in action cannot be overestimated. His work has been extensive and exhaustive over many years, and this is a fitting tribute for those years of service on behalf of the families of those soldiers. The late Mr Patrick Keast of Junee Reefs received the rare honour of a posthumous Order of Australia Medal for his service to the agricultural society movement around New South Wales and Australia. As a fervent supporter of agricultural shows, I know firsthand what an enormous contribution Mr Keast made—he was an amazing man—over many years to show societies around the State and around Australia, as both a local volunteer and a committee member of the Junee Show Society, a delegate, vice-president and president of the Agricultural Societies Council of NSW, and as a councillor for the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW from 2009 to 2012.

Temora's Mayor, Rick Firman, has received a Medal of the Order of Australia for services to local government and to the community of the Riverina. Councillor Firman's focus is and has always been on the community of Temora and its environs, as is shown through his positions on boards and organisations such as the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisations of Councils, Wagga Wagga Local Area Command Police Accountability Team, and Temora's Australia Day Council, Education Foundation, Debutante of the Year Ball, Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal, Rotary, Show Society and Medical Complex and Sports Council, to name a few. Born and bred in Coolamon, Angela McCann is a volunteer for the community quite simply because that is what she does. She does not do it for recognition. Mrs McCann personifies the heart and spirit of what volunteering is all about. Mrs McCann is the main organiser of Coolamon's Anzac Day remembrance ceremony and secretary of the Coolamon RSL, having been the first woman to join the local RSL after World War II. She has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for services to veterans and their families and to Coolamon shire.

Peter Neve is one of our own, even if he only moved to Junee quite recently. He has been recognised for his services for the preservation of Australian rail heritage. He has been a train buff since he was a young boy in Sydney. Mr Neve went on to work for the New South Wales Government Railways where he became the heritage officer, ensuring the preservation of precious history, rail motors, locomotives and infrastructure.



Former mayor of Narrandera John Sullivan has been awarded an OAM for service to local government and the Narrandera community. Having served eight years on council, he is also an active member of the Australia Day, wetlands and Narrandera Shire Town Improvement Committees.

Former constituent Julia Burton-Taylor has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to youth in rural and remote areas and to the not-for-profit sector. She has been an outstanding volunteer for the Country Education Foundation. A Public Service Medal has been awarded to Goldenfields Water general manager, Temora's Andrew Grant, for outstanding public service to water supply and distribution in the south-west tablelands of New South Wales—a great recognition of his talent. Our community appreciates all of these wonderful contributions to our local society.

### ROSE BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON** (Vaucluse—Attorney General) [5.22 p.m.]: On Tuesday 9 June 2015 I welcomed students from Rose Bay Public School to the Legislative Assembly Chamber at Parliament House as part of their studies into how the New South Wales Government works. Rose Bay Public is an excellent school in my electorate of Vaucluse, led by principal Gai O'Neill, who brings great experience and passion to her role. I acknowledge in the House today principal O'Neill's contribution to education in New South Wales and her positive influence on the lives of primary school students in the Rose Bay area who have attended the school under her leadership.

Over the past four years since I have been the member for Vaucluse I have been pleased to announce support from the New South Wales Government to improve the school and its safety. In 2011, for example, Rose Bay Public School was given \$12,000 to boost the maintenance work that needed to be undertaken at the school. In 2013 I announced that Rose Bay Public School would receive a school crossing supervisor, also known as a lollipop person, to better ensure students can make it safely across the busy Albemarle Avenue in Rose Bay. This was a big win for the school, because it had been campaigning for some time for a supervisor for that road. There is also a great community spirit at Rose Bay Public School that includes not only its students but also parents and staff. On election day this year, for example, I visited the school's bric-a-brac market, which gave me a really good opportunity to talk with local residents, parents and children.

When the students of Rose Bay Public School visited Parliament, I was impressed with the knowledge they brought to the Legislative Assembly. They seemed to know quite a bit about what their local member of Parliament does—what kind of work I do. I also talked to them about my role as the State's Attorney General. I pointed out to the students the portrait in the Chamber of William Charles Wentworth. He was an early contributor to democracy in New South Wales. He established the University of Sydney and the *Australian* newspaper. He lived in Vaucluse House, which was his ancestral house. It is now managed by the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. In fact, the modern suburb of Vaucluse takes its name from Vaucluse House. The students found that fascinating. They were particularly interested in the fact that in that portrait William Charles Wentworth looks like his eyes are rather crossed. We had a little debate about whether that was true or was simply the perspective in that painting.

After I departed, the students then participated in a role-playing exercise in the Chamber to familiarise themselves with the business of the House and the way debate on legislation works. They did a fantastic job. I thank the Parliamentary Education Office for running Rose Bay Public School's visit and for the excellent job it does on a regular basis in educating young students from across New South Wales on our great New South Wales democracy. I also thank the students and teachers of Rose Bay Public School for coming along and visiting my House, the Legislative Assembly. I look forward to visiting future school groups from across the Vaucluse electorate when they come to the New South Wales Parliament. I commend my private member's statement to the House.

### KU-RING-GAI COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY GROUPS

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS** (Ku-ring-gai) [5.26 p.m.]: I always thought I had a fair grasp of the diverse number and importance of community and volunteer groups around us, having been part of a few myself over the years. However, recently becoming the member for Ku-ring-gai has opened my eyes to the level of generosity that exists in our communities. Seemingly in every nook and cranny of our electorates there is an organisation that devotes itself to helping those who need a hand up to get by, while other organisations operate with a charter to bring communities together and closing the generational, social, ethnic or linguistic gap.

A household name that I am proud to say I have a branch of in the electorate of Ku-ring-gai is Meals on Wheels. I have learned that Meals on Wheels has its origins in the United Kingdom in World War II. Thankfully this selfless organisation established its roots here first in Victoria in about 1950 and then quickly spread its branches around the country. In the Ku-ring-gai electorate, Meals on Wheels has its headquarters in the Home and Community Care [HACC] building in Gilroy Road at Turramurra. Just weeks ago there was reason for celebration when Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby Meals on Wheels recognised 55 years of community service to the area.

It would be impossible to begin to calculate how many thousands of meals have been lovingly prepared and delivered by the many hundreds of selfless volunteers over the years. More than 100 volunteers continue to do so, delivering more than 1,500 meals prepared in the industrial level kitchen at Turramurra each week. While more than 100 volunteers have chalked up the incredible milestone of more than 10 and greater than 20 or 30 years volunteer service—I would love to name each of them if time permitted—I mention those who have amassed an amazing 40 years dedication, and I mean dedication, to this organisation. Congratulations Jenny Clarke, Padmini O'Brien, Barb Jessep, Jessie Bond, Margaret Lander, Mary Wallace, Bev Chapman and Barb Wood on your more than 40 years of service. Your community thanks you greatly and we wish you all the best when you mark National Meals on Wheels day in late August.

I urge government at all levels to do their bit to keep these vital agencies healthy and active. Another agency we all know about and are grateful for the existence of is Lifeline. Lifeline never switches off. It is truly a 24/7 operation, and needs to be, because it is often in the hours of darkness that the darkest thoughts creep in. When many of us are asleep, others around us are tortured to the point of considering ending their lives. Lifeline's Harbour to Hawkesbury [H2H] chief executive officer Wendy Carver says that last year alone H2H took 98,000 calls locally and recorded 2,000 hours of face-to-face counselling through the 131114 crisis support line. Nationally that figure has topped more than 700,000 calls and the range of topics is almost endless. But there are often common themes—drug addiction, gambling addiction, financial stress, bankruptcy, depression, bipolar disorder, unexpected pregnancy, domestic violence, sexual abuse, bills that simply have no way of being paid, relationship break-ups, homelessness or impending homelessness.

Last week I was honoured to be shown through the Gordon headquarters of H2H, which is one of only three centres across Australia that operates a midnight-to-dawn telephone crisis centre. The professionalism and enthusiasm of the volunteer and paid staff I met were inspiring. Their care for their clients and empathy for others was heartwarming. That visit allowed me the opportunity to present Patrick Rougon with the Premier's Volunteer Award for more than 25 years' service to Lifeline. Patrick has served Lifeline for 29 years in a range of capacities—a volunteer crisis line call operator, trainer, personal counsellor, board member and, as his colleagues describe him, quiet achiever and all-round nice guy. I was honoured to recognise Patrick's incredible selflessness and meet his wife, Nancy, and their two young children.

Patrick is one chapter in a great Lifeline story. I acknowledge Kirstie D'Sousa, Nicola Probert, Sarah Thompson, Julie Maizey, Angela Dodd, Adrienne Bennett, Chris Pettinger, Merlyne Thompson, Michael Friend, Mark Rooney, Michael Cleary, Sylvia Darby, Soniya Gune, Rosanne Petters, Di Fletcher, Jeanette Svehla, David Hollier, Megan Andriessen, Cannabis Information Helpline counsellor Sophie Walker and all the incredible staff whom I met at H2H Gordon and thank them for their life-saving work. As I commented before in relation to Meals on Wheels, many people attached to the Lifeline network deserve to be mentioned across its 52 years of operation in the Hawkesbury/Ku-ring-gai area, but time does not allow me to do that. To members on all sides of the political fence, who are served by one of the 42 Lifeline centres in Australia: Thank you on behalf of those you have helped to save and will continue to save.

### HUNTER STORM RESPONSE

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON** (Maitland) [5.31 p.m.]: Today I will inform the House about the Government's response to the super storm we experienced last April. Before coming to this place I was a bus operator for some years. In that time I made contributions to manuals on critical incident management and attended an Australian Tourism Export Council [ATEC] workshop on natural disaster management by government and the community sector. I have quite a lot of interest in this area. The storm was—please excuse the pun—a perfect storm. I, like many of my new Hunter colleagues, had just received the keys to our electorate offices. In fact, I had spent only six days in my office prior to the storm. When I awoke on that morning in April seven trees had fallen in my backyard—two were across my driveway, but they narrowly missed my car—we had no power, no telephone and no running water. Another 12 or 13 trees have fallen since then. It took a couple of days for some of those trees to be removed so I could once again leave my property.

Four hours before the Premier was to visit my electorate I was informed of his visit via a text message from one of my colleagues in Sydney. The question for me was how to contact him. The scorched earth policy in the handover of offices in this place does not help new members who have to deal suddenly with an emergency or a danger to our community. I tried several means of contacting the Premier. In the end I made contact with his electorate office via his generic email. I was directed to the office of the State Emergency Services [SES] at Rutherford but was advised that the Premier travelling by helicopter—I was driving through flooded and congested roads—and I would not be able to get to his media briefing in time. The Premier did not end up going to Rutherford; he went to Metford. I missed the Premier's briefing but I was able to speak to the many SES volunteers who had come from all over Australia to help us. I also urged people not to use flooded and congested roads and generally supported the Government's messages on safety.

My daughter, Jessica, also helped during this time because some of my staff were unable to make it to the office. I have just finished reading the biography of Anna Bligh, the first female Premier of Queensland. It is good reading and I recommend it to the Premier. By taking a bipartisan approach in times of crisis, Anna Bligh earned the respect of the people of Queensland. The Hon. Catherine Cusack in the other place told me that when cyclone Yasi hit the Ballina electorate then Labor Premier Kristina Keneally took with her the local Nationals member at the time, Mr Don Page, to inspect the extent of the storm damage. Sadly, when the April super storm hit my colleagues on this side of the House warned me that the Government would attempt to shut Opposition members out, as it had during the Blue Mountains bushfires.

Local members are part of the political process. Indeed, in times of crisis people turn to their local members—for example, the gentleman who came to my office when his mobility scooter was on its last battery and who was in need of a warm cup of tea and help in obtaining a referral to Family and Community Services or people calling from Sydney who were trying to get in contact with their love ones stranded at Gillieston Heights. Such events must be managed in a bipartisan way. Earlier today I noted that the Local Land Services [LLS], in a disaster recovery meeting, said it was having issues contacting some of the farmers. The member for Port Stephens also drew attention to the plight of an organic farmer who was giving up because he or she did not know about category C funding and other grants—he and I are using our electorate allowances to provide that information to the community.

I am not placing this information on the public record as part of a blame game; I want an inquiry into this event. I note that as at 1 July the Ministry for Police and Emergency Services is to be absorbed into the Department of Justice and that some funding has been allocated in the budget for SES communications. I want to support the Government on these issues, but Opposition members must be included. At some stage it must be acknowledged that everyone in this community, whether they vote for the Liberals and Nationals, for Labor or The Greens, is part of this State. For the good of us all, the Government should be fair to everyone, particularly in times of crisis.

### **ST GEORGE ROWING CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS** (Miranda) [5.36 p.m.]: Today I congratulate the St George Rowing Club on its recent success in winning the New South Wales Rowing Association Premiership Shield for the second time. The shield is awarded to the club that scores the highest number of points in a variety of racing categories. But do not be fooled by the club being named St George; its boatshed is located in Como, within the beautiful Miranda electorate. The St George Rowing Club was formed in 1957 to cater to the rowing fraternity and to help with the expense associated with the sport. It was initially formed with 24 members, but that quickly grew to more than 200 members by 1962 when the boating club was moved from a modest tin shed to the single-storey clubhouse on the banks of the Cooks River. Increasing siltation of the Cooks River and public works in the area have led to the rowing activities being transferred to Scylla Bay at Como, where the club currently trains.

The St George Rowing club, a not-for-profit organisation, operates for the benefit of its members. In its 58 years since formation it has produced three Olympians. The club, although small, has consistently outperformed its rivals. This year the club, for the sixth consecutive year, has finished in the top three New South Wales rowing clubs in the premiership points score. This remarkable achievement is even more impressive because the club has had only 60 to 70 competitive rowers each season, whilst some rival clubs have had more than 200 competitive rowers. In response, the club has been investing in growing its rowing presence. It has introduced a learn-to-row program to reach out to members of the public who are interested in attaining recreational rowing skills.

On 19 June 2015 I had the pleasure of attending the club's presentation night. Some of the outstanding individual achievements that I acknowledge include: Oarsman of the Year, Steve Harrison; Oarswoman of the Year, Krys Macready; Clubman of the Year, Mark Featherstone; and Pararower of the Year, Steve Knott. It appeared unanimous on the night that the highlight of the 2015 season was the unprecedented success of the Mens A Grade Eight, which featured four father and son combinations in the Edward Trickett New South Wales Grade Championships. The silver medal winning crew included Airton Ramos senior, Airton Ramos junior, Steve Harrison, Nick Harrison, James Chuter, Glenn Chuter, Ben Crooks and Lewis Crooks.

This is the first time that a father-son combination has won a medal in an Australian championship eight race. I extend my deep congratulations to those gentlemen and I hope this is a trend that continues throughout all clubs. Bringing a family dynamic to sport must be commended and applauded because it engages an ever wider range of members in the activities of the organisations. Overall, this season the St George rowers achieved 184 firsts, 180 seconds and 123 thirds, which is astounding given that the club operated with only 65 competitors this year. The club is expecting to grow and there is no doubt that the successful culture it is building will propel its status to that of one of Sydney's major clubs and one that will continue to enrich my electorate.

Finally, I mention the dedicated office bearers and take this opportunity to thank president Stephen Irons; vice-president Helen Anderson; secretary Danika Wright; captain Steven Anderson; vice-captain Allan Pollock; committee members Nick Nesevski, Brendan Henwood and Anthony McKinlay; and general manager Tony Lycakis for their tireless work in ensuring the ongoing success of the club. I wish all of the competitors, members and volunteers every success in their future competitions and commend them for their achievements and efforts to date.

### WOLLONGONG JOBS

**Ms NOREEN HAY** (Wollongong) [5.41 p.m.]: I raise an issue of concern that has been bandied around since early June and was reported in the *Illawarra Mercury*. On 10 June I released a media statement in relation to my concerns with BlueScope Steel in Port Kembla in my electorate. The *Illawarra Mercury* reported that the company had made it the responsibility of its workforce to cut production costs. I believe this will take industrial relations back to the dark ages when employees were threatened, "Either you do the job cheaper or else". I commented that I recognise the right of unions to negotiate enterprise agreements on behalf of their members but that I expect BlueScope to enter into negotiations in good faith.

I am concerned about this ongoing issue. Recently I asked the Premier: Where is the support for BlueScope from the State Government? Where is the support for using Australian steel in government procurement? I am not suggesting that the Government interfere with the ability of companies to compete for business but that it should look at opportunities in the interests of Australia and New South Wales. Our jobs must come first. We are continually behind the eight ball. On a number of occasions I have raised in the House the number of jobs that have been lost in the Illawarra and in my electorate of Wollongong. I have called on the Government to relocate a government department to the Illawarra or to enter into a job-creating investment project to assist the community.

Day after day we hear the Government say what it is doing for the regions. The Illawarra region needs assistance. If it does not get government assistance, the employment figures in the Illawarra will continue to head south. We do not want threats of further job losses and closures; we want companies to negotiate in good faith. On 10 June I stated that the workforce has displayed over many years its preparedness to be flexible, productive and efficient. In the 1980s BHP, as it was then, employed nearly 30,000 people. Today its figures are below 3,000 and it negotiates with the workforce by way of threats. Job losses also affect subcontractors and ongoing contractors. We cannot sit quietly and allow this situation to happen.

I ask the Premier that when the Government is creating procurement policies to commit to jobs in New South Wales. I suggest that this Government follow the procurement policy of the former Labor Government, which included preferences for tenderers that provided apprenticeships, training and jobs creation and investment in regional areas, areas of high unemployment and areas with particular needs. The Government's policy should also include a requirement to use Australian and New South Wales steel from Port Kembla. As I understand, the North West Rail Link does not include one nut or bolt that was produced in Australia, let alone in New South Wales, in particular, Port Kembla. I ask the Government to reverse this situation forthwith.

### TRIBUTE TO MAURIE LYNCH

**Mr DAVID MEHAN** (The Entrance) [5.46 p.m.]: In the history of the labour movement in New South Wales, the story of the Builders Labourers Federation [BLF] is an important one that is often dominated by the figure of Jack Munday, the green bans and the de-registration of that union. I want to record the work of another man from that time who has not received the same recognition as the more notorious members of the BLF. In my view, his contribution to the labour movement was much greater and his life should remain an example to us all in the progressive labour movement in this country.

I am talking about Maurice John Thomas Lynch, more commonly known as Maurie Lynch. On June 10 Maurie passed away peacefully at the age of 84 at his home at Killarney Vale on the Central Coast, which is located in The Entrance electorate. He was a dear friend, a companion and a support to me in the Labor Party. I will miss him very much. Maurie Lynch was born on 1 November 1930. In the 1950s, while working as a builder's labourer in the Sydney region, he joined the Builders Labourers Federation. Soon after, he joined the Australian Labor Party.

At that time the BLF was noted as a conservative union that relied on the arbitration system for improvements to wages and conditions. For labourers, these were few and far between. Better conditions tended to accrue to the tradesmen's unions, which dominated the industry. Maurie banded together with people such as Jack Munday, Joe Owens, Bob Pringle, Tom and Brian Hogan, Harry Connell, Bert Magill, Dick Prendergast and others. They not only liberated the New South Wales branch of the BLF but also built a new militant union leadership which significantly improved the wages and conditions of builders' labourers. I note that they significantly improved the status of builders' labourers in the building industry, which was an important achievement.

They had to go through some fierce struggles before achieving this victory. They produced a news bulletin called the *Hoist*, which they used to mobilise membership. Their victory eventually saw Jack Munday become secretary of the New South Wales branch of the BLF and gave birth to the green bans movement. The story of the BLF rank and file reform movement during this period is recorded in an interesting pamphlet produced by Paul True entitled "Rolling the right!" Maurie's role receives a brief mention in that pamphlet when it records that he won a ballot of more than 4,000 building workers to be elected the senior job delegate at the St Mary's munitions storage in 1956.

In the election campaign he ran against the preferred candidate for the union leadership. The pamphlet, I note, incorrectly records Maurie's name using the spelling M-o-r-r-i-e. Maurie stood out at the time as a loyal Australian Labor Party [ALP] member in a communist-dominated reform group, a reform group that went on to become the leadership group of the Builders Labourers Federation [BLF]. It is a tribute to his character and standing within the union membership that he won positions not only on the job but also later as a full-time elected official of the union even though he was never part of the dominant communist group. He remained a loyal member of the Australian Labor Party throughout.

After the BLF was absorbed into the Building Workers Industrial Union [BWIU] and the larger Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union [CFMEU], Maurie moved to the Central Coast to organise workers in that area. He built a home for himself and his wife, Nanette, at Killarney Vale. After retiring from full-time union activities, Maurie remained active in the labour movement on the Central Coast. He was central to the development of The Entrance-Bateau Bay branch of the ALP and was elected president. During his presidency, The Entrance-Bateau Bay branch grew to be one of the largest and most vibrant branches on the Central Coast. Maurie also was closely involved in the reformation of the Central Coast Trades and Labour Council in 2002, at a time when Central Coast union affairs tended to be run out of Newcastle or Sydney. Maurie worked with me on Dobell Federal Electoral Council and The Entrance State Electoral Council. I could always rely on Maurie's support.

**Dr Geoff Lee:** Numbers.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN:** He did help me with numbers, but, more importantly, he was open about his support. On each occasion that I contested preselection as an ALP candidate, Maurie attended the count and remained behind to share a beer with me afterwards, win or lose. Maurie was made a life member of the CFMEU and a life member of the Australian Labor Party. He was awarded for his service to the labour movement with a scroll of honour by Unions NSW. After many years of service, Maurie retired from full-time branch work to care for Nanette, who suffered under the burden of Alzheimer's disease and was experiencing

worsening dementia. Nanette's condition probably warranted full-time residential care, but Maurie refused to be parted from his dear wife. They had no children. Maurie is survived by Nanette, who is now in full-time care. Building workers have lost one of their true champions.

### PARRAMATTA SCHOOLS

**Dr GEOFF LEE** (Parramatta—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.51 p.m.]: I bring great news to the House today. I am encouraged by the latest budget announcements made by the Government of investment in schools in my electorate of Parramatta. We are building Parramatta as the education capital of Western Sydney, if not the whole of New South Wales. Families in my electorate have access to public and non-government schools that are second to none. The Parramatta community is excited about the Government delivering three more schools. Arthur Phillip High School, in the heart of the Parramatta central business district, will become the site of the State's first public high-rise school. This is history in the making. The current site of Arthur Phillip High School contains the oldest continually used education building in Sydney. The redevelopment will preserve the heritage and maintain the site.

The redeveloped Arthur Phillip High School and Parramatta Public School sites will rise into the sky, matched only by their students' aspirations. The schools will cater for up to 3,000 students. There will be an investment of more than \$100 million in the Parramatta central business district. The ambitious time line means that students will not have to wait long to access learning in a state-of-the-art, world-leading school. The Minister for Education is on record as saying that the school will open in 2019. Hardworking and dedicated Arthur Phillip High School principal Lynne Goodwin, when questioned about the advantages of a high-rise school, said that "students will love their new school" and "enjoy learning in a high-rise school".

Recently it was reported that students at St Andrew's Cathedral School, located in the Sydney central business district, said that the advantages that their school had over suburban schools included access to resources and opportunities and close proximity to businesses, places of interest and other educational facilities. That will also be the case for the new education precinct in Parramatta. The development means greater connectivity, with access to a vast network of public transport options for students. It will allow parents who work in Parramatta's central business district easy access to the school and a convenient drop-off and pick-up schedule. Another historic announcement will see students return to the old King's School site. The King's School is Australia's oldest independent school, operating since February 1832, when it started with just three young boys. Funding is now committed to accelerate the development of the new primary school.

The new school will cater for up to 1,000 kindergarten to year 6 students. That is a \$30 million investment in education in Parramatta. What a wonderful initiative. I deeply thank the Minister for Education for his support for the initiative. When the announcement was made, community comments quickly showed that parents cannot wait to enrol their children at the new King's School. In Parramatta there is growing investment and choice in the tertiary sector as well. The University of Western Sydney has committed to building a new campus in the central business district. The university will invest millions of dollars in a new facility for 10,000 students. I commend the Chancellor, Professor Peter Shergold and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Barney Glover for their commitment to investing in the new facility, adjacent to Arthur Phillip High School.

We are creating an education hub in the Parramatta central business district, from the new high-rise Arthur Phillip High School to the new primary school and the university campus. In addition, the University of Sydney is investing \$50 million in stage one of the redevelopment of the Westmead biomedical campus, which will take up to 2,000 students. I commend the University of Sydney for that wonderful commitment. The University of Western Sydney has also announced a major rebuilding program on the Westmead site, an investment of approximately \$450 million. The Government continues to develop Parramatta as the capital of Western Sydney. The Government is also making Parramatta the education capital of Western Sydney, if not the whole State.

### SYDNEY AIRPORT

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER** (Rockdale) [5.56 p.m.]: To many of us across the inner west and southern suburbs of Sydney, the noise of aircraft flying overhead is simply a part of life. When you are a stone's throw from the airport, as we are in Rockdale, despite the frequency of flights, you never quite lose the shock value of just how low planes fly above us. Coupled with this, we are burdened with the freight and passenger trips from Sydney's airport precinct congesting our local roads and impacting on our daily lives.

I am no opponent of progress. I recognise and welcome the need for traffic and noise. They are a small price to pay for having a major international airport—which we need, as a major international city. However, it is only fair and just that some small compensation be paid to local areas like mine which bear the brunt of the disadvantages associated with our airport while the advantages are shared by the entire Sydney metropolitan area. As part of the Sydney Airport lease, a rate equivalent payment was required to be made to local councils, including Rockdale City Council, to compensate for the inconveniences we face due to our proximity to the airport. It has been extremely disappointing to see that not only are these payments not being made in full but the Commonwealth is refusing to enforce payment of moneys that are owed to local ratepayers and the local community.

My history in accountancy means that I am all too familiar with the keenness of the Australian Taxation Office in pursuing outstanding tax payments. So I find it simply insulting that when it comes to payments owed not to the Federal Government but to my electorate's local government it is nowhere to be found. As things stand, we have a bizarre situation in which there is an effective tax liability owed to Rockdale and other councils by the Sydney Airport Corporation, but enforcement powers remain solely with the Federal Government. This anomaly arises due to the land on which Sydney Airport lies technically remaining the property of the Commonwealth.

Given the recent debate in this place, I will not retread the idea of 99-year leases versus sales but it should be obvious to all involved that Sydney Airport should not be able to shirk its local tax burden. This is particularly galling due to the significant impacts that the airport has on our suburban lifestyle, when all we are asking for is the payment of land rates. I was heartened to see a strong push, at the recent Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly, to fight against this unfair treatment of local councils by the private corporations that control our airports. I congratulate the Mayor of Rockdale, Shane O'Brien, on prosecuting the case that the Commonwealth Places (Application of Laws) Act 1970, which allows for certain State taxes to apply equally to Commonwealth land in certain circumstances, should be amended to allow for the inclusion of local government rates.

Sydney Airport land is clearly being used for commercial purposes, and it runs counter to basic common sense that the corporation would be able to abrogate its tax liabilities thanks to legal loopholes and a failure of contractual enforcement. Local families in Rockdale and in surrounding local government areas would have debt collectors knocking on their doors if they chose to pay only part of their rates, but the Sydney Airport Corporation continues to operate with impunity. We would not let a local fish and chip shop operate without paying rates but for some reason—whether due to wilful ignorance or inaction—the Australian Government is letting a multibillion-dollar company ignore its responsibilities.

I join Rockdale City Council and the Australian Local Government Association in calling on the Commonwealth Attorney-General and the Abbott Government, first, to recognise that the exemption from local council rates that applies to Commonwealth land from such land leased to private enterprises for commercial purposes should be reviewed; and, secondly, to carry out a review into the Commonwealth Places (Application of Laws) Act 1970 to determine appropriate amendments to encourage competition in the marketplace for Commonwealth land. There cannot be one law for some and another law for everybody else—particularly when it comes to treatment under the tax code.

### INGLESIDE PRECINCT

**Mr ROB STOKES** (Pittwater—Minister for Planning) [6.01 p.m.]: I am pleased to provide the House with an update on the Ingleside Precinct in my electorate of Pittwater. As members are aware, Pittwater is located on the beautiful northern beaches and is a growing community. The New South Wales Government is working alongside our community to ensure that we manage growth and change in a more sustainable way. We have seen ad hoc and uncoordinated development in the past and we are keen to ensure that development in the future is great for our environment, our society and our economy. Many new homes will be needed across Sydney, including on the northern beaches. With the growth of our community, the new Ingleside precinct will provide much-needed new housing, community benefits and education resources for our community, responding to Pittwater's growing needs.

The New South Wales Government is increasing housing supply, which is a positive response to provide for the people of Pittwater. We estimate that up to 3,000 homes could be built in Ingleside, which is a significant number. However, we are planning for a sustainable future at Ingleside. The release of Ingleside is being led by the Department of Planning and Environment, Pittwater Council and Urban Growth NSW. We

have listened to the community and have responded to their needs and concerns to achieve the best possible social environmental and economic outcomes for the Ingleside precinct. The New South Wales Department of Planning and Environment has released a discussion paper that highlights the planning and development outcomes for the new precinct. There will be an estimated population of around 9,500 people; up to 3,000 homes, based on early investigations; a small town centre with a mix of retail and commercial businesses, including shops, a community centre, parks and sporting facilities; and one or two new public schools, depending on future demand and broader school capacity.

The mix of land uses aims to balance development with conservation, as this is a very ecologically diverse part of New South Wales. There is more biodiversity in Ingleside than there is in the United Kingdom, for example. It is an incredibly biodiverse area. The aim is to integrate the community's vision and driving principles and to provide a range of housing options to suit diverse community needs. The goal is to plan for facilities the community will need and, importantly, to manage impacts on the environment by conserving remnant vegetation, protecting water quality and managing the impacts of development on flooding. Development in Ingleside will occur over a number of years.

There are two main areas of the precinct that have the best potential for urban development. Environmental and infrastructure constraints mean there is limited additional development potential within the next few years in Wirreanda Valley and the Bayview Heights areas. Those areas are designated to have lower-density development. Investigations are being undertaken to facilitate that appropriate low-density development. It will probably be consistent with the sorts of developments in the area at the moment. As Minister for Planning, I will be working closely with the Minister for Environment to ensure the Ingleside precinct achieves environmental outcomes, including the protection of our biodiversity.

At this stage more than one-third of the land in the precinct is proposed for conservation. Two endangered ecological communities were recorded in the precinct. Duffys Forest vegetation will be retained within the Baha'i Temple lands, and more than 90 per cent of the coastal upland swamp community is also slated for conservation. Wildlife corridors will provide connectivity across the precinct both north-south and east-west to allow for fauna movement between the surrounding national parks and the escarpment. I will continue to work closely with Mark Speakman, the Minister for the Environment, to ensure environmental impacts are appropriately offset and that the biodiversity of this area is properly protected.

Heritage is an important part of planning and it is something I have long had a passion for. In a development such as Ingleside it is important to create that balance to ensure heritage is not sacrificed for growth. There are Aboriginal cultural heritage sites within the precinct that are of significance. Non-Indigenous heritage items, including the Baha'i Temple, Ingleside House, the Powderworks ruins, Klerks Gardens and the beautiful Monterey pines, will be conserved. The Ingleside precinct is a crucial opportunity to provide for the people of Pittwater more opportunity for housing in a way that balances the need to protect our environment and create more jobs for our local community. I am very proud to be a member of this Government that has delivered, and continues to deliver, much-needed housing and infrastructure for the people of New South Wales, including Ingleside.

### TRIBUTE TO BRIAN DAVEY

**Mr CLAYTON BARR** (Cessnock) [6.06 p.m.]: I make a very brief contribution to finish off this week and to recognise a giant of the community of Cessnock, Mr Brian Davey, who unfortunately passed away this week. Brian arrived in Cessnock some 60 years ago with his wife. They were both schoolteachers and went on to become principals of local primary schools, serving more than 60 years in the local area. Indeed, they had a local business that continues to educate young people in our area. When Brian arrived in Cessnock he was a young cricketer and Rugby League player, and he went on to give the rest of his life to Rugby League in our area. Although I said that he gave a lifetime to Rugby League, I probably should have said that he gave two lifetimes because of the length of his ongoing service.

Brian was the voice of Rugby League whenever you went to Cessnock sportsground. He was the ground announcer who made all the important comments and statements during the games and he kept those watching up to date with the scores. Brian Davey was also a lifelong member of the Lions Club and received various awards for his long-term service there. Brian wrote as a columnist in our local newspaper, the *Cessnock Advertiser*. He wrote under the name "The Shadow" for more than 40 years, and his identity was a complete secret to the community until his retirement from that column just three years ago.



I had the good fortune to be taught by Brian as a nine- or 10-year-old student in year 3, and then as an 11- or 12-year-old in year 6. As a schoolteacher, Brian had a life-changing effect on me. He taught me a lot about being a man, being respectful, having fun while learning and being open to, and aware of, the broader community and the world. In my inaugural speech I mentioned three schoolteachers who had had a significant role in the development of Clayton Barr, and Brian Davey was one of those teachers. At the 2011 election, I ran against Brian Davey's wife, Alison. Alison was then the Mayor of Cessnock and she was also a member of The Nationals. I send my deepest regards, sympathies and respect to Alison, not just because of the work that she has done but because she has lost this giant of a man, who Cessnock has been so fortunate to have in our community for so long. Vale Brian Davey.

**Private members' statements concluded.**

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 6.10 p.m. until  
Tuesday 4 August 2015 at 12 noon.**

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