

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 22 May 2012

The Speaker (The Hon. Shelley Elizabeth Hancock) took the chair at 12 noon.

The Speaker read the Prayer and acknowledgement of country.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Notices of Motions

General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) given.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JOYCE WHEATLEY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) [12.07 p.m.]: It is with great sadness that I acknowledge the contribution of an extraordinary woman. Joyce Wheatley passed away on 15 May 2012. I knew Joyce Wheatley as a person of passionate principle, a community advocate for those in need, a person renowned for fairness and good humour and, in every sense, a great defender of traditional Labor values. Despite our political differences, Joyce was someone whom I deeply admired as an advocate for social justice and a fair go. Not long after I was elected to this place Joyce heard that the Berry Apex club had handed back its charter. When I attended Minnamurra Rotary's changeover dinner in 2011 it was not long before Joyce put the hard word on me to join and she sponsored my membership at a forthcoming meeting.

But my association with Joyce goes much further than just 2011. Joyce Wheatley served as a councillor on Kiama Municipal Council from 1980 to 2008 and served as mayor between 1992 and 2000. Joyce was a strong and significant figure in our region, serving as chairperson of the Illawarra Region of Councils during her tenure as mayor in addition to her service as Vice President (Country) of the New South Wales Local Government Association. An enthusiastic advocate for increasing the participation of women in local government, Joyce also served as President of the Local Government Women's Association (New South Wales Branch). In addition, Joyce served as a member of the National Parks and Wildlife Service Advisory Committee and as a member of the Crown Lands Committee.

Joyce was born Joyce Elsie Spindler on 15 July 1937 at Annandale and was the eldest of 13 children. She was raised in a small home at Camperdown which boasted three bedrooms—the master bedroom and two rooms for the children. Joyce's education began at Camperdown Primary School and progressed to Fort Street High School, which at that time was located at Observatory Hill. In fact, it was right in the path of construction of the Harbour Bridge and lost some of its playground to that development. The school site today is the headquarters of the National Trust. Fort Street High School is no ordinary school. It is in fact the oldest selective high school and has a place in history, having educated and nurtured some of the most prominent and influential citizens in Australia. In her early years of education Joyce Wheatley demonstrated an above average intelligence and was selected to attend Fort Street High School. Joyce's mother was mindful of Joyce's ability and encouraged her to go to university, even though it meant leaving the family home.

Leaving school at the age of 16, Joyce firstly attended Sydney Teachers College, where she studied for two years. Part of the course was time spent at the National Art School for training in women's handicrafts and domestic skills. On completion of her training Joyce joined a local school, where she remained for just 12 months. Why just 12 months? After all, it was her first posting in her teaching career. Such was the strength of her ability and skill that when aged just 18 Joyce was transferred to Wagga Wagga Teachers College, where she was to train primary school teachers. It was while at the Wagga Teachers College that Joyce met Frank Wheatley. At the end of one year at the teachers college Joyce was transferred to Yass High School and Frank Wheatley went to a one-teacher school on the New South Wales and Victorian border. But distance was no barrier to love, and on 8 May 1959 Joyce and Frank exchanged their marriage vows at St Stephen's Church of England at Newtown.

From Yass the Wheatley family transferred to Kiama in 1965, where Joyce taught at Kiama High for five years. In 1970 Joyce took up a position at Warilla High; and, in addition to her role as a hard-working teacher, Joyce was now mother to Ian, Alan and Kathy. Joyce went on to be the mistress in charge of girls at Warilla High School. Warilla High School also presented Joyce with other challenges, and none more so than striving to assist those who were socially disadvantaged. Joyce set up a special group to help and nurture young people who needed extra assistance with their schooling. Joyce's time was not confined to school hours as she often visited families in her own time to discuss scholastic progress. There again, this hard work ethic was indicative of Joyce Wheatley's attitude and her commitment to young people.

In 1968 Joyce and Frank joined the Kiama branch of the Labor Party. It was also at about this time they formed a progress association in an effort to get things done. Out of sheer frustration, in 1980 Joyce stood for election to Kiama Municipal Council—easily gaining election, which is a reflection of the respect she had earned from the community for her relentless work with the progress association and the many aspects of community life in which she was inextricably linked. And so began a remarkable political career. Sadly, in 1981, just as Joyce and Frank felt things were beginning to work in their favour, Frank took ill and passed away.

The short time I have available leaves me little opportunity to reflect on a person who made a great contribution—to St John Ambulance, to the Kiama Community College, as a marriage celebrant, a Rotarian, a member of the Country Women's Association, a girl guide, a director of the Illawarra Housing Trust, a teacher, a councillor, a leader, a mother, a grandmother and a friend. Joyce Wheatley's life will be measured not in years but in the great value of her contribution to the Kiama community, her service above self and her dedication to loving life and all who were touched by this remarkable and outstanding citizen. Joyce is survived by her loving and dedicated partner Lionel and her three children. May God bless her and may she rest in peace.

Mr DONALD PAGE (Ballina—Minister for Local Government, and Minister for the North Coast) [12.12 p.m.]: I join the member for Kiama and convey my deepest sympathies to the family of Joyce Wheatley. A remarkable and tireless community advocate, Mrs Wheatley will be greatly missed by the people of Kiama and especially by her partner, Lionel, and her children, Ian, Alan and Kathy, and her four grandchildren. Joyce was incredibly committed to serving the community of Kiama and was the recipient of many community service awards from groups including the Red Cross and St John Ambulance. As Minister for Local Government I want to focus on the important role Joyce played in the Kiama council. She was a Labor councillor who served from 1980 until 2008, including eight years as mayor of Kiama. Her time as mayor is especially significant as it was at a time when there were very few women mayors in New South Wales.

Joyce loved to be in the thick of the action, but her conciliatory approach as mayor was respected and she reportedly had a calming effect during volatile council debates. Joyce made an outstanding contribution to local government, particularly as a catalyst for women's participation and leadership for more than 28 years. Joyce contributed to establishing workshops for the Australian Local Government Women's Association of New South Wales. The workshops were to inspire women to run for local government—and what an inspiration she was. I believe the Kiama community has lost an incredible woman who was greatly valued. As Minister for Local Government I understand the importance of having such knowledgeable and committed members of the community involved in local government, and I know Joyce's passing will have an incredible impact on the community of Kiama.

WOLLONGONG ELECTORATE EVENTS

Ms NOREEN HAY (Wollongong) [12.13 p.m.]: I congratulate both the member for Kiama and the Minister on their comments in relation to Joyce Wheatley. It is a great shame though that the member for Kiama left out of his speech a very important part in the recognition of Joyce Wheatley: her being made a life member of the Australian Labor Party. Today I share with my colleagues a number of special events that took place in my electorate on the weekend. However, first I place on record that I too attended Joyce Wheatley's funeral yesterday: it was hugely attended, and showed the respect that she was held in. The first event I attended on the weekend was the Annual Friendship for Life ceremony, a community program that was first introduced by the Friendship for Life Incorporated Association in 2005. I am proud to say I was part of the association, and played a part in establishing this ceremony as a yearly event. Its founding principles come from a pledge made to Anzacs in 1934 by the first President and Founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

The annual event commemorates all soldiers who fell during World War I and is a vision of friendship for all humanity. The event was celebrated, as it is every year, at the Port Kembla RSL. Congratulations must be extended to the secretary, Peter Edwards, and the board of directors of the RSL on the success of the morning.

The master of ceremonies at the event was local business person Terry Whetherall. His father, Ray, now sadly passed away, was a great Australian Labor Party stalwart and veteran. The Wollongong brass band played both the Turkish and Australian anthems to perfection. I must also mention the outstanding horn playing of Bob Walbum and Bevan Firmore and the outstanding dancing by students of the Illawarra Sule College.

Another important event that took place over the weekend was the Angels of Hope Charity Race Day. Angels of Hope is a not-for-profit organisation that supports and implements suicide prevention programs. I do not need to tell anyone in this House about the importance of raising awareness of youth suicide and suicide in general. We should all be doing our best to counter this terrible blight on our society. People ultimately commit suicide often through a feeling of lack of support. A further event that I attended on Saturday 19 May 2012 was the launch by the Illawarra Association of Teachers of Italian of this year's Italian Week, held at The Centro CBD in Stewart Street, Wollongong. Italian Day in the Wollongong mall, Tutti in Piazza, will take place on Saturday 2 June, and I look forward to that.

The Turkish and Italian communities, along with a whole host of others, play a very important part in the development and continued success of the area of Wollongong. I extend my appreciation and thanks to them for the great work that they do and for their great community spirit. The multicultural communities of Wollongong are second to none in Australia. I am very proud of them. I am proud of the fact that they open up their hearts and minds and display great warmth to the whole of the community: it is a wonderful thing to experience. Finally, I place on record my disappointment, having returned from overseas, to find that the first State of Origin match is to be played in Melbourne. I am horrified. I find it abhorrent.

Last year two games were played in Queensland and one in New South Wales. This year should have been our year for two games. With no disrespect to Victoria, but if its Minister thinks that Queensland is playing New Zealand, I think that proves the first State of Origin match should have been played in New South Wales. I place on record also, just in case any member of Parliament missed it, that Chelsea won the European championship, and took the cup back to Chelsea. I am very proud of the team, and very proud that my family marched in parading the cup the next day.

PORT MACQUARIE SEA OF BLUE MARCH

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) [12.18 p.m.]: Last Thursday I had the great pleasure of representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon. Mike Gallacher, from the other place at the 150th anniversary of our police, the Sea of Blue march in Port Macquarie. Every region and every area of the Police Force has a history that deserves to be told. Last week it was the turn of Port Macquarie-Manning-Great Lakes to celebrate its role in 150 years of policing in New South Wales. Attending the celebrations were Deputy Commissioner of Police, Nick Kaldis, Assistant Commissioner of Police Carlene York, mid North Coast Police Commander, Superintendent Peter Thurtell, Manning Great Lakes Commander, Superintendent Paul Fehon, and Port Macquarie-Hastings Council's Administrator, Neil Porter, to name a few.

On 1 March 1862 independent policing units across New South Wales were merged into a single Police Force under the Police Regulation Act. We commemorated this momentous occasion with the Sea of Blue march along Horton Street to Port Macquarie's Town Green. Current and retired police officers marched to represent the contributions of police officers, past and present, over the last one and half centuries of policing. The march demonstrated the range of tasks and responsibilities carried out by modern day police officers. In the parade the banner party and the marching and capability contingents represented the various police groups that were brought together as one Police Force under the proclamation of 1862.

There were police representatives from the Highway Patrol, operational foot police and the Marine Area Command Water Police who demonstrated their skills later in the day at Lady Nelson Wharf. There was even a fly-over of the police helicopter Polair 4, which then landed on the foreshore in front of the local police station. Each of these groups reflects the long and distinguished history of the NSW Police Force. Those who marched did so as representatives of the almost 16,000 sworn officers who make up the Police Force. They represented officers in both country and city locations as well as officers in the field and in specialist and other areas.

The parade to Port Macquarie Town Green was an acknowledgement by the mid North Coast and Manning Great Lakes and the State Government of the service and sacrifice provided by Northern Region and its members to the people and institutions of the State of New South Wales. It would be stating the obvious to say that so much has changed in the last 150 years. The powers and procedures, and even the equipment that

police use, are more complex than they were 10 years ago or even five years ago, let alone the conditions officers operated under in the mid-nineteenth century. The command vehicles, Highway Patrol sedans, motorcycles and the Water Police vessels displayed reminded us of how far policing has evolved over the last 150 years. Those vehicles assist police in ways their counterparts 150 years ago could only dream about, assisting with land and water searches, carrying out rescues and providing invaluable support with surveillance and transport.

One thing that has not changed over the last 150 years is the dedication of the men and women of the Police Force to upholding the law and keeping the people of New South Wales safe. I congratulate the local commanders and all their officers on reaching this significant milestone and I wish them all the very best for the coming year. I also make special mention of Sergeant Paul Dilley, who was the person responsible for coordinating the local celebrations: he did a fantastic job.

Mr DONALD PAGE (Ballina—Minister for Local Government, and Minister for the North Coast) [12.22 p.m.]: I thank the member for Port Macquarie for her contribution acknowledging 150 years of policing in New South Wales. All members in this House recognise that the police do a fantastic job, often risking their lives and sometimes, tragically, losing their lives in the performance of their duties. I commend to members the Police Museum near Circular Quay. The museum contains a record of all the police officers in New South Wales who have lost their lives since the beginning of this colony and the circumstances in which they lost their lives.

NSW POLICE FORCE 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—The Speaker) [12.22 p.m.]: I note that the member for Port Macquarie just spoke about policing, I believe the member for Heathcote will also speak about 150 years of policing in New South Wales, and it is with great pleasure that I will too. This year we are celebrating 150 years of policing in New South Wales. Of course, there was policing before 1862—which is the year the Police Regulation Act was introduced to amalgamate the various roles and duties of police—but the roles and duties of police were undertaken by a number of groups such as the Night Watch or the Row Boat Guard. It is interesting to note that many of those duties were undertaken by the best behaved of the convicts. Of course, these days police are not recruited from the criminal classes. As we know, our police are the finest men and women in this State.

In the Shoalhaven we have also been celebrating 150 years of policing, and I commend the Hon. Paul Green, the Mayor of Shoalhaven, who has been working very hard with the police in the Shoalhaven Local Area Command to ensure that we have beautiful banners along the highway—and you would be aware of those, Mr Acting-Speaker—celebrating the various roles and duties of the police in this State. Last week I was very pleased to attend the opening of a very special exhibition in the Nowra Museum on the history of policing in the Shoalhaven. On display were photographs of members of the Police Force, past and present, and of many of our local area commanders.

I particularly commend the Shoalhaven Historical Society, who fought very hard in the 1970s and 1980s to ensure that the building which now houses the Nowra Museum—the old Nowra police station—was not demolished. At that time the government and the council had moved to have the building demolished, but thank goodness sense prevailed and we now have a beautiful museum, which is a fine example of Victorian architecture in the Nowra area and which now houses all sorts of police exhibits, particularly the current beautiful exhibit. We have learnt a lot since those days about preserving our heritage, and I urge members to go and have a look at this fine example.

Currently 15,788 men and women are serving in the NSW Police Force. There were no female police officers in New South Wales until 1915, when two female police officers were appointed. But they were not allowed to wear uniforms or carry weapons, they had no superannuation, and if they were injured on duty they had no rights to claim anything for their injury. Things have changed. But the recruitment of women into the Police Force took some time. In the 1980s women police officers comprised only about 3 per cent of the total Police Force; in 2012 women police officers comprise about 30 per cent of the Police Force. That is pleasing to note. They make a significant contribution in every way—a contribution equal to that of their male counterparts.

In 1852 when the township of Nowra was laid out no provision had been made for a police station. A petition was sent to the Legislative Assembly to set aside land for this essential service. In 1899 plans were drawn up for a dedicated Nowra lock-up at the corner of Plunkett Street and Kinghorne Street, Nowra. Tenders

for construction of the lock-up were called for in the *Government Gazette* of 6 February 1900 and the building was completed by 13 February 1901. In October 1953 the building officially became the Nowra police station, with three cells attached and the existing rooms converted into office space. By the early 1970s it was obvious that the building was far too small to house the number of officers at that time, so moves were made to build a new police station.

A new police station was built and it is still used but it is still a little small. We need police stations in other areas. The bay and basin area is still in need of a new police station and I continue to lobby the police Minister for a new station in that location. All of that aside, I pay tribute to the Shoalhaven Historical Society for the display I enjoyed so much last week and for all its hard work in the past—in particular, the president Wayne Vost, vice-presidents Joy Vost and Neville Bray, and Ms Lyn Allen who organised the display. I was very privileged to cut the ribbon to open the exhibit last week in a ceremony attended by many officers, past and present, of the Shoalhaven Local Area Command.

Mr DONALD PAGE (Ballina—Minister for Local Government, and Minister for the North Coast) [12.27 p.m.]: I thank the member for South Coast for her erudite and interesting insights into the development of policing in her area. I was particularly interested to hear about the early policing that was conducted by well-behaved convicts. I was also interested to hear about the history of policing in Shoalhaven and particularly the increasing role of women in our Police Force.

McBURNIE PARK

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) [12.28 p.m.]: On 14 April this year I was fortunate to attend the opening of McBurnie Park at McBurnie Road, Cabramatta. The park was established following the purchase by Fairfield City Council in my mayoral term of three blocks of land, which were developed into a fantastic piece of open space that will be used recreationally by the local community around Cabramatta and Cabramatta West. The park was appropriately named McBurnie Park as a fitting tribute to the McBurnie family—pioneers and mainstays of the Cabramatta-Canley Vale area.

Nicholas McBurnie served as an alderman on what was then known as Cabramatta-Canley Vale Council from 1892 to 1905. Born in 1842 in County Armagh, Ireland, Nicholas came to Australia in 1865 and worked the land firstly in Rose Bay and then in Warwick Farm until 1889. In 1889 he moved to Cabramatta and opened his shop, the McBurnie Produce Store, on Railway Parade, Cabramatta, directly opposite the railway station, in the vicinity of what is now known as Cook Square. After opening his shop, McBurnie applied for the post office to be moved from the station to his store, submitting to the Minister:

In the consequence of the multitudinous duties of the Officer in Charge (he having no assistant) causing his frequent absence from the office, the residents are put to considerable inconvenience. My store is in close proximity to the station and the residents believe they would be better accommodated.

His application was successful. Nicholas McBurnie agitated for the separation of Cabramatta-Canley Vale from Liverpool council. Through the agitation and representation of McBurnie and other members of the Cabramatta-Canley Vale districts, on 18 December 1892 the municipality of Cabramatta and Canley Vale was proclaimed. The community wasted no time in holding council elections. So on 22 December 1892 Nicholas McBurnie, George Simson, John Asimus, Henry Lathem and Edward Stimson were elected, along with Henry Willis, who was elected mayor. Willis would go on to serve in this Chamber as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly from 1911 until 1913. We see his name just above our heads on the wall of the Chamber.

In the 1930s 94-year-old Nicholas McBurnie was acknowledged as the Father of the district. Continuing the legacy of Nicholas McBurnie was his son, John George McBurnie. John McBurnie was first elected to council in 1911 and served until 1951, bringing his tenure to 40 years serving the local community. John McBurnie served as Mayor of Cabramatta-Canley Vale municipality on three occasions: from 1915 to 1917, from 1929 to 1930 and again from 1949 to 1950. One of his first acts as mayor was to build administrative offices as an extension to the Town Hall. During his term of office revenue rose to £2,250 and the roads in the district were upgraded.

In 1915 John McBurnie lobbied for the Regents Park rail line to go through Cabramatta, emphasising its strategic positioning and, at the time, reasonable land prices. In reply to a question on house block prices at the time, John McBurnie stated in the early part of his tenure as mayor that he thought that "blocks of land close to the station might reach £1", which is a far cry from today's prices. As one can see, modern-day Cabramatta residents have a lot to thank the McBurnie family for. The McBurnie family were close friends of Gough

Whitlam and it was said that they would "yarn for hours" in the rear of the store about politics and the good old days. The McBurneys sold their store to Woolworths in 1958. They were great servants to the area and their legacy remains undiminished by the passing of time.

At the opening of McBurney Park I, along with Mr Jack McBurney, son of John George McBurney and grandson of Nicholas McBurney, attended the official opening which was performed by the new mayor of Fairfield City Council, Frank Carbone. Although Jack McBurney did not follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather and serve on council, he continued the legacy of the McBurneys through his lifelong support for local charities and community groups. The atmosphere that day felt very historic. I thank the many descendants of Nicholas and John McBurney, as the hard work and achievements of the McBurney family were immortalised in Cabramatta. All communities have their heroes and their pioneers. The McBurney family is certainly both of those to Cabramatta.

NORTHERN INLAND ACADEMY OF SPORT TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) [12.32 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to update the House on the Northern Inland Academy of Sport as that fine organisation reaches a major milestone of 20 years of operation.

Mr Richard Torbay: A great organisation.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I note the presence of the member for Northern Tablelands in the Chamber. The Northern Inland Academy of Sport covers the electorates of Northern Tablelands, Barwon and Tamworth. The Northern Inland Academy of Sport, or NIAS, as it is more commonly known, is an autonomous community-based organisation that was established to identify and prepare talented sports people in the northern inland region to reach their maximum potential on and off the field. It celebrates 20 years of operation this year and is proud to have been involved with more than 3,500 athletes, 350 coaches and managers and more than 500 volunteer board members and community sporting personnel to make young and talented athletes in the northern inland region of New South Wales healthier and active individuals both on and off the field.

I pay tribute to the current long-serving board member of the Northern Inland Academy of Sport, Mr Wally Franklin. I pay tribute also to the executive officer of the organisation who has been a driving force for many years with his vision, passion, commitment to sport, to those involved in it and sport administration generally. The executive officer, Peter Annis-Brown, does a magnificent job. To mark this milestone, a number of events and functions are being planned throughout the region. The first event, which opened in Tamworth last Friday night, is an exhibition at Tamworth Regional Gallery celebrating 20 years of the Northern Inland Academy of Sport in photographs. The exhibition runs until 9 June and is in conjunction with the Legends of League: 100 years of the Game and sports photos from the *Northern Daily Leader*. The exhibition was opened by Mr John Summerland, managing editor of the *Northern Daily Leader*.

Over 20 years the Northern Inland Academy of Sport has assisted athletes such as Nathan Blacklock from Tingha, who went on to play with the Sydney Roosters and the St George Dragons; Jamie Lyon from Wee Waa, the captain of Manly, which won the NRL grand final last year—Jamie was in the Northern Inland Academy of Sport touch program back in 1997—Olympic softballer Stacy Porter, who was identified while an athlete at the Northern Inland Academy of Sport back in the 1990s; and a very young George Barton, who has gone on to represent Australia in clay target shooting at numerous world titles, the Commonwealth Games and the 2008 Beijing Olympics. George is a member of the current Olympics team and was a member of the first ever Northern Inland Academy of Sport hockey squad back in 1993.

There are a number of sporting programs currently in the Northern Inland Academy of Sport stable: netball, cycling, rugby, swimming, hockey, tennis, triathlon, golf and the Lone Star individual program, which assists those in remote areas still to have a pathway and access to higher level coaching, and exposure to the high end of sport which in turn gives them an opportunity to compete at State, national and international levels. Following the exhibition in Tamworth, the Northern Inland Academy of Sport will be taking the photographic exhibition around the region over the next few months as part of its regional focus to celebrate 20 years. I am a proud life member of the Northern Inland Academy of Sport and I have served on its board. My colleagues have noticed the bright and striking tie that I am wearing today, which is the Northern Inland Academy of Sport tie. I thank my colleagues for their interest in my tie.

Mrs Tanya Davies: I quite like it.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: The member for Mulgoa quite likes it so we might have a discussion about it.

ACTING-SPEAKER (Mr Gareth Ward): Order! That tie should have its own standing order.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: The second major event will be held at the Armidale City bowling club. I am sure the member for Northern Tablelands will try to attend on 2 June.

Mr Richard Torbay: I'll be there.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: It is a great opportunity for friends, supporters, athletes, parents, coaches and others to come together to celebrate the wonderful contribution of the Northern Inland Academy of Sport to athletes in our region over 20 years. I congratulate one and all involved.

Mr DONALD PAGE (Ballina—Minister for Local Government, and Minister for the North Coast) [12.37 p.m.]: I shall comment briefly on the contribution of the member for Tamworth on the Northern Inland Academy of Sport. When one has been around the place as long as I have—24 years—one remembers a few things. Many sports academies were established in New South Wales at about that time by Minister Bob Rowland Smith in the Greiner-Murray Coalition Government. The North Coast Academy of Sport was established at about the same time. These sports academies have been a huge success because they have identified wonderful young athletes, particularly in regional areas. As we know, many of our great sports people come from the regions. I thank the member for Tamworth for drawing attention to the contribution of the Northern Inland Academy of Sport over 20 years, and I acknowledge the contribution of Bob Rowland Smith who started the whole program.

ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS

Mr RICHARD TORBAY (Northern Tablelands) [12.38 p.m.]: It has taken a long time for authorities to recognise the effect on Indigenous people of appropriating their land. It is not only the land they lose but also their culture and traditions, their way of making a living, their self-respect and sense of self-worth, their language and their history. The well-documented loss and grief experienced by our Aboriginal people as a result of this is testament enough. Importantly, the real test is what happens when the land is returned to them. Today I have a positive story to tell about the Banbai nation which lives in the Guyra area in my electorate. In 1983 the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Rights Act enabled Aboriginal people to make land claims over Crown reserves. It took another 15 years and many approaches and knockbacks before the Banbai people acquired a 650-hectare property named Wattleridge, north-east of Guyra, which was purchased for them by the Indigenous Land Corporation.

Around 80 per cent of the property was natural bushland and included several significant Aboriginal sites. At first the budget enabled the employment of only two or three people; however, 20 others were trained over six months in heritage site work through the New Work Opportunities program. This resulted in an exercise to document all cultural sites in the local area. The following year a busload of 23 Banbai representatives travelled to South Australia to visit the Nepabunna Aboriginal community, the first in Australia to have its land declared an Indigenous protected area [IPA]. As a result of that trip the consensus of opinion within the group was to declare Wattleridge an Indigenous protected area, the first in New South Wales. From there things happened quickly. Banbai Business Enterprises Incorporated, with a board of elders and younger people, was formed to oversee the day-to-day management of the property.

Through the Guyra Local Aboriginal Land Council another 9.3 square kilometres of wetlands and stringy bark forest 40 kilometres west of Guyra was added to the Indigenous protected area and named Tarriwa Kurrukun, meaning "strong one" in the Banbai language. The staff number has grown from its original three to 18 which comprises 15 full-time and three part-time staff members. They range in age from 19 to 50 years and 12 of them are aged under 25. Banbai membership numbers 57 which means that one-third of its members are now employed. Over the 10 years it has been operating the organisation has employed a total of 42 Banbai people, some of whom have gone on to further work and study. The work includes bookkeeping, staff management, administration, budgeting report writing, information technology, and environmental and cultural management. The group undertakes conservation work, pest management, cultural site protection, fencing, walking track maintenance, propagation of native plants, fire management and planning, revegetation, water quality monitoring, heavy machinery works and rare and endangered species management.

Training is involved. All the rangers have completed their certificate III in Conservation and Land Management (Indigenous Land Management) and are now working towards completing their certificate IV. All workers have undertaken some form of formal training. As a result of their efforts weeds are being removed, native plants are being propagated and planted and feral animals such as pigs, rabbits, foxes and deer are being controlled. Trials are underway to rid the streams of an introduced fish, the eastern gambusia, which is a threat to local fish and native frogs. Fire hazard burning is also underway. Chief Executive Officer Tanya Patterson told me that the connection back to the land changes the way her people feel and how they think. Health and wellbeing have improved. She says her people are getting fitter and taking pride in their work. Self-esteem is higher. Young rangers are putting in long days at work rather than sitting around at home.

Young people have become more conscious of looking after their health so that they are able to perform more work. They have been given portfolios such as culture, water, occupational health and safety and feral animals. They have responsibility for contacting people, making phone calls and arrangements in their designated areas and, as a result, are increasing their skills and improving their confidence. They are revelling in the benefits of having a job, being able to buy new clothes for their children, buying cars and being able to pay their rent. Relationships with the local Guyra community have also greatly improved. Plans are afoot to develop contracting teams to take on environmental work, feral pest and weed control, to establish a local native plant nursery, to venture into ecotourism and to provide a venue for conferences. I commend the program for producing positive results for the Banbai people and the local community.

PENRITH DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) [12.43 p.m.]: On 28 April the Penrith District Netball Association 2012 season launch occurred in my neighbouring electorate of Penrith. It was a wonderful event which I attended with the member for Penrith, Mr Stuart Ayres, and a number of other important dignitaries. The event was more than an annual season launch; it was also a celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Penrith District Netball Association. Thousands of participants attended the event, including coaches, team members, mums and dads, grandparents, and brothers and sisters.

The guests were warmly welcomed by the newly elected president, Joy Gillett, who gave a fantastic speech in which she highlighted a number of wonderful people and their achievements. Before I speak about some of the achievers in the netball association, I place on the parliamentary record that once again the region of Penrith was blessed with a rousing rendition of the national anthem by its local Broadway star and composer, Mr Nicholas Gentile. He is an amazing young gentleman with incredible talent who will go far in this world. Once again the march past of the teams was another very colourful and creative display by all the team members. It was a joy to witness the enthusiasm that so many youngsters and teenagers have for their sport.

Last year a fortieth anniversary committee was formed which was chaired by Heike Forth. Its members included Jenny Clay, Kim Wennerbom, Serena Vaeila, Kellie Tickner, Cathy Ormerod, Judith Sibbald, Rodney Watson and Joy Gillett. To celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Penrith District Netball Association the committee organised a number of activities and mementoes. A souvenir I picked up on the day was a book entitled *Forty Years of Netball*, which was compiled and edited by Jenny Clay. Looking through the book and seeing the many happy snaps taken by mums and dads was a wonderful walk down memory lane. It was interesting to see what the netball courts were like and to see the cars people drove and the netball uniforms they wore 40 years ago. One photograph I will not forget was of a canteen which operated out of the boot of a car.

The event was a wonderful celebration of the start of the season and it also marked a special milestone year for retiring committee member Mr Rodney Watson. Rodney served on the executive committee for 19½ years and was president for the past 18½ years. His commitment and strong service to the Penrith District Netball Association is well known. As a local councillor I have experienced his formidable lobbying on behalf of the netball association and I know the strength of his commitment to netball. His resignation from the executive committee was a bittersweet moment because it came as a result of his being elected to become a director of Netball NSW for one year, which is a wonderful achievement. I congratulate Rodney Watson and his wife and thank him for his service to our community.

I also place on record the achievements of some young players who are progressing well in netball. Paige Hadley has been awarded a temporary contract with the New South Wales Swifts. Penrith junior Courtney Tariri has accepted a one-year contract with Southern Steel. Zoe Gilbert has been selected for the New South Wales 17 years and under team and Chloe Saville and Teisha Ojeida have been selected for the 19 years and under team. Paige Hadley has also been selected to play for the New South Wales 21 years and under team in

Perth in mid-July, along with Brooke Miller, and Jaqua Heddle has been appointed as the team manager. They are outstanding achievements by local Penrith district netball players. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to those athletes and congratulate also the committee members, lifetime patrons, volunteers, coaches, managers and parents on their continued service and support for netball in our region. I congratulate them on the start of the season and on their fortieth anniversary.

Mr DONALD PAGE (Ballina—Minister for Local Government, and Minister for the North Coast) [12.48 p.m.]: I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Mulgoa in which she spoke of the fortieth anniversary of the Penrith District Netball Association. As she said, the member for Penrith also attended that recent event. What a great job those two members are doing in representing western Sydney. Unless I am mistaken, I think netball is the most popular participatory support in New South Wales.

Mr Kevin Anderson: Yes, that's correct.

Mr DONALD PAGE: It is wonderful to see so many young people participating in netball. I congratulate all those who were involved in the celebrations, in particular, the organising committee.

RIVERSTONE ELECTORATE SCHOOLS

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) [12.49 p.m.]: In my electorate of Riverstone there is a pressing need for a new high school to serve The Ponds, Kellyville Ridge and Stanhope Gardens. There is no doubt in my mind or in the minds of thousands of my constituents about the critical importance of this project. Thirteen of the 16 precincts in the north-west growth sector are in the electorate of Riverstone. It is for this reason that a majority of the local issues confronting me relate to the need for planning and for infrastructure that keeps pace with urban development. One of those local issues has been the need for a high school in an area that is rapidly developing, which means that student enrolments in local schools are rapidly increasing every year.

This issue has been apparent for some time, though disregarded by the previous Government, with the projected number of households in the combined suburbs of The Ponds, Kellyville Ridge and Stanhope Gardens expected to reach 12,000, which is more than enough for the department's normal criteria for a high school. This is a result of continuing development, particularly in The Ponds where it is expected that an additional 2,300 dwellings will be built in stages three and four. At present the four local primary schools which are feeder schools to Glenwood High School—that is, Caddies Creek Public School, Parklea Public School, Kellyville Ridge Public School and John Palmer Public School—have between them 2,700 students enrolled and that number will continue to grow as houses are completed. That number is too large for a single high school. As Glenwood High School already has over 1,400 students and is growing every year, the need is obvious.

Based on the projected number of households and student enrolments a high school serving The Ponds, Kellyville Ridge and Stanhope Gardens is needed as soon as possible. It is for this reason that during the campaign one of my core election commitments for Riverstone was to begin urgent planning for a new high school in the area if a Liberal Government was elected. Following my election as the member for Riverstone in 2011, I have strongly pursued and advocated for a high school in our area. I have continued to liaise with the office of the Minister for Education and the Department of Education and Communities, pressing the case for a new high school to serve The Ponds, Kellyville Ridge and Stanhope Gardens.

Last year I was pleased to be able to show some senior staff from the department around the area concerned so that they could see for themselves the urgency of that need. Some months ago I was pleased to receive a commitment from the Minister for Education that construction of the new high school would begin within this term of government. Despite this positive indication I will continue campaigning for the high school until funding is allocated and there is a clear start date for construction. This date needs to be as soon as possible. Residents in the area want certainty about the educational provision that will be available to their children and I am committed to delivering it. The residents in my community place a high value on education; it is an important priority to them and they are anxious to see the delivery of this project. I am deeply conscious of my responsibility as the State parliamentary representative of my community to fight for and to deliver the services that are needed in our area. That is why I will continue to fight and to advocate for this important project which is sorely needed in our area.

BATHURST CORRECTIONAL CENTRE MOBILE OUTREACH PROGRAM

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Parliamentary Secretary) [12.53 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure today to speak about the Bathurst Correctional Centre Mobile Outreach Program—a wonderful program in the Bathurst electorate. It is fitting that the Attorney General is in the Chamber because I know he would sing the

praises of this successful program. A couple of months ago a number of vehicles were launched as part of the program. These vehicles are fully equipped to transport machinery, chainsaws, whipper snippers, lawnmowers, one officer and eight inmates to remote worksites so that the inmates can carry out maintenance work that cannot be undertaken by local volunteers or council workers. The inmates camp for three or four days at these worksites, which also is a time-saving measure.

The mobile outreach program, which has been extremely successful, provides a mutual benefit with the community receiving much-needed assistance and offenders being given an opportunity to work and to integrate back into society whilst gaining self-respect and pride in their own ability. Deputy Commissioner Ian McLean has been instrumental in supporting the mobile outreach program and he, along with many others, is proud of what has been achieved. Mobile outreach programs are being run at various locations throughout New South Wales, including Tamworth, Emu Plains, Cooma, Muswellbrook, Kempsey and Wellington. The Bathurst mobile outreach program is under the supervision of overseer Scott Keen, who has done a massive amount of work in the Bathurst regional council area. I commend Les Frater—

Dr Geoff Lee: He's a good man.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: He is a good man. He is responsible for looking at the various programs that are needed in the community. I note that a stakeholders committee will be formed over the coming months and members will meet to identify further projects that need assistance in the Bathurst electorate. Currently, 11 sites are serviced by the mobile outreach program. These sites, which are located in rural and remote areas, are not serviced by council workers or volunteers. The program includes maintenance of areas such as cemeteries, which have many regular visitors, community halls and camping areas. The program does not impact on employment and enhances community work in communities surrounding Bathurst. Those involved in the program camp and work at sites such as the Caloola cemetery, Trunkey Creek showground and cemetery, Rockley Park hall and the horse sportsground, Wattle Flat, Sofala and Turon. Last year the Bathurst mobile outreach program assisted with the flood clean-up at Wellington.

Only a few weeks ago when I visited Trunkey Creek I had an opportunity to witness a number of programs that inmates had been undertaking for the past two years. Indeed, their work equates to over 806 hours of volunteer work. They have carried out work around the local school, built a new fence and frog pond, demolished old sheds at the showground, erected new stalls for the animals and mowed the grass in public parks and at the cemetery. Once their project work is completed they take time out to help elderly residents in the village. They have done odd jobs such as wood chopping, mowing lawns, removing trees that have blown over in storms and undertaken minor building repairs. If someone is struggling, the team helps out. This is true community spirit which these offenders live up to every day. Obviously this rapport between the inmates and the community is unique. The Bathurst electorate has received these inmates well when they have undertaken these programs. The mobile outreach program is a great program, with wonderful work being completed.

Mr GREG SMITH (Epping—Attorney General, and Minister for Justice) [12.58 p.m.]: I commend the member for Bathurst for his comments about the mobile outreach program that is being run by Corrective Services. I have spoken with officers and prisoners at Bathurst about this program and I also have inspected the equipment. I understand from what I have been told by departmental officials that people who have taken part in this program help not only the community but also themselves. In addition, the rate of reoffending decreases significantly for those involved in the program; they have a low recidivism rate once they have been through it. I therefore encourage and support the establishment of a similar program in other communities. It does a lot of good in communities and it helps all those living in country towns, in particular, when councils or non-government organisations cannot afford to undertake the work.

The mobile outreach program is certainly worthy of praise. Earlier the member for Riverstone spoke about the need for a new high school in The Ponds, Kellyville Ridge and Stanhope Gardens. I am somewhat familiar with those areas as I have relatives living there. Those areas are booming and they are going ahead. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure recently announced a large number of land releases out that way so many more homes will be built. Clearly we need new schools in that area. I fully support the efforts of the member for Riverstone.

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR NOEL CANNON

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) [12.59 p.m.]: It is a great privilege to bring to the attention of the House the sensational work in my local community of Redeemer Baptist School and its founder, spiritual leader and

driving force, Pastor Noel Cannon. Earlier this year I attended his funeral: Pastor Noel Cannon lived in my electorate. The school chapel in North Parramatta was packed on that occasion with his church's congregation, families and friends of Redeemer Baptist School, educational colleagues, church leaders from various Christian denominations, councillors, members of Parliament, and many other friends. Noel Cannon had a remarkably fruitful life. In the few days between his passing and the funeral, the school was flooded with condolence messages, which were filled with commendation for Noel's achievements.

Reverend the Hon Fred Nile said that Noel was "a brave soldier for Jesus Christ". The Hon. Alan Cadman wrote, "A wonderful, great man has gone home." Reverend Bob Frisken, AM, the founder of Christian community schools, sent an email: "I will miss Noel. He and I were pioneers together and I always enjoyed the opportunity to [engage in] fellowship with him." Stuart Piggin, an Associate Professor of History at Macquarie University, wrote, "Your movement and school have been blessed with a remarkable founder." Dr Alan Rice, who is a former President of the Baptist Union of New South Wales and Dean of the Australian Centre for Education Studies at Macquarie University, described Noel as "a great teacher and scholar." And Emanuel Perdis, who is the managing director of Napoleon Perdis Cosmetics, gave a most poignant description of Noel: "A force of nature indeed Uncle Noel was, with an indomitable will and a panoramic vision of education within a strong framework of loving Christian fellowship." Napoleon and Emanuel both studied at Redeemer when Noel was the principal.

Noel left a remarkable legacy at the Redeemer Baptist School. For many years he was a science teacher before becoming a principal. Noel retained his love for science. Many Redeemer students have been acclaimed with both Australian science awards and international Grand Awards in science at the Intel Science and Engineering Fair [ISEF] in the United States of America. This year in the BHP Billiton Science Awards one of the five national primary winners was a Redeemer student and, in the secondary school, one of the 15 national finalists also was from Redeemer. Noel was also a pioneer in literacy education. He headed an inter-school project, which resulted in the first Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board [VETAB] accredited Vocational Graduate Certificate to equip teachers for effective literacy instruction, based on phonemic awareness. In recent years, this innovative approach to teaching literacy has been rewarded as Redeemer has repeatedly won the national schools award for poetry.

And Noel's heart for the underprivileged was clearly demonstrated in his initiatives that established long-term educational relationships with Indigenous communities in Australia and Papua New Guinea. This year, Redeemer students sent solar power systems to be installed at the Itokoma Primary School in Papua New Guinea, which has provided lights and power for about half the classrooms in this remote village that does not have access to town water or electricity. I have touched only briefly on the incredible range of Noel's pioneering achievements. He was a man who simply loved to serve his community. I honour the life of Pastor Noel Cannon, and commend the continuing work of the fine school that he founded.

NSW POLICE FORCE 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) [1.04 p.m.]: I congratulate the men and women of the NSW Police Force on their recent 150th anniversary celebrations and commend their hard work and dedication. Every police officer, past and present, should feel incredibly proud of this historic milestone that I was thrilled to celebrate with the officers of Sutherland Local Area Command last week. This anniversary has been marked by the Sea of Blue March, a NSW Police Force Expo in Darling Harbour, an historic policing exposition at Sydney's Justice and Peace Museum, and local celebrations at every command across the State. Over the decades our courageous police officers have served the people of New South Wales admirably through crime waves, the Great Depression, two world wars, and major disasters and riots, and have even helped to keep the peace abroad in places like Cyprus, Cambodia, Yugoslavia and East Timor. The Police Force has undergone significant changes throughout its history, from the gradual inclusion of women to the Wood royal commission and introduction of the Police Integrity Commission. Today it is one of the largest, most diverse and professional police forces in the world, with almost 16,000 sworn officers.

The history of policing in New South Wales began with the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788, when the Royal Navy Marines were tasked with enforcing law and order throughout the colony. This arrangement was far from ideal. Governor Arthur Phillip quickly appointed a free settler, John Smith, to the position of constable and he is the first recorded police officer in Australia. The following year Governor Philip appointed the Row Boat Guard, which is a forerunner to the present-day Marine Area Command, and the Night Watch, which was later known as the Sydney Foot Police. Both the Row Boat Guard and the Night Watch drew their recruits from the best-behaved convicts in the colony. In 1803 Constable Joseph Luker of the Sydney Foot Police became the first

police officer to be killed in Australia. He was attacked at night while patrolling on foot not far from this place, on Back Row East, Sydney Town, which is now known as Phillip Street. His body was found with his cutlass guard embedded in the back of his skull. Four offenders later faced trial. Three were acquitted and one was sentenced to death, though this sentence was later commuted after three attempted hangings failed.

In 1862 the Police Regulation Act finally amalgamated all existing officers into the New South Wales Police Force under the former Army Captain John McLerie as Inspector General. At that time the Police Force headquarters were located in Phillip Street and 800 officers were divided into Foot Police, Mounted Police, Water Police and a Detective Force. In 1912 the force acquired its first set of wheels, a Sunbeam roadster, for the exclusive use of the Inspector General, followed by a Douglas motorcycle for special duties in the following year. In 1915 a Renault was modified for use as a motorised patrol van. Also in 1915, Lillian Armfield and Maude Rhodes were appointed as special constables and became the first women in the New South Wales Police Force. They were not allowed to wear a uniform or to carry firearms. It was not until 1948 that women were allowed to wear uniforms. It was 1965 before they were sworn in as constables, like male officers. In 1979 they were routinely allowed to carry firearms.

In 1937 the first Police Citizens Boys Club was established in Woolloomooloo. Today the police and community youth clubs [PCYC] movement continues to guide young people through their lives. In 1987 the New South Wales Police Force was amalgamated with the policy and administration focused New South Wales Police Department. Ten years later our current network of local area commands was established. Last year the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon. Mike Gallacher, launched the innovative project Eyewatch, which uses social networks to give every citizen a direct connection to their local police, and an opportunity to prevent crimes or to stop them as they are happening. I have no doubt that the development and success of New South Wales could not have been achieved without the diligence, integrity and ingenuity of the New South Wales Police Force. From row boats and morse code, to helicopters and project Eyewatch, the Police Force has grown and changed in step with our great State and has always risen to meet our evolving demands. I thank every officer, past and present, for their loyal service to New South Wales. New South Wales owes them a great deal.

Mr GREG SMITH (Epping—Attorney General, and Minister for Justice) [1.09 p.m.]: I commend the member for Heathcote for his illuminating historical overview of policing in Sydney. It reminded me of a role I played years ago in the musical *Oliver* as a Bow Street Runner. He praised modern police officers and the great protection the police give us from the dangers of everyday life and sometimes even serious crime. I also commend the member for Parramatta, Geoff Lee, for his comments about the Reverend Noel Cannon, RIP, who was buried recently. Dr Lee attended his funeral; unfortunately, I could not get there. I have had dealings with the school, which is most impressive. The spiritual director, Jonathon Cannon, is Noel Cannon's son. Speaking of the Reverend Fred Nile's commendation, I recall that at the funeral of his wife, Elaine, the Redeemer Baptist Choir sang beautifully. The funeral was attended by the Premier and me, many members of Cabinet and members of Parliament from both sides of the House. It is good to commemorate the dead, particularly someone who was a legend in his lifetime and did much to spread Christianity in the area where he dwelt.

RUSSIAN VICTORY DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) [1.10 p.m.]: Sixty-seven years ago one of history's worst regimes, if not the worst, was finally brought down with the fall of Berlin and the unconditional surrender of the Nazi forces to the Soviet Union after the Battle of Berlin. World War II was over, and a devastated Europe was left to pick up the pieces of what once was. Recently I attended Russian Victory Day ceremonies to remember the millions of men and women who died for the Soviet Union during the war. On 9 May I attended the Victory Day ceremony at the Waverley Cenotaph with my colleague the member for Vacluse, Gabrielle Upton. The ceremony was organised by Waverley Council, the Russian branch of the New South Wales Association of Jewish Ex Servicemen and Women, and Russian weekly newspaper *Horizon News*. On 12 May I attended the Russian Social Club's Victory Day ceremony in Lidcombe with the co-chair of the New South Wales Government's Russian Ministerial Consultative Committee, Charles Casuscelli, the member for Strathfield. Each day was a great commemoration of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom and righteousness in its victory over the evils of the Third Reich.

The war on the Eastern Front is, to some extent, little known in Australia but it was where some of the Second World War's most decisive battles and greatest sacrifices were made. It was the bloodiest theatre of battle that the world had ever seen, and hopefully that the world will ever see. At least one-third of the people killed in World War II were from the Soviet Union. To put this figure in some context, in Australia we lost

around 40,000 people during the Second World War, the entire British Commonwealth lost 580,000 people, and the United States lost 420,000 of its citizens. The Soviet Union lost 27 million. Nearly 14 per cent of the Soviet population was killed, and one of every four Soviet citizens was killed or wounded in World War II. Victory Day deserves continuing recognition in Australia. Without the efforts and the sacrifice of the Soviet Union in World War II, the Allied efforts would have been in vain.

As years go by, it is important that we never forget those who gave their lives for such an important cause. It is my hope that Victory Day's significance will come to be recognised by all Australians. Following the war, many Russians came to Australia to enjoy our unique lifestyle. The eastern suburbs, in particular Waverley and Bondi, are home to the largest Russian population anywhere in Australia. As co-chair of the New South Wales Government's Russian Ministerial Consultative Committee, it is my job to help advocate for Russian expatriates in government, fostering a greater engagement by producing ideas and considering government policies affecting the Russian community. At the ceremonies I spoke about some of the things the committee has been looking at so far, including strengthening Russian language courses in our schools, and improving access to student, working holiday and skilled migration visas for Russian citizens.

The committee is a wonderful tool to give the Russian community a say on State Government issues that affect them, and I was proud to be asked to co-chair the committee. I look forward to working with the committee into the future to strengthen our Government's relationship with the Russian expatriate community. As both the member for Coogee and co-chair of the Russian Ministerial Consultative Committee, I was honoured to be present at both events to commemorate this important day in world history. While Victory Day was and is cause for celebration, it is also a time to pause for solemn commemoration and to reflect on how different a world it would be today had the Russians not succeeded in bringing the war in Eastern Europe to an end.

TRIBUTE TO MR RALPH NADEN

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES (Barwon—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Healthy Lifestyles, and Minister for Western New South Wales) [1.14 p.m.]: I inform the House about one of the most inspirational, committed and community-minded members of my electorate, Mr Ralph Naden from Balladoran. Last year Ralph was named New South Wales Volunteer of the Year in recognition of his dedication to Indigenous youth. I cannot think of a more worthy recipient. A shearer for more than 30 years, Ralph turned to supporting his community when he saw a need for someone to mentor and teach young Indigenous people about their culture, and keep them engaged and out of trouble. His dedication to helping Indigenous youth saw Ralph open up his private property as a camp for Aboriginal youth at his own expense. He has built showers, toilets, an outdoor camp kitchen and other facilities without any government assistance for the purpose of helping to teach and mentor some of the most vulnerable and marginalised residents of our State.

Ralph adopts a flexible approach depending on the individual, and most of his students are from troubled homes and need direction—youth from the juvenile justice system, some on probation or parole, or suspended school students. They come from as far away as Dubbo, Cobar, Wellington, Coonamble and Nyngan, some for a day and some for a week. Ralph has built his dream of a youth culture camp through sheer determination to help the youth of his race find a better way of life. Through his work he has helped to reduce the youth crime rate in Gilgandra, empower and inspire Aboriginal youth, and give many young people a future to look forward to. I know that nothing makes Ralph more proud than when one of his young blokes rings him up to say that they are doing okay and all because of him. He has been instrumental in helping so many young people get their lives back on track.

On top of his camp commitments Ralph is a tireless community man, leading NAIDOC Week celebrations in Balladoran, regularly visiting two hostels for the aged to entertain residents, and helping organise a yearly bus trip to Sydney for a rugby union match for young people through the Gilgandra Youth Club. Ralph also regularly takes a team of young Aboriginal dancers to perform at the Opera House. His dancers are currently embarking on a joint project with Irish dancers and musicians entitled "Celtic Fire—The Dreaming", which will soon tour Australia.

Mr Greg Smith: Hear, hear!

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: The Attorney General might like to make a guest appearance. Volunteers such as Ralph are the lifeblood of communities throughout the Barwon electorate. It is the passion and commitment of our volunteers that brings people together and makes our communities stronger. I note that

nominations for the New South Wales Volunteer of the Year Awards are again open. These annual awards run by the Centre for Volunteering recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions of the two million-plus volunteers in New South Wales. Ralph is just one of thousands of volunteers within my electorate, and I know that any one of the many generous volunteers in Barwon would be a worthy nominee for these awards. I hope these awards not only raise the profile of our dedicated volunteers but also encourage more people to think about how they can give back to their community.

Mr GREG SMITH (Epping—Attorney General, and Minister for Justice) [1.18 p.m.]: I commend the Minister and member for Barwon for his tribute to Ralph Naden of Balladoran, whose support for Indigenous youth is very much appreciated by the community of this State. Reducing the youth crime rate in Gilgandra is a great step forward and something we are all trying to do at present with our ministerial task force that is seeking to give power back to the people. I am very pleased to hear about the encouragement of Irish music and Aboriginal dance and music; it can only better the community and improve the culture of the country. The member for Coogee paid a wonderful tribute in acknowledging two Russian Victory Day ceremonies. It was interesting to hear him speak about the terrible slaughter of Soviet citizens and soldiers by Nazi Germany. Twenty-seven million Russians were killed during World War II. That is an incredible figure and it shows the terrible affliction caused by war and attempts to wipe out whole communities and races. I compliment the member for Coogee for bringing those matters to our attention.

TANTRUM THEATRE COMPANY

Mr ANDREW CORNWELL (Charlestown) [1.19 p.m.]: I inform the House of a fantastic local Hunter Valley theatre group. The Tantrum Theatre was established in 1996 as an off-shoot company, catering to emerging actors and theatre artists aged 18 to 25. Under the guidance of the company's staff, Tantrum established itself as a unique company in the region, producing innovative contemporary performances that appeal to the peers of those involved and to the wider local demographic. In 2004, Tantrum Theatre was merged with the 2 Til 5 theatre company to establish the Tantrum Theatre company. The decision to reshape the company came as the result of a review of the company's activities and image, and from a desire for a much clearer direction. The new company's first artistic program was in 2005. Tantrum continues to be Newcastle's leading theatre company for young people, providing bold and cutting-edge performances and the presentation of new works.

Tantrum Theatre's mission is to create innovative arts programs that engage, celebrate and support young people's development, identities and interests. As noted on its website, Tantrum provides opportunities for young people aged five to 30 to gain skills and opportunities in the creation of contemporary performance through weekly workshops with emerging and professional artists. Tantrum offers young people the opportunity to gain experience and skills through skills-based learning and mentoring. Tantrum nurtures young artists by providing opportunities for growth, risk-taking and excellence through performance-based training and activities in Newcastle, while linking these young artists with innovative arts programming with local and national arts organisations. It offers a range of classes for our five- to 17-year-olds as well as weekly workshops and intensives for our 18- to 30-year-olds.

Last Thursday I had the opportunity to attend the premier of a brand-new production performed by Tantrum Theatre, a new play called *Grounded*. The play was written by noted writer Alana Valentine. It is the story of Farrah, a young Novocastrian with a fascination for Newcastle's industrial port—a fascination none of her peers shares or comprehends. It is set against the backdrop of one of the most intriguing events in Newcastle's recent history: the grounding of the *Pasha Bulker*. When a storm forces the *Pasha Bulker* onto Nobbys Beach and the world's attention turns to the harbour she knows so well, the impact on Farrah's own reality is not what she expects. The play explores the themes of isolation, belonging and identity, and that time in your life when the obsessions of childhood get grounded in reality.

Tantrum Theatre and Australia's flagship youth theatre company, Australian Theatre for Young People, co-commissioned nationally celebrated playwright Alana Valentine, as I mentioned, to create this new work, which celebrates Newcastle's identity and the significance of the working harbour to Newcastle's culture. The Hunter has a proud tradition in the dramatic arts, and our strength was exemplified by the brilliant performances in the play. Jemima Webber was on stage for almost the entire performance as Farrah, and her performance was both powerful and engaging. Siobhan Caufield's interaction as Farrah's friend Chloe provided some of the emotional highs and lows of the evening—another great performance. Farrah's suitor, played by Mathew Baird-Steele, shows the mix of immaturity and sensitivity that many adolescents possess.

Dean Blackford and Scott Gelzinnis are lively as the other Blue Jays. Emily Daly, Naomi Dingle and Tamara Gazzard play the three faces of Matilda—a very effective technique used by the playwright—and the three actors performed with strength and humour. The youngest performer, India Wilson, gave a performance that more than belied her age, but showed tremendous skill and sensitivity. The young cast was supported by professional actor Paul Kelman. Paul is known for appearing in feature films such as *Mullet* with Ben Mendelsohn, *Terra Nova* and *A Cold Summer*, and has also appeared in television productions such as *All Saints*, *McLeod's Daughters*, *Home and Away*, and others.

I also congratulate the fabulous people who drive the Tantrum Theatre company: artistic director, Toni Main; general manager, Justine Potter, with whom I went to high school; and associate director, Rachel Jackett. It was a fantastic performance of a great play. It is highly likely to have a season in Sydney soon, and I recommend it to all members of the House as a very worthwhile production. As I said, it explores the themes of youth and through them also Newcastle's identity. It was a fantastic evening with wonderful performances by the cast, and I highly recommend it to the House.

BANKSTOWN PACEWAY

Mr GLENN BROOKES (East Hills) [1.24 p.m.]: I talk today about an establishment within the Bankstown local government area that is almost as old as the region itself; an establishment that has seen the famous and the infamous walk its turf; an establishment that has entertained thousands; an establishment that directly and indirectly provides employment to hundreds of dedicated workers; an establishment with a rich and colourful history; and an establishment whose very existence, I am sad to say, is currently under threat. The Bankstown Paceway has been the home of harness racing in the south-west for many decades. The Bankstown Paceway is a hub of community activity. It is the place for many social events. It is where fortunes have been won and lost—sometimes on the same night. Bankstown Paceway is the heart and soul of Sydney harness racing. It is an establishment that forms part of Sydney's character, and it is an establishment worth fighting for.

On Friday 18 May 2012 I had the pleasure of attending the Schweppes Sydney Cup, held at Bankstown Paceway. I represented the Hon. Barry O'Farrell, Premier of New South Wales. The Schweppes Sydney Cup is Bankstown Paceway's leading event on the autumn racing calendar, and the night was characterised by a carnival atmosphere, track-side excitement, glamour, live entertainment, fashion, prizes and good food. East Hills' and Bankstown's racing, social and political elite gathered to witness this annual event and to rub shoulders with the hundreds of punters and racegoers who came to watch the spectacle and support the sport of harness racing. Bankstown Paceway provides a valuable community service and any decision or circumstance that weakens this establishment's financial viability is, without doubt, a threat to an entire community within the Bankstown local government area. I have had meetings with directors and managers from Bankstown Paceway to discuss not only the allocation of race dates for 2012 but also ways of revitalising what was once a thriving business.

Last week I also met with the chairman and chief executive officer of Harness Racing New South Wales to discuss the situation. While no solution was agreed upon at that meeting, positive steps were taken to explore a way forward that will benefit the harness racing industry, Bankstown Paceway and, most importantly, employees and patrons. I will continue to provide my support to Bankstown Paceway. I encourage the community to get firmly behind the industry and to patronise the racetrack. I look forward to an ongoing and long-term relationship with Harness Racing New South Wales that will see Bankstown Paceway refreshed, invigorated and given a new lease on life.

Mr GREG SMITH (Epping—Attorney General, and Minister for Justice) [1.28 p.m.]: The member for East Hills paid a strong tribute to the Bankstown Paceway and the good fellowship and excitement at the race meetings. He gave a particular outlook on the Schweppes Sydney Cup, which he attended recently on behalf of the Premier. Hopefully, his desire that Bankstown Paceway is rejuvenated will be fulfilled. The member for Charlestown, in discussing the Tantrum Theatre—an interesting name—talked about a play the company performed recently about the grounding of the *Pasha Bulker*. Those who were in this place during the previous parliamentary term will remember well the difficulties that that grounding caused Minister Joe Tripodi. While Americans are urged to remember the Alamo and Pearl Harbor, those watching how the ship of State is performing would do well to remember the *Pasha Bulker* and Joe Tripodi.

[The Acting-Speaker (Mr Gareth Ward) left the chair at 1.29 p.m. The House resumed at 2.15 p.m.]

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I draw the attention of members to the presence in the public gallery today of Mr Peter Achterstraat, the Auditor-General of New South Wales.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following bills was reported:

Industrial Relations Amendment (Industrial Organisations) Bill 2012
Sydney Water Catchment Management Amendment (Board Members) Bill 2012
Co-operatives (Adoption of National Law) Bill 2012

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE

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

T. F. BATHURST
Lieutenant-Governor

Office of the Governor
Sydney, 13 May 2012

The Honourable Thomas Frederick Bathurst, Lieutenant-Governor of the State of New South Wales, has the honour to inform the Legislative Assembly that, consequent on the Governor of New South Wales, Professor Marie Bashir, having departed the country on overseas travel, he assumed the administration of the government of the State at 1.50 p.m. on Sunday 13 May 2012.

QUESTION TIME

[Question time commenced at 2.21 p.m.]

MINISTER FOR RESOURCES AND ENERGY, SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE, AND MINISTER FOR THE CENTRAL COAST

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON: My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier guarantee that his Minister Chris Hartcher was not involved in the electoral funding irregularities currently under investigation by the Electoral Funding Authority?

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: What I can guarantee is that the Electoral Funding Authority is engaging in an appropriate investigation into a matter raised with it by the State Director of the New South Wales Liberal Party.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: The irony is that the Leader of the Opposition thinks that he should be judge and jury in these matters. I remind members about the inquiry into The Star casino, which the Leader of the Opposition referred to the Independent Commission Against Corruption and which it said it would investigate.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: The Leader of the Opposition asked more than four dozen questions about that issue over three months, but the report handed down last week did not substantiate a single claim that he made.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: We will allow those who are charged by legislation and supported by both sides of politics to do the job they are expected to do. In this case, the Election Funding Authority—

Mr John Robertson: So you will not give a guarantee.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: What I will guarantee to the Leader of the Opposition is that the Election Funding Authority will undertake rigorous investigations and it will report.

The SPEAKER: Order! An Opposition member has asked a question but Opposition members are not listening to the answer.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: What I will not do is what the Leader of the Opposition argued should be done—

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the third time. Government members will restrain themselves.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: What I will not do is what the Leader of the Opposition tried to do in relation to The Star matter; that is, to direct the investigation. That is the way in which members opposite behaved for 16 years.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Keira to order. I call the member Cessnock to order. I remind members that interjections are disorderly at all times.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: That is the way members opposite sought to conduct investigations for 16 years and that is why people like Eddie Obeid could retire from Parliament instead of being booted out.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: What we saw under the former Premier, the member for Heffron, with two matters that were referred to the Independent Commission Against Corruption—

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot imagine what it might be. If Government members do not come to order, I will place them on calls to order.

Mr Michael Daley: Before I invoke Standing Order 73, I invoke Standing Order 129 and ask the Premier whether he backs his Minister. That was the question.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: That was not the question I was asked. However, having been asked it by way of interjection, I point out that every member of my Cabinet has my full support.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: No member of this place should be surprised about that. I return to the member for Heffron, who loves the spotlight, because I would hate her to be ignored during question time. I well remember two Independent Commission Against Corruption inquiries, one into a member for Drummoyne and one into a member for Penrith. On both occasions the former Premier sought to attack those who made allegations. What was the result of the inquiry in both cases? The members were found to have engaged in corrupt conduct. It is no coincidence that those who sought to shut down the inquiries and to defame those who raised issues should today continue to throw mud instead of focus on issues that affect this State.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: They can throw buckets of mud, but nothing will extinguish Eddie Obeid from the public domain.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn Opposition members that several of them are on calls to order. It has been a particularly noisy start to question time. I will not tolerate continual interjections from members on either side of the House. If members continue to interject, I will have them ejected from the Chamber pursuant to the sessional order that gives me that discretion. Members will come to order.

WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I direct my question to the Premier. Why is the Government determined to reform the workers compensation scheme?

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: I thank the member for Monaro for that timely question.

Ms Noreen Hay: They hate workers.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: Madam Speaker, you pointed out at the start of question time that Malcolm Mackerras is in the gallery, and I know that he loves anecdotes. One of the best stories of this Parliament is that when tens of thousands of people were marching outside this place protesting about me and my Government the member for Wollongong was so concerned that she came inside and went to lunch. That demonstrates her concern: "What do we want? Lunch! When do we want it? Now!"

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: That demonstrates her concern for workers.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: I thank the member for Monaro for this question because it touches on a matter that is important to everyone in New South Wales. The reform of the workers compensation scheme to ensure its continued viability is critical to workers, employers, our community and the economy. We know that workplace accidents can be terrible for those involved. In fact, they can be much more than terrible; they can be catastrophic or in dreadful circumstances even fatal. Accidents and injuries occur even in the most safety conscious workplaces. Therefore, it is in everyone's interests to have a workers compensation scheme that ensures that mortgages can be paid, that children can be fed and that injured workers can recover as quickly as possible.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: The former Labor Government let this scheme—the safety net for the State's workers—fall into a heap with a \$4.1 billion deficit at December last year. WorkCover would not be sustainable if that were to continue. How ironic is it that those who, as the member for Wollongong demonstrated two minutes ago, pretend to be the friends of workers should take their eyes off the ball in relation to a matter such as this.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wollongong will refrain from responding.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: The former chairman of WorkCover said that no responsible Minister under those opposite took an interest in a scheme that is so critical to workers across this State. Like so many other things, it falls to us to fix the problem, and we are determined to right the wrongs that have been done to our State's workers and employers.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: Today I make this commitment: This Parliament will not rise for the winter recess until the bill to reform WorkCover has been voted upon by both Houses. A parliamentary

committee, informed by a discussion paper released by the Government a month ago as well as more than 200 written submissions, is now taking evidence from a range of stakeholders on how to best reform WorkCover. The committee is due to hand its report to the Government on 13 June and, guided by the committee's recommendations and other work, the Government will introduce legislation soon after that. The time frame will be tight, but injured workers, the State's wider workforce and businesses cannot wait. Those opposite pretend to be interested in this matter. The Leader of the Opposition is out there crying crocodile tears about this matter, but I recall that in 2006-07, when he was a member of the WorkCover board—the board that oversights the management of this critical safety net for workers—that board conducted 11 meetings. How many meetings do members think the official representative attended?

Mr Adrian Piccoli: Ten?

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: Any advance on 10? Not a single meeting did the representative attend. We intend to fix the problems and we intend to do that expeditiously. That means that the Leader of the Opposition and his mates can put away their holiday bags and expect to be here until both Houses have voted on this matter. As the member for Davidson said in his notice of motion, PricewaterhouseCoopers have said that, without change, premiums will have to increase by 28 per cent to make this scheme sustainable by 2017. That is a direct threat to employment in New South Wales. If we do nothing, the owners of a cleaning company, for instance, paying around \$150,000 in wages each year, will see their workers compensation premium rise to \$13,600—more than double that paid by a similar company in Victoria. If we do nothing, a nursing home operator paying around \$965,000 a year in wages would see its premium rise to almost \$62,500—more than double the \$28,000 paid by a similar business in Queensland. The scheme as left by those opposite is unsustainable. We will make reforms to ensure that it is sustainable to give to injured workers and non-injured workers the security that they deserve.

THIRD PARTY DONATIONS

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: My question is directed to the Minister for Resources and Energy, Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Central Coast. Has the Minister ever organised for the salary of a member of his staff to be paid by a third party donor and, if so, can he inform the House of the details of the arrangement?

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: How appropriate it is that that question is asked by the member for Maroubra, because yesterday we heard a lot in Federal Parliament about the Health Services Union, which gave \$100,000 to the member for Maroubra. In the 2005 by-election, the Health Services Union gave him \$100,000. Better than that—

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: I have a lot on the member for Maroubra.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Monaro to order. I call the member for Wyong to order. I call the member for Kiama to order.

Mr Michael Daley: I ask the Minister to table the document that shows that I got \$100,000 from the Health Services Union for my campaign.

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: With pleasure. Here it is. I have it here.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is not in order for the Minister to table the document. The member for Maroubra was out of order when he asked a further question, as he well knows. The Minister will continue with the answer to the question that he was asked originally.

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: Let me address the issue raised by the member for Maroubra and the issue insinuated by the Leader of the Opposition. No allegations have been made about me, nor am I the subject of any investigation. The allegations published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* relate to a time when Mr Koelma was not in my employ. Mr Koelma commenced work as ministerial adviser in April 2011. He previously worked in my electorate office as a permanent employee from April 2003 to July 2007. Mr Koelma discussed alternative employment opportunities with me in January of this year. He resigned from my office in April to pursue those opportunities. Matters relating to electoral funding are currently subject to review by the Election Funding Authority. I propose to say no more about this matter because the sting is in the tail. What I propose to do is this—

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

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: I have given what is the appropriate answer, given the authority's investigation. On the subject of investigation, if any member opposite wishes to ask me a question such as that which the member for Maroubra was so foolish to ask, I invite them to please do so because I am only too anxious—

Ms Linda Burney: Give me a break.

Mr John Robertson: Are you threatening us now? Is that a threat?

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: That is a challenge to you. I have been here 12 months and not once—

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

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: —not once has the Leader of the Opposition dared to ask me a question about the solar bonus scheme, which is a huge issue, or coal seam gas, which is a huge issue. Never does he dare ask a question about those issues because he wrecked solar bonus and he wrecked coal seam gas.

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

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: Even today he gives his question to the member for Maroubra—

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

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

Mr Michael Daley: You can dish it out in cowards' castle—

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

Mr Michael Daley: Standing orders 73 and 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. That was extremely disorderly.

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: Let me answer the interjection of the member for Maroubra. When he was deputy mayor of Randwick, the general secretary of the Health Services Union, Michael Williamson, had a big development application approved against the wishes of council officers, whom he had pledged to always support. And when he was challenged as to why he voted for Michael Williamson—and we all know who Michael Williamson is—

Ms Carmel Tebbutt: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

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

Ms Carmel Tebbutt: The Minister himself said he had answered the question. He is now going on a general rant. I ask that he be called back to order.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not know that a general rant contravenes any standing order. The Minister will conclude his answer.

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: Can I ask the member for Maroubra to please give me just two minutes more? [*Time expired.*]

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members that several of them have been placed on calls to order. Because of the level of interjection they may not have heard their names being called. Opposition members who are now accusing me of being biased had better think again; I have called several Government members to order also. However, Opposition members are interjecting more than Government members are interjecting.

RAIL TRANSPORT REFORM

Mr TIM OWEN: My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport. How has the community reacted to the New South Wales Government's plan to fix the trains?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I thank the member for his question and for his interest in public transport—a real question that relates to the people of this State. As all members would know, last week I announced a major shake-up of rail services in our State. This is because, frankly, our customers deserve better. Constituents of members of both sides of this House have been doing it tough for too long and they deserve better, and they want us to fix the trains. These are part of some tough but necessary reforms we will introduce on our railways—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They are reforms that those opposite ducked for 16 years—reforms that should have been implemented—but Labor turned a blind eye and allowed rail services to go down the gurgler. I am pleased to announce that we are creating two new customer-focused organisations, Sydney Trains and NSW Trains. For too long RailCorp has tried to be all things to all people.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Mount Druitt to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We know that our commuters in Sydney—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We know that our commuters in Sydney want quick and more frequent services, and we also know that our commuters in inter-city, regional and country areas, like those in the Hunter and Newcastle, want better on-board facilities.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They want to make sure that as they travel longer distances we realise their needs and we meet them. In addition to providing very poor customer service, RailCorp is currently financially unsustainable. Those opposite ignored that, too. It costs taxpayers more than \$10 million a day to run RailCorp. This is growing—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wollongong and the member for Kogarah will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The cost is growing at three times the rate of growth in passenger journeys; this has to change. It does not give me a sense of pride to say that RailCorp is the most bureaucratised organisation in New South Wales by far, perhaps even in the country. There is not a single person in this place or in the community who does not believe that things must change when it comes to rail services. No, there is one, and that is the Leader of the Opposition. It is little wonder that services languished when he was the transport Minister, because in February this year he stated on a radio program that RailCorp is an organisation that delivers services to the people of the city and delivers them effectively. He is the only one in this State who believes that, and little wonder.

Unlike his Government, this Government will continue to strive to deliver better services for our customers. We are tackling RailCorp's bloated top-heavy bureaucracy by offering 750 voluntary redundancies to middle managers. Cutting waste and reducing inefficiencies will make it easier for our front-line workers to do their jobs and look after their customers. I have been heartened by the emails, letters and support from our hardworking staff, who know that less bureaucracy means that they can provide better service to their customers. In fact, a retired station manager wrote to the *Daily Telegraph* saying it is time to empower front-line staff. Another long-time RailCorp employee wrote on the *Sydney Morning Herald* website:

I can vouch that this is an organisation that needs to be torn apart and rebuilt. It is bloated and broken and the utter dominance of the union prevents good strategic decision making in the interest of commuters.

That view has been reflected in the many emails I have received from workers, and staff past and present. It was also reflected in the feedback received from the general public. Whether it is Infrastructure Partnerships Australia, the Sydney Business Chamber or the Tourism and Transport Forum, we are being commended for the

action we are taking to put customers first—it is about time that happened. I am also pleased to say that we have had a great response from areas like the Hunter and the Central Coast. The *Newcastle Herald* reported that the announcement was a step in the right direction. Similarly, the Central Coast *Express Advocate* celebrated the changes with these words:

The travelling public are the winners—the new plan to fix the trains.

There is a groundswell of support in the community for this long overdue and real change. The Labor Party ignored the plight of taxpayers and customers for 10 years. While they stand for middle managers, we stand for our constituents. We stand for our customers. [*Time expired.*]

POLITICAL DONATIONS

Ms LINDA BURNEY: My question is to the Minister for Energy and Resources, Minister for the Central Coast and Special Minister of State. Has he ever collected donations—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Murray-Darling will come to order. The member for Canterbury has the call.

Ms LINDA BURNEY: Has he ever collected donations on behalf of the Liberal Party from the Exclusive Brethren or their associated entities?

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: I refer to my previous answer.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members may not like the answer the Minister chose to give, but that is no reason to interject.

EDUCATION REFORM

Mr PAUL TOOLE: My question is directed to the Minister for Education. What has been the progress of the Government's educational reforms to public schools?

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: I thank the member for Bathurst for his question and acknowledge a great trip I had to Bathurst a few days ago to announce the construction of a new gymnasium at Bathurst High School, which was received enthusiastically from the school assembly. The project is well overdue. The previous member for Bathurst could not deliver it, but the current member for Bathurst will deliver it. The response was terrific. An older lady sitting up the back of the school assembly who had been campaigning for the gymnasium for years had tears in her eyes. It was a pleasure to meet her after that school assembly. I also had the opportunity to speak to the staff about other reforms the Government has introduced. I stood in front of 40 or 50 teachers and answered their questions about class sizes and I was able to say that the policy on class size is not changing.

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

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: I was able to answer all of their questions. I was asked a question about procurement changes and when they would be introduced. It was a pleasure to be able to say they are already in place to support small businesses and to make life for those schools so much easier. One teacher wanted to buy art supplies from the local community. This Government is doing things differently; doing things that make sense. I also had the pleasure of visiting the electorate of Camden to announce that the Government was buying a Christian school, which is something the former Government never did. Admittedly, those opposite had only one education policy: keep open schools that have no children. Hope Christian School went into bankruptcy, the Government bought it and for the time being it will be converted into a public primary school.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Toongabbie and the member for Keira will come to order.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: When other schools in that district have been constructed, it will become a school for students with disabilities, which is a huge win for that area. Another win is that the Christian school left a roomful of school uniforms, which Rotary at Narellan has organised to send to a school in Cambodia. Not only is this Government delivering for the people of New South Wales, it is also delivering for the people of Cambodia; it is a win-win for everybody. A few weeks ago on the first day of term I had the pleasure of speaking to 200 or 300 teachers in Dapto. I stood in front of them and answered every question that they asked

me about Local Schools, Local Decisions and reforms. They asked legitimate questions. I have a good relationship with the union, but I am disappointed that it does not pass on to its members particularly accurate information.

As I have said on at least 27 occasions, the policy on class sizes will not change. I have had the opportunity to speak to staff at Nepean school in the Penrith electorate and answer their questions. On every occasion I have been able to advise principals and their staff about precisely what the Government is proposing and allay some of their fears, which have been generated by the union, not by the Labor Party because it has been pretty silent. I think that principals and their staff support our position, but they are not going to tell the union they support it. When teachers and staff are advised about the benefits that these reforms will produce for students—ultimately, that is why we are doing it—

Dr Andrew McDonald: Point of order: The Minister is misleading the House. The highest-risk students in the area will suffer from these reforms.

The SPEAKER: Order! Misleading the House does not constitute a point of order.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: For my birthday I was given a tie similar to that worn by the member for Macquarie Fields, and he has just reminded me why I do not wear it. [*Extension of time granted.*]

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

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: These reforms continue to roll out. As I said when the reforms were announced, these are the biggest reforms in 100 years. There is significant detail, including a resource allocation model. The way we fund individual schools is still being worked out in consultation with the union and principal groups. PricewaterhouseCoopers, a large accounting firm with expertise, is helping us. It is almost the same process as proposed by David Gonski in his review. But the reforms continue. Changes to the procurement process commence this term. On day one of next term principals will have more power to decide their maintenance priorities. In term 4 changes will be made to the way schools select staff. This means that at a minimum, schools will be able to merit select at least every second staff appointment to a school. That is a significant reform. Schools will be able to decide on their mix of permanent and temporary staff.

Ms Carmel Tebbutt: They can do it now.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: The member for Marrickville said that schools get to choose every staff position now. They do not. A few weeks ago in Bourke I was told that the past seven appointments to the schools in Bourke had been made by head office; the schools did not select any new staff. School staff are not saying that they want to select all new staff, but they want to select at least every second staff appointment. Teachers who are residents of Bourke and who left the area to get teaching experience have now come back to the area and they want to stay. In communities with high Aboriginal populations in particular schools want certainty and stability in their workforces. They appreciate the teachers who come to their communities for perhaps only three years, but they want teachers to come and stay. That is one of the best ways to improve the educational performance of Aboriginal students, but schools are denied that under the current system. These reforms are designed for one thing only: to support students across New South Wales. [*Time expired.*]

EXCLUSIVE BRETHREN DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Mr PAUL LYNCH: My question is addressed to the Minister for Resources and Energy, Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Central Coast. In light of the Minister's refusal to answer the previous question, did he make any phone calls or have any contact with the applicants, their representatives or any member of Gosford council about the development application for the Exclusive Brethren worship centre at Lisarow, which was recently approved?

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: Earlier I said that if I was asked about investigations I would talk about investigations. I was hoping, above all, that the member for Liverpool would ask me a question. It was not the member for Maroubra or the Leader of the Opposition, but the member for Liverpool who has asked a question. There used to be a television series called *Ancient Mysteries*—I am coming to the member's question.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129 relating to relevance. The point of question time is for the Minister to answer the question when he is asked it, not when he thinks it is a good idea. Standing Order 129 requires the Minister to be relevant now.

The SPEAKER: Order! Given that the Minister has been speaking for only 20 seconds or so, I will give him a little latitude.

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: *Ancient Mysteries* concerned unsolved mysteries. And there was a great unsolved mystery: how people who joined the Liverpool branch of the Australian Labor Party moved up the Housing Commission waiting list when they voted for the member for Liverpool.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: Ask another question.

Mr Paul Lynch: Because you are relying on your mate—

The SPEAKER: Order! Perhaps I should remove the member for Liverpool and the Minister so that they can take their argument outside.

Mr Michael Daley: We would sign up for that bargain.

The SPEAKER: Order! I am pleased to hear that. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Michael Daley: On several previous occasions you have directed the Minister to answer the question or to sit down. I ask you to do a similar thing now, in light of his refusal to answer the question and his obvious breach of Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: Order! On previous occasions I have asked Ministers to return to the leave of the question. I have not yet done so on this occasion. However, if the Minister does not return to the leave of the question, I will ask him to do so.

Mr CHRIS HARTCHER: I have one more sentence. There was an investigation by the Independent Commission Against Corruption, but let us not go there. I will save the rest for my answer for the member's next question, which will be probably in another year or maybe longer. As for all other matters, I refer to my previous answer.

SYDNEY DESALINATION PLANT

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: My question is directed to the Treasurer. What are the benefits to the people of New South Wales of the Government's long-term lease of the desalination plant?

Mr MIKE BAIRD: There is so much to say on this topic. I thank the member for Cronulla for his interest in this matter and for continuing to fight for his community, as he does regularly. It is a contrast. We have heard about reform from the Government; we have heard about muck from members opposite. We have heard about workers compensation, transport reform and education reform, and now we are delivering for infrastructure.

Mr Nathan Rees: Our community partnerships.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The Government is getting on with the job of fixing this State. We are delighted that on 10 May the Government accepted an offer to refinance the desalination plant from a consortium, Ontario Teachers Pension Plan Board and a Hastings-managed infrastructure fund.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: It is the first transaction completed under the O'Farrell Government and it was an incredible success. We saw a competitive process—something that members opposite are not used to in terms of running a transaction—with unprecedented interest from across the globe. We also achieved value for taxpayers—\$2.3 billion delivered to this State for infrastructure going forward. The transaction has been strongly endorsed by Infrastructure Partnerships Australia, which said that the refinancing will have zero impact on consumers in terms of price or quality, but it will free up the State to begin funding for major projects. The New South Wales Business Chamber said that it is a common-sense approach to making a substantial dent in the New South Wales infrastructure backlog.

Members opposite seem to have forgotten that the real winners in this transaction are the people of New South Wales. Money for infrastructure has been unearthed, with \$300 million going to Restart to address the capacity available to borrow for infrastructure needs without impacting on our triple-A credit rating. There is no impact on water bills or water security. As members opposite know, the costs of the desalination plant are already reflected in water prices. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal will continue to set water prices, and Labor's Metropolitan Water Plan will remain in place. We also know that there is more competition in the water industry to benefit customers. Indeed, in relation to competition in things such as water, Morris Iemma said it best:

The biggest antidote to rising cost of living pressures is a big dose of competition.

So Morris Iemma has endorsed this transaction as well. However, I draw attention to what the Opposition said about this transaction, because it did not exactly endorse it. We know what the water spokesman, Luke Foley, is like. Interestingly, in a press release issued on 9 December 2011, when the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal made its determination on the pricing for this transaction, Mr Foley said:

Today's decision won't have an additional impact on household water prices.

Mr Foley confirmed that the desalination plant transaction will have no impact on water prices. The Opposition knows that it is a good deal. Let us look at what the member for Maroubra said—this is where it gets interesting. When the member for Maroubra first spoke publicly about this matter he said that the desalination plant should have remained in public hands in case of drought. He must think that the new consortium will pick up the desalination plant and run away. The desalination plant will remain in place: it is there for the people. In his press release—it is a great press release—he also said that the desalination plant was sold for a pathetic amount of money. He said it was a shemozzle and that the people of New South Wales had been short-changed. I say to the member for Maroubra and I think that 69 members at least across this Chamber would say to him that \$2.3 billion for infrastructure is a fantastic result for the people of New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra has not been asked a question. He will cease interjecting. I call the member for Toongabbie to order.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: Those opposite talk about pathetic deals, but they are specialists in this area. One need only go back to the gentrader deal, which was signed off by the former finance Minister, the member for Maroubra. What did he do in that regard? We know what he did. Delta Electricity, which was valued at \$1.35 billion, was sold for \$453 million. Eraring was valued at \$1.8 billion but Labor sold it for \$867 million. The Auditor-General confirmed that Labor sold those assets for half their value.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: When members opposite stand up to criticise a sale that is \$300 million more than book value they do not know what they are talking about. This is a good result for the people of New South Wales. Indeed, one should look at the numbers that the member for Maroubra spoke about because it is worth noting—*[Extension of time granted.]*

The member for Maroubra said on that day that the transaction had cost close to \$300 million; that \$300 million had been lost. That shows that the member for Maroubra is not good with numbers because the true cost of the transaction is less than 1 per cent of proceeds, which effectively means about \$20 million. What does that mean for the people of New South Wales? It means that the member for Maroubra was more than 90 per cent wrong in his numbers—we did give him a calculator but he is not paying attention.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer does not need any assistance from Government members.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The truth is that the O'Farrell Government is getting on with the job of delivering infrastructure for the people of New South Wales. The very simple question we have for members opposite is: What are your plans? If they oppose the long-term lease of the desalination plant, what will they do about infrastructure? What hospitals, roads or schools will they cut? If that is what their plans are, then the people of New South Wales need the loan. We say, "Thank goodness for the O'Farrell Government" because on the back of this transaction we have delivered \$2.3 billion that can be put into infrastructure. We have delivered value for money for the taxpayers, something they are not used to. There will be no impact on bills for water customers. Today we deliver yet again on an election commitment to get on with the job of fixing New South Wales.

TIM KOELMA POLITICAL LOBBYING

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON: My question is directed to the Premier. What steps has the Premier taken to investigate claims that Tim Koelma was operating a lobbyist business from inside this Government?

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: As I said at the start, the Liberal Party referred matters relating to that individual and his activities to the Election Funding Authority. Those matters are under investigation.

Mr John Robertson: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has barely begun to answer the question. What is the member's point of order?

Mr John Robertson: My point of order relates to relevance. This is a serious matter. It is not about the other investigation that is going on. This is specifically about what this person was doing from inside government running a lobbyist business; it is not related to the other matters being investigated by the Electoral Funding Authority.

The SPEAKER: Order! I understand the point of order. The member can refer to the specifics of his question but, as he is aware, I can only ask that the Premier be relevant in his answer, and so far the Premier is being relevant.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: As I was saying, I was notified by the State Director of the Liberal Party on the same day that he referred that matter to the Electoral Funding Authority. I am not quite sure where the Leader of the Opposition wants to go with this question. He asked 48 or so questions on The Star casino matter and ended up with egg on his face, and he again prefers to throw mud instead of doing what leaders of opposition have to do if they expect to be elected, and that is, on behalf of the community ask questions about the tough things. We heard the Minister for Resources and Energy say there has been no question on coal seam gas or any of those issues that concern him. The Minister for Primary Industries is still waiting for a question on the aquifer policy or other issues to do with small business. I cannot remember the last time members opposite asked the Minister for Disability Services a question. The Minister for Community Services has to organise questions for the backbench in order to stand up for those who live in social housing. Under this Government one does not need to be a Labor Party member to get social housing.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Murray-Darling and the member for Wollongong will cease interjecting.

Mr John Robertson: Point of order: This is a serious matter. At the moment the Premier is debating the question and starting to argue about the question asked and what question should be asked. I ask you to bring him back to the leave of the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! As I said in my previous ruling, the Premier is being relevant to the question asked. The standing orders do not allow me to direct him to answer it specifically.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: I am told that we have answered 107 questions this year posed by those opposite. Half of them include smear and innuendo, but not one of them has stood up to scrutiny. I was out of the country last week; I did not see the Newspoll so I will not refer to it. But what is clear to me is that members opposite have learnt nothing from the poll on 26 March last year. It is still about them and the way in which they used to operate in government; it is not about the public of New South Wales. It is not about improving transport, it is not about improving health, it is not about improving education, it is not about safe communities; those opposite have learned nothing after 14 months in opposition. If that continues for 48 months, it will not be

good for the body politic. Good government requires a strong Opposition focused on the public need, but the only need those opposite are focused on is smear and innuendo and standing up for the union bosses in this State. We will continue to protect the public interest. We will continue to govern on the matters that people are concerned about. We will continue to fix this State for the people of this State. We will continue to fix transport and schools so that the people of this State have the best possible future.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the Leader of the Opposition that he is already on three calls to order. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the third time.

MIDDLE EAST TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Mr THOMAS GEORGE: My question is addressed to the Premier. What is the Government doing to enhance investment and trade with Lebanon and the United Arab Republic?

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: I thank the member for Lismore for his question but more importantly I thank him, the member for Granville and the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport in the other place for paying their own way to accompany me on a trip to Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates. As we know, Lebanon is an important friend to New South Wales. More than 350,000 people of Lebanese heritage live in this State and across this country, and they have been great contributors to the success that we enjoy and will continue to contribute to the strong future of this State and this country. Sydney is home to almost half of those Lebanese Australians and when I went to Lebanon for the third time, as Premier, I was fondly greeted by people eager to tell me about relatives living in this city or other parts of this State. Their generosity was absolutely overwhelming.

I held high-level meetings with President Michel Sleiman, who undertook the first visit by a President of Lebanon to this country a month ago; Prime Minister Najib Mikati; and Speaker Nabih Berri, who has strong connections with this country. As well as discussing those strong ties I took the opportunity to press the benefits of Australian trade and infrastructure investment, particularly in roads across this State. The delegation was honoured with a working lunch in the presidential palace with President Sleiman, Prime Minister Mikati, Deputy Prime Minister Mokbel, Foreign Minister Mansour, Information Minister Daouk and Public Works and Transport Minister Aridi. I thank the Lebanese Government for its very generous welcome. It was a demonstration of the high level of regard they have for this State and the way in which we have provided a home to people of Lebanese extraction for 224 years.

I also met representatives of religious leaders from the Sunni, Shi'a, Maronite and Melchite communities as well as visiting St Anthony the Great Monastery in the Kadisha Valley. The delegation held meetings with community municipal leaders in the Bcharre and Al Minie regions in Lebanon's north, from which so many of the migrants to this country have come. I have to say that the trip north in particular pleased the member for Granville. We were able to stand beside that great Parramatta Road sign installed all those years ago by Joe Barakat, who was a Parramatta councillor.

In the United Arab Emirates the focus was heavily on how to unlock the billions of dollars of investment and try to divert them to infrastructure projects in New South Wales. The Government signed a memorandum of understanding with the Dubai International Finance Centre Authority to grow our banking and finance sectors. The agreement will facilitate greater contact between Sydney and Dubai and promote potential investment opportunities in New South Wales and in the Gulf Cooperation Council region. Sydney and Dubai will also collaborate on education and research projects and organise conferences and seminars on financial issues. The centre also expressed interest in attracting experts from Australian universities, institutes, companies and governments, particularly in innovation in finance, to develop the people who work in the financial services sector in that region.

Also in Dubai I took part in an alternative finance options roundtable organised by the Dubai government. The roundtable was an opportunity to discuss the potential of unlocking finance from the Middle East to assist this Government's efforts to renew the State's infrastructure. One message that came through loud and clear, whether from the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority or the government Ministers I met, was that they knew New South Wales as an attractive investment option, given particularly the economic and other uncertainty that exists in Europe. My message back to them, just as clearly and just as loudly, was that New South Wales was open for business again so they should come on down and invest. It was a message I also delivered to the Minister for Foreign Trade, Sheikha Lubna, and the Minister of State, Her Excellency Al-Hashimy, who is heading up the United Arab Emirates' bid for the 2020 World Expo.

Mr Nathan Rees: Avoid Khemlani.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: You might want to make fun of the Middle East. Members opposite might want to use the name of the notorious Federal Labor adviser Khemlani. We are talking about people who have the potential to provide billions of dollars in investments in this State and the juvenile member for Toongabbie wants to play games with people's names.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Toongabbie will cease interjecting.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: The last time I went to Toongabbie it was a culturally diverse community. What do the member's constituents think when he makes fun of people's names? What an absolute joke he is. No wonder he was a disastrous Premier of this State. No wonder his record as Premier of this State will fill one footnote in the books on the history of this State. For the benefit of the member for Wollongong I conclude by saying that we also opened an expansion of the University of Wollongong. It has been in Dubai for 20 years and has produced more than 6,000 graduates. It is held in high esteem and it demonstrates not just the opportunities that exist here for investment from the Middle East but what our companies, individuals and educational institutions can do in the Middle East. What a jerk the member for Toongabbie is.

Question time concluded at 3.13 p.m.

TRIBUTE TO MR DON RITCHIE, OAM

Ministerial Statement

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES (Barwon—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Healthy Lifestyles, and Minister for Western New South Wales) [3.13 p.m.]: On behalf of the New South Wales Government I extend my and the Government's deepest condolences to the family and friends of one of Australia's true heroes, Mr Don Ritchie, OAM, and acknowledge the extraordinary life he lived in the service of others. Don passed away on Sunday 13 May, aged 85, surrounded by his family. Born in Vaucluse in 1926, Don was a seaman in the Royal Australian Navy during the Second World War and witnessed the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay in 1945. Following the war Don worked in Sydney in the insurance industry.

For more than five decades Don patrolled The Gap and kept watch from the window of his home on Old South Head Road at Watsons Bay for people in trouble. During this time his smile, gentle words and personal invitations to his home for a cup of tea and a biscuit saved the lives of hundreds of Australians. He would later tell friends of the people he had saved, "I was a salesman for most of my life and I sold them life." For this Don will always be known as "the Angel of The Gap". To the hundreds of Australians who directly owe their lives to the fact that he cared he will always remain a true hero.

I had the genuine privilege of meeting Don and his wife, Moya, and was struck by their generosity of spirit, dedication and compassion. Don dedicated most of his life to helping those people who had reached tremendously difficult points in their own lives, people whose desperation led them to The Gap and, in hundreds of cases, thankfully, to Don. Don's legacy extends well beyond his personal interventions. I have no doubt that Don's important work in raising awareness of suicide saved countless more lives at risk. His commitment to suicide prevention over many decades set an example that the community and the Government must strive to follow. This commitment saw him awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1996.

In 2010 Don and his wife, Moya, were named Woollahra Council's Citizens of the Year. In 2011 he received the Local Hero Award from the National Australia Day Council, which said, "His kind words and invitations into his home in times of trouble have made an enormous difference. With such simple actions, Don has saved an extraordinary number of lives." Upon accepting the award, Don urged people to never be afraid to speak to those most in need. "Always remember the power of the simple smile, a helping hand, a listening ear and a kind word," he said. Don truly was an angel to hundreds of people at a time when they needed one most and his legacy will now live on in the hundreds of people he saved through his kind interventions.

Ms LINDA BURNEY (Canterbury) [3.16 p.m.]: I join with the Minister to express on behalf of the Opposition our condolences to the family of Mr Don Ritchie. As the Minister said, he was a truly remarkable individual. He was 85 years old when he left this earth last week. I can just imagine what his funeral must have been like. Both sides of the House were represented at the funeral and the Hon. Adam Searle represented the Australian Labor Party. The coffin was covered with the Royal Australian Navy flag because Don was in the

Royal Australian Navy for some time. The Last Post was played as his coffin was carried away, and we all know just what emotion that stirs in us as Australians.

Don Ritchie and his wife lived opposite The Gap and would see desperate people at the very brink of committing suicide. There are members of this House who have been touched by suicide. It is a type of death that is almost irreconcilable for families and individuals. Don Ritchie would walk over to people contemplating suicide and, with nothing more than a simple smile, ask them what they were doing there and invite them to come to his house and have a cup of tea. In the week following Don's death the ABC replayed an interview with him on the radio. He was talking about a young woman who was standing outside the fence while her shoes and handbag were inside the fence. He said, "Come on. I'll pick up your shoes and your handbag. Let's go and have a cup of tea." That is what he did.

The woman's life was a shambles and she could see no other way forward. This amazing man, with his smile and the offer of a cup of tea, not only saved her life but helped pull that woman and her family back together. There are probably hundreds if not thousands of people walking around today who were at the point of suicide or who were members of their families who have Don Ritchie to thank for that smile, offer of a cup of tea and the words, "Come and have a talk." On behalf of the Opposition I offer our condolences and join with the Government in paying respect to this man and his 85 years on earth during which he did good things for many people.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report

Mr Stephen Bromhead, as Chair, tabled the report entitled "Legislation Review Digest No. 17/55", dated 22 May 2012, together with the minutes of the committee meeting regarding Legislation Review Digest No. 16/55, dated 8 May 2012.

Report ordered to be printed on motion by Mr Stephen Bromhead.

PETITIONS

The Speaker announced that the following petition signed by more than 10,000 persons was lodged for presentation:

Highway Vehicle Breakdown Safety

Petition requesting legislation requiring breakdown lanes and road shoulders on all major roads, highways and freeways to meet AustRoads standards and the enactment of "slow down move over" legislation, received from **Mr Andrew Stoner**.

Discussion on petition 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:

Coal Seam Gas Mining

Petition calling for a royal commission into the impacts of coal seam gas mining, a moratorium on coal seam gas mining and a ban on the extraction technique known as hydraulic fracturing, received from **Mr Jamie Parker**.

Pets on Public Transport

Petition requesting that pets be allowed on public transport, received from **Ms Clover Moore**.

Walsh Bay Precinct Public Transport

Petition requesting improved bus services for the Walsh Bay precinct, and ferry services for the new wharf at pier 2/3, received from **Ms Clover Moore**.

Animals Performing in Circuses

Petition requesting a ban on exotic animals performing in circuses, received from **Ms Clover Moore**.

Container Deposit Levy

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

Pet Shops

Petition opposing the sale of animals in pet shops, received from **Ms Clover Moore**.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION NOTICES

By leave and pursuant to resolution the Speaker identified that General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) Nos 472, 475 to 481, 483, 485 to 491, 493, 495, 497, 499, 501, 504, 505, 507 to 512, 514 to 516, 518 to 523, 525 to 534, 537 to 547, 549 to 563, 565 to 577, 579, 581 to 587, 589, 591 to 593 and 595 to 597 had been reclassified as General Business (Community Recognition Notices).

Question—That the following motions given by the members as indicated pursuant to notice be formally agreed to—proposed.

TAHLIA TUPAEA SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates 14 year old Tahlia TuPaea of Glenmore Park who was recently selected in the School Sport Australian Open Girls Basketball team to tour Texas and Arizona in 2011.
- (2) Notes that all other team members are aged 17 and above.
- (3) Congratulates Tahlia on her other sporting achievements, including joining the WNBL Sydney University Flames Academy, selection to the NSW Metro team that won gold at the Pacific Coast Slam and bronze in the under 16 National Championships.

SOUL CAFE AND WALLSEND BAPTIST CHURCH

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House:

- (1) Thanks the volunteers from Soul Cafe and Wallsend Baptist Church who prepare and serve free meals at the Church for disadvantaged members of the Wallsend community every Monday and Thursday.
- (2) Notes the service provides meals for different people in the community, including those who are homeless, having financial difficulties, and seniors, and feeds over 40 people each session.
- (3) Commends Phil Skinner of Wallsend Baptist Church for his efforts and initiative.

MULTICULTURAL CELEBRATION DAY

Mr GARETH WARD—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Jan Frikken on organising the 5th Annual Multicultural Celebration Day 2011 held at Bomaderry on 18 September 2011.
- (2) Notes the event also celebrates the International Day of Peace.
- (3) Acknowledges the financial support of Shoalhaven City Council for this project.
- (4) Recognises the tireless efforts of the Illawarra Multicultural Services and Shoalhaven Multicultural Group.

MAMRE HOMESTEAD 100 MILE DINNER

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Mamre Homestead in St Marys on hosting the third annual 100 Mile Dinner on 29 October 2011 and as a part of the Crave Sydney International Food Festival.
- (2) Commends Mamre Homestead for demonstrating leadership in sustainable food practices with a menu of fine food.

- (3) Encourages food lovers to support Mamre Homestead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by selecting food within a limited geographical area.
- (4) Thanks Costa Georgiadis of Costa's Garden Odyssey on SBS and Simon Marnie of ABC Radio for their support in hosting the third annual 100 Mile Dinner.

ILLAWARRA DIGGERS REST HOME

Mr RYAN PARK—That this House:

- (1) Notes that the Illawarra Diggers Rest Home in the Keira electorate has been providing aged care to veterans, their families and the broader community for 65 years.
- (2) Congratulates the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Rex Leighton, Chairman, Mr Barry Glover and the staff, executive and Board for their commitment to aged care in the region.
- (3) Congratulates the RSL Sub Branches and Women's Auxiliaries of the Central Southern and Southern Metropolitan regions for their ongoing support of this facility.

PARTNER HOUSING AUSTRALASIA

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Partner Housing Australasia for the success of its fundraising activities held on 8 October 2011.
- (2) Acknowledges the work done by Peter Sheldon and the Board of Partner Housing Australasia in assisting individuals with accommodation.
- (3) Notes the next dwelling to be built is at Tahmoor.

JOEL HERBERT

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House congratulates Joel Herbert of Elmore Vale, on his selection as a ball boy at the Davis Cup World Group play-off tie between Australia and Switzerland from 16 to 18 September 2011.

KIAMA REGIONAL WINE SHOW

Mr GARETH WARD—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Chairman John Kelly and his committee members on organising the 6th Annual Kiama Regional Wine Show on 23 and 24 September 2011.
- (2) Recognises the success of local wineries Coolangatta Estate and Tertini Wines in winning major Gold Medal awards.
- (3) Acknowledges the support of Kiama Municipal Council and the host of local businesses who sponsored the show.

BANKS PUBLIC SCHOOL TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Banks Public School, St Clair, on its 25th Anniversary and on the opening of the new classrooms and upgraded library.
- (2) Commends school captains Brayden Fisher and Synthia Shin for their introduction to the anniversary celebrations.
- (3) Congratulates the School Choir on its performance at the celebrations.

CAMBEWARRA PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr GARETH WARD—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Cambewarra Public School on receiving the award for Best New School at the Wakakirri story and dance competition held at the Entertainment Centre in Wollongong on 4 August 2011.
- (2) Acknowledges the Director Trent Burns.
- (3) Notes the performances of 60 students and 17 backstage crew from the Cambewarra Public School during their dance production based on the children's book 'Dancing the Boom Cha Cha Boogie'.
- (4) Commends the school on its outstanding achievement in their first year involved in the competition.

REGAL BY THE LAKE FILM FESTIVAL

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House congratulates the fundraising efforts of the hard working Friends of the Regal Cinema Group, in partnership with Lake Macquarie City Council, on conducting the 2011 film festival at Lake Macquarie Performing Arts Centre.

TRIBUTE TO MR BILL BALL

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Recognises the dedicated and selfless service of over 50 years by Mr Bill Ball in his promotion and advocacy of cricket in Western Sydney.
- (2) Thanks his family, Penrith District Grade Cricket Club and Penrith City Council in their commitment to name a cricket oval in St Marys the Bill Ball Oval.
- (3) Encourages all sports participants who use Bill Ball Oval to learn of the great service and contribution of Mr Bill Ball to the community including his legacy for cricket.

INDIGENOUS APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR THOMAS LIBBESSON

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House congratulates the achievements of Thomas Libbesson, Elmore Vale, on winning the indigenous apprentice of the year at the NSW Group Training Awards and on achieving outstanding academic results throughout his study for the Certificate III in construction carpentry.

PICTON SHOW

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Acknowledge the success of Picton Show held on 8 and 9 October 2011.
- (2) Acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the organising committee, in particular President Alex Apps and his wife Gale Apps.
- (3) Notes the importance of such rural events to promote local produce, agricultural practices and businesses.

PENRITH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL NATIONAL CHEMISTRY COMPETITION ACHIEVEMENTS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Penrith Christian School chemistry students on their success in the National Chemistry Competition.
- (2) Notes that 17 students from the Penrith Christian School placed in the top 40 per cent of the competition.
- (3) Congratulates Christina Petherick, who scored 100 per cent in the test.
- (4) Congratulates Christina Petherick's parents, for their encouragement and support.
- (5) Thanks Science Coordinator Denise Bailey and the other science teachers for their teaching and inspiration to these students.

FOOTBALLER WILLIAM MILLER

Mr GARETH WARD—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates William Miller of Berry who was recently selected in both the Australian Schoolboys Rugby Union side and the Australian Under 18 Seven-A-Side Rugby Union team.
- (2) Acknowledges William's rugby prowess and talent.
- (3) Wishes William all the best of success in these two Australian teams and his rugby career.

STEPH'S HAIR STUDIO

Mr GARETH WARD—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Steph's Hair Studio in Meroo Meadow on winning the best senior hairdresser award at the recently held NSW International Hairstylists Society competition.
- (2) Congratulates those staff members who also won a number of prestigious awards at this competition.
- (3) Extends our best wishes to all the staff at Steph's Hair Studio for the National International Hairstylists Society competition finals to be held in Melbourne in October 2011.

MACARTHUR REGION MG MY GATEWAY APPRENTICE AND TRAINEE AWARDS

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the presentation of MG My Gateway Apprentice and Trainee Awards for the Macarthur region on 7 October 2011.

- (2) Congratulates the five Wollondilly Shire Council staff nominated and notes that council staff have performed well at the awards over the past two years.
- (3) Congratulates Melissa Taylor on winning the Local Government Trainee of the Year Award and Amanda Irvine for winning the Trainee of the Year Award.

CAMDEN LOCAL AREA COMMAND

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Camden Local Area Command that services the Wollondilly electorate on the successful launch of the Camden LAC Facebook page and the Eyewatch program.
- (2) Notes that this will allow residents to participate in crime prevention activities to benefit community safety.
- (3) Thanks Crime Prevention Officer Senior Constable Christine Millan for her support in policing the Wollondilly electorate.
- (4) Acknowledges the work done by the Local Area Command in its services to the Wollondilly electorate.

MOTOCROSS CHAMPION MEGHAN RUTLEDGE

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates 15-year-old Meghan Rutledge of Picton on being crowned the senior women's Australian champion in motocross.
- (2) Acknowledges the great success that Meghan has had in winning previous events.
- (3) Notes that Meghan will now be competing against the under 19 boys in the Australasian Supercross Championships in Campbelltown on 5 November 2011.

MENANGLE HERITAGE PRESERVATION

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Wollondilly Shire Council on taking the first step to preserve Menangle's heritage after allocating more than \$11,000 to fund a heritage report on the town and its surroundings.
- (2) Acknowledges the good work done by the Menangle Community Association in advocating and supporting the heritage town of Menangle in the Wollondilly electorate.
- (3) Notes Menangle was a leader and innovator of Australian agriculture with firsts in wool, cattle, dairying, wheat, fruit and wine.

POLIO SURVIVORS

Mr GARETH WARD—That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges that polio survivors continue to be the single largest disability group in Australia, numbering in the tens of thousands.
- (2) Notes that this number includes those who contracted polio in Australia during the epidemics last century, as well as young polio survivors who have migrated from countries where polio is still prevalent or only recently eradicated.
- (3) Notes that the needs of polio survivors have become a lower priority with successful vaccination programs but as sufferers age chronic sufferers will become a greater concern.
- (4) Recognises the wide variety of symptoms of the late effects of polio.
- (5) Notes over the last 20 years polio survivors have established State-based post-polio organisations, providing information and support for fellow survivors, run by polio volunteers who themselves are experiencing increased disability and decreased mobility.
- (6) Calls on the Federal Department of Health and Ageing to allocate specific funding to support post-polio survivors and to Polio Australia as a matter of urgency.

PENRITH PANTHERS BMX CLUB

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the performance of Penrith Panthers BMX riders at the New South Wales Championships held on 1 to 3 October 2011.
- (2) Congratulates Nicole Docherty (2nd, AA Ladies), Jordan Lecher (1st, 15 Boys) and Chelsea Boylan (2nd, 11-12 Cruiser Girls).

- (3) Commends President Lynne Docherty and the management committee of the Penrith BMX Club for their dedicated and passionate drive to see BMX sport grow and flourish in western Sydney.

MANUFACTURING EDUCATION PROGRAM

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House congratulates Regional Development Australia and leading manufacturers Varley Engineering, Ampcontrol, BAE Systems and Forgacs along with local schools on working together to open up career opportunities for local students through the Manufacturing Education Program.

VARIETY BASH

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS—That this House notes the efforts of Camden Haven residents Robert Dwyer, Wayne Poll, John Skyes and Robert Plante in raising more than \$10,000 in the 2011 Variety Bash.

SHELLHARBOUR UNDER 12 FIRST DIVISION FOOTBALL TEAM

Ms ANNA WATSON—That this House congratulates Shellharbour under 12 first division football team on reaching the final 20 in the Junior Masters Australian Competition.

MICHELLE ARENTZ ART EXHIBITION

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Michelle Arentz on the opening of her art exhibition "From Campbell Town to Campbelltown" and encourages people to attend the exhibition.
- (2) Notes that the exhibition is a collection of drawings and paintings of the history of Campbelltown's architecture.
- (3) Notes that Michelle Arentz's work has featured in many competitions, and that she was a finalist in the 2008 and 2009 Fisher's Ghost Art Award.

PALLIATIVE CARE NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr RICHARD AMERY—That this House:

- (1) Notes that Palliative Care New South Wales is the peak organisation in this State representing palliative care providers.
- (2) Notes that the organisation was established in 1981 when palliative care services started to develop in New South Wales.
- (3) Notes the organisation operates to promote the access of every person to quality care at the end of life.

LIONS CLUBS

Mr MARK COURE—That this House:

- (1) Notes the contribution made by local Lions clubs as volunteer organisations in our communities.
- (2) Notes that Lions clubs around the world have a membership of 1,368,683 people committed to making a positive contribution to their communities.
- (3) Commends the Lugarno Lions club for the festival which was held on 18 September 2011, an event attended by thousands of people supporting community groups and charitable causes.

CAMDEN ORDER OF THE OLD BASTARDS

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Camden branch of the Order of the Old Bastards who raise money for ill children in hospital.
- (2) Acknowledges that this organisation is made up of community-minded people.
- (3) Acknowledges that with the humble sausage barbeque they have managed to raise over \$10,000.

JOHN HUNTER HOSPITAL VETERAN VOLUNTEERS

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House:

- (1) Commends all the veteran volunteers for their continued support and work at John Hunter Hospital.
- (2) Notes that the veteran volunteers are a vital part of the team at the hospital committed to their volunteer work.
- (3) Notes that one volunteer, Pat Fields, recently celebrated her 80th birthday.

ANTI-BULLYING ADVOCATE LENORE FLANAGAN

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Lenore Flanagan from Glenmore Park on the establishment of her website Bullied Kids Have Voices, which is a safe forum for children who are victims of bullying to express their feelings and share stories.

- (2) Commends Ms Flanagan for her innovative idea to help combat the problem of bullying in schools.

PORT MACQUARIE ZONTA CLUB

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS—That this House acknowledges the ongoing work of Zonta in Port Macquarie in advancing the status of women in the Hastings area and wishes the organisation well for its annual conference in October 2011.

BMX RIDER KYLE HOGAN

Ms ANNA WATSON—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Kyle Hogan on his recent achievement in the 15 boys division of the BMX State titles held on 1 to 3 October 2011.
- (2) Commends Kyle Hogan for his success in BMX and for qualifying to compete in the Australian titles.

COUNCILLOR KEN HALSTEAD RE-ELECTION

Mr GARETH WARD—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Councillor Ken Halstead on recently being re-elected Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire Council for a second term and Councillor Larry Whipper on being elected Deputy Mayor.
- (2) Commends Councillor Halstead for continuing to deliver outcomes in the best interests of Wingecarribee Shire.

OZHARVEST NEWCASTLE

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House:

- (1) Commends the good works of Ozharvest Newcastle for providing 300,000 meals to disadvantaged Hunter residents since its formation a year ago.
- (2) Notes the generous help and donation from the nib foundation, and the commitment of many volunteers and supporters.

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Recognises and commends all Wollondilly students for their hard work in preparing for the forthcoming Higher School Certificate [HSC] exams.
- (2) Acknowledges the great work and commitment of the teachers and support staff at all schools in the Wollondilly electorate.
- (3) Wishes all HSC students success in their exams, and in achieving their aspirations for the future.

SPEECHCRAFT COURSE

Mr MARK COURE—That this House:

- (1) Notes the commitment of many organisations to promoting multiculturalism and opportunity for migrants to fully involve themselves in our community, both socially and economically.
- (2) Congratulates Pole Depot and Guardian Funerals on establishing the "speechcraft" course, designed to teach migrants confidence in public speaking and to enhance English language skills.
- (3) Commends the students who participated in the first course which concluded with an awards ceremony on 6 October 2011.
- (4) Commends the students who are participating in the second course, commencing on 7 October and is being run by St George Migrant Resource Centre and Guardian Funerals.

CAMDEN CARP-A-THON FISHING COMPETITION

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Camden Councillor David Funnell on organising the annual competition "Carp-a-thon" fishing competition in Camden dams.
- (2) Notes that the 2011 event attracted over 100 participants and families in the sport of fishing.
- (3) Acknowledges the initiative to clean up dams and alleviate the problem that carp cause.

EUREKA PRIZE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH FINALIST PROFESSOR CHRIS LEVI

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House congratulates Professor Chris Levi, named as a finalist in the Australian Museum's Jamie Callachor Eureka Prize for Medical Research.

PENEFRANCIA FESTIVAL

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Notes that the Filipino community celebrates the Penefrancia Festival each September.
- (2) Congratulates the Australian devotees of Our Lady of Penefrancia, including Jun Relunia and Father Chris De Souza for of St Nicolas of Myra Church parish on organising the festival activities in Sydney over the past five years.

"CALL ME" CAMPAIGN

Ms NOREEN HAY—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Wollongong Police and the University of Wollongong on the "Call Me" campaign to raise awareness of personal safety.
- (2) Notes the campaign is to raise awareness of the need for safety both on and off the university campus, to protect personal belongings and to encourage communication with police.
- (3) Recognises the contribution of students and police in the development of the project and campaign.

EGGTOBER FOUNDATION AND LYNDIA CHAMBERLAIN

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Lyndia Chamberlain on establishing the Eggtober Foundation to raise awareness of gynaecological cancer.
- (2) Notes the fundraising event to be held on 29 October 2011 to raise money for medical equipment at Liverpool Hospital.

ST GEORGE CHARITY BALL

Mr MARK COURE—That this House:

- (1) Notes the contribution of many business organisations to charitable groups in our community.
- (2) Congratulates the organising committee of the St George Charity Ball held on 17 September 2011, which raised funds for the St George Hospital.
- (3) Encourages all members of our community to become involved in philanthropic and charitable works.

PORT KEMBLA MARINE RESCUE

Ms NOREEN HAY—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Marine Rescue of Port Kembla Search and Rescue base on its swift action when a yacht capsized off Bellambi Reef during the Cruising Yacht Club's annual Sydney to Flinders Islet race.
- (2) Commends the NSW Police Marine Area Command for its participation in the successful rescue of the vessel and 14 crew.
- (3) Acknowledges the outstanding work undertaken by all emergency service personnel in the Illawarra.

COUNCILLOR SANDRA MCCARTHY RE-ELECTION

Mr GARETH WARD—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Councillor Sandra McCarthy on recently being re-elected as Mayor of Kiama Municipal Council for a record twelfth term and Councillor Brian Petschler on being elected Deputy Mayor.
- (2) Commends Councillor McCarthy for continuing to deliver outcomes in the best interests of the Kiama municipality.

STROKE SPECIALIST DR LONGTING LIN

Ms SONIA HORNER—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the John Hunter Hospital, the University of Newcastle and the Hunter Medical Research Institute on their initiatives to exchange ideas between stroke specialists.
- (2) Commends Dr Longting Lin of China whilst on placement in the Hunter for her work in regard to the area of clinical methods and advanced imaging technology, and for sharing her knowledge and use of acupuncture in the rehabilitation of stroke patients.

PAWS IN THE PARK FUN DAY

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Camden Council on organising the Paws in the Park fun day to be held on 23 October 2011, in particular, the organising committee on its hard work on this inaugural event.
- (2) Recognises the Camden Council's initiative to raise awareness of the need for responsible animal ownership and extends best wishes for the day.

ST JOHN AMBULANCE

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT—That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the establishment of the Parliamentary Auxiliary of the St John Ambulance and looks forward to the collaboration between the St John Ambulance (New South Wales) and the Parliament through the new auxiliary.
- (2) Commends St John Ambulance Australia for its contribution to our community for over 125 years, currently through over 12,000 volunteers.

LUGARNO PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Mr MARK COURE—That this House notes the work done by the Lugarno Progress Association in supporting the community through important local projects and congratulates Joan Curtis on her leadership and contribution to the association.

PICTON COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Picton branch of the Country Women's Association, including its president Tracey Robinson, in the launch of the second CWA cookbook.
- (2) Acknowledges the good work and community spirit that the Country Women's Association provides the Wollondilly electorate.
- (3) Notes that the Picton branch will be celebrating its first anniversary on 23 October 2011.

ST GEORGE DISTRICT ATHLETIC CLUB NINETIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK COURE—That this House:

- (1) Notes the importance of promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyles in our community.
- (2) Congratulates the St George District Athletic Club on its recent 90th anniversary celebrated at a dinner on 8 October 2011.
- (3) Looks forward to many more successful years of the St George Club in promoting and supporting athletics in the local community.

DRIVES FOR LEARNERS IN WOLLONDILLY INITIATIVE

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Wollondilly Shire Council on its initiative for the "Drives for Learners in Wollondilly" which provides a logbook run around Wollondilly roads.
- (2) Acknowledges Leanne Ledwidge, Road Safety Officer, and her colleagues in the community services section at Wollondilly Shire Council for their hard work in providing a safe alternative for younger drivers.
- (3) Notes that the next drive will be on 13 November 2011.

ST CHARBEL'S COLLEGE, PUNCHBOWL

Mr MARK COURE—That this House:

- (1) Notes the importance of a safe and positive learning environment to provide the best educational experience for students.
- (2) Congratulates St Charbel's College, Punchbowl, on the opening of the new multipurpose hall and the Creative Arts Exhibition on 23 September 2011, and extends best wishes to the staff and students of St Charbel's for their future success.

CONSTABLES KRISTAL MATHEWS AND MATTHEW HANLY

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Constable Kristal Mathews and Constable Matthew Hanly who recently dived into the Georges River during wild weather to save three teenagers who could not swim.
- (2) Acknowledges all police who put their lives on the line on a daily basis and thanks them for their service.

DHARAWAL NATIONAL PARK

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the importance of the creation of the Dharawal National Park and looks forward to the dedication of the national park later in 2011.
- (2) Commends local community groups, including the Macarthur Bushwalkers, the National Parks Association and Rivers SOS, as well as *Macarthur Advertiser* and its editor Jeff McGill, on their strong advocacy for the creation of the national park.
- (3) Notes that over 2,000 upland swamps will be protected.

RURAL FIRE SERVICE LONG SERVICE MEDAL RECIPIENT STEPHEN WEYMAN

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Stephen Weyman, of Orchard Hills, on being awarded the NSW Rural Fire Service Medal for long service, acknowledging 40 years of service.
- (2) Congratulates Mr Weyman on his many other awards including his life membership of the Orchard Hills Rural Fire Service, the Centenary Medal and the National Medal for Service with a 35 year clasp.
- (3) Acknowledges the contribution made by Mr Weyman to the Rural Fire Service in Western Sydney, including his key role in bringing together the Penrith, Blacktown and Fairfield districts to form the Cumberland Zone.

MCKELL AWARD RECIPIENT BOB FULTON

Mr RYAN PARK—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Bob Fulton, of the Thirroul branch, on being awarded the prestigious McKell Award for his service to the Australian Labor Party.
- (2) Recognises the service over many years that Bob Fulton has given both the Australian Labor Party and the Northern Illawarra community.

WARRAGAMBA-SILVERDALE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Warragamba Silverdale Neighbourhood Centre Incorporated on its success in staging "Dam Fest" at Warragamba on 16 October 2011.
- (2) Acknowledges the importance of this event for tourism in Warragamba and its surrounds.

TRESILLIAN NEPEAN FUNDRAISING MOVIE NIGHT

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Rachel Suesskow and Jessica Pease from Glenmore Park on their fundraising efforts for Tresillian Nepean.
- (2) Acknowledges the success of their fundraising movie night which raised \$715 towards equipment.

PENRITH PHANTOMS ICE HOCKEY TEAM

Mr STUART AYRES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Penrith Phantoms on its success at the 2011 State Ice Hockey Senior Championships.
- (2) Recognises the contributions made by Chris Bell, Rob Gray, Frank Corby, George Kozumplik and Bill Kourelakos to the ongoing success and operation of the club.

CAMPBELLTOWN QUOTA CLUB FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Quota Club of Campbelltown on its 50th anniversary and acknowledges its support of the community and in particular helping people in need.
- (2) Notes the club members serve the community in three distinct areas of disadvantage: women and children; hearing and speech; and community service.
- (3) Acknowledges President Lisa Harvey of Bradbury and other members Barbara Martyn, Jan Wallace and Barbara Rochaix for their service to the club.
- (4) Wishes the club all the best over the next 50 years.

COLYTON LEARNING COMMUNITY SHOWCASE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the work of Mrs Collette Rankine, of St Marys Public School, and other committee members in coordinating the Colyton Learning Community Showcase 2011, which included dance, drama and choir performances.
- (2) Congratulates Colyton High School Trade School, St Marys Public School, Bennett Road Public School, Colyton Public School, St Marys South Public School and Oxley Park Public School on their participation in the Showcase.

PEDAL AGAINST POVERTY

Mr GLENN BROOKES—That this House:

- (1) Commends Pedal Against Poverty for their 24-hour charity event held on 15 and 16 October 2011.
- (2) Notes the efforts of the many volunteers who made Pedal Against Poverty a great success.
- (3) Congratulates Reverend Matthew Le Claire, Chief Executive Officer, on organising the 2011 and previous years' events.
- (4) Acknowledges the work undertaken by organisations like Pedal Against Poverty to raise funds and increase awareness about people who are disadvantaged by poverty.
- (5) Encourages the Government and all members of the community to support efforts to reduce poverty in Australia and worldwide.

PENRITH OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE

Mr STUART AYRES—That this House:

- (1) Commends the Penrith Outback Steakhouse restaurant for their support of victims of domestic violence and their children by holding its Christmas lunch in conjunction with the Nepean Domestic Violence Network.
- (2) Extends our encouragement to members of the business community who provide in-kind, volunteer and financial support to community services across Penrith.

SHERWOOD HILLS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates senior students from Sherwood Hills Christian School, Bradbury, on their outstanding community service.
- (2) Notes such community service includes six weekly visits to elderly residents of the Illawarra Retirement Trust Macarthur Care Centre to help residents create memory books and perform musical items.

SCHOOLS FIRST PROGRAM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Notes that the National Australia Bank Schools First is a national award program that encourages schools to partner with their community to make a significant difference to outcomes for young people.
- (2) Congratulates St Clair High School students and Principal Chris Presland on winning a seed funding award of \$25,000 for their school-community partnership with Worley Parsons to support Aboriginal students.
- (3) Thanks NAB, the Foundation for Young Australians and the Australian Council for Educational Research for the program that encourages engagement with learning and stronger school-community partnerships.

COMMUNITY LINKS WOLLONDILLY

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Community Links Wollondilly on its successful funding application for a local Aboriginal project.
- (2) Thanks and notes the work that Community Links Wollondilly provides to the community of Wollondilly.
- (3) Acknowledges the support of the Government in providing \$150,000 for the local Aboriginal project, Culture Connect.

PHOTOGRAPHY, ART, LITERATURE AND MUSIC AWARDS FINALIST EMILY GITTOES

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House congratulates Emily Gittoes from Glenmore Park on being named a finalist in the University of Sydney's Photography, Art, Literature and Music [PALM] Awards.

BAULKHAM HILLS AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT—That this House:

- (1) Recognises the success of the Baulkham Hills Australian Football Club in the 2011 season.
- (2) Congratulates the 180 local Auskick players on receiving their awards.
- (3) Notes the enthusiasm of local AFL participants in engaging with the new Greater Western Giants, as they prepare for entrance into the Australian Football League.

MUSIC: COUNT US IN PROGRAM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Surveyors Creek Public School, Oxley Park Public School, St Clair Public School and St Marys South Public School for participating in the 2011 'Music: Count Us In' program.
- (2) Commends these schools on their commitment to music education and involvement in a national awareness campaign.

SINGER CHRISTIE LAMB

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House congratulates Christie Lamb on her singing career and first recording to be released by the end of 2011.

DHARAWAL NATIONAL PARK

Mr MARK COURE—That this House commends Save Dharawal, Go River and the Georges River Alliance along with Anne Wagstaf, Brian Shaw and Sharyn Cullis, for their strong advocacy for the creation of the Dharawal National Park.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN—That this House congratulates the winners of the 2011 Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards and notes the contributions of the winners to the job creation and the provision of outstanding goods and services in the Sutherland Shire.

RENAE LAWRENCE COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS—That this House acknowledges the community work of Renae Lawrence of St Paul's High School, Port Macquarie, and congratulates her on being presented with a Duke of Edinburgh Award by the Governor of New South Wales, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, AC, CVO.

WOMEN IN LEAGUE AND YVONNE PURTELL

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Yvonne Purtell, of Mulgoa, manager of the Penrith and District Junior League, on her nomination for the Women in League 'One Community Volunteer of the Year Award'.
- (2) Commends Women in League for providing recognition for women contributing to their communities.

PICTON COMMUNITY BANK

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Wollondilly community on the opening of the Picton Community Bank.
- (2) Notes the Wollondilly public looks forward to the bank's contribution to the fabric of the community.

SAVOUR AUSTRALIA RESTAURANT AND CATERING AWARDS

Mr MARK COURE—That this House:

- (1) Notes the important role played by the restaurants and caterers as local businesses and employers.
- (2) Congratulates all winners at the Savour Australia Restaurant and Catering Awards for Excellence held on 19 September 2011.
- (3) Congratulates the Penshurst Italian restaurant on receiving an award for excellent cuisine and outstanding service.

MACCABI HAKOAH JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Maccabi Hakoah Junior Football Club and award winners at the presentation on 16 October 2011 for an outstanding 2011 season.

- (2) Notes that the Maccabi Hakoah Junior Football Club is one of the largest junior sport clubs in the Eastern Suburbs, and the largest Jewish sporting club in Australia.
- (3) Extends to all players, volunteers and parents best wishes for the 2012 season.

PENRITH AND LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS TOURISM

Mr STUART AYRES—That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the Government's commitment to events, tourism and the arts across Penrith and the lower Blue Mountains.
- (2) Notes the integral role of Ron Curran of the Glenbrook Cinema, Jill Hogwood and the management committee at the Glenbrook Players Theatre Society and the Blue Mountains City Council in sustaining the Glenbrook Cinema building as a tourist attraction.

AQUA SCULPTURE PUBLIC ARTWORKS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Port Macquarie-Hastings Council for organising the outstanding display of Aqua Sculpture public art works on Town Green, Port Macquarie to celebrate National Water Week.
- (2) Commends the Outcomes Group members, Dr Jenny Hutchison, Jo Davidson, Jenny Hooper, Kim Staples and Sheree Munday.

RANDWICK BOYS HIGH SCHOOL

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the recently elected captains, prefects, School Representative Council members and house captains of Randwick Boys High School.
- (2) Wishes all leaders the very best for their terms.

ALICE SPRUIT 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr MARK COURE—That this House:

- (1) Notes the recent 100th birthday of Alice Spruit, of the Oatley electorate.
- (2) Congratulates Pole Depot and the organisers of Alice's birthday party held on 14 September 2011.
- (3) Looks forward to celebrating future birthdays with Alice.
- (4) Congratulates all of those who have made an outstanding contribution to their communities over many years.

KINGSWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

Mr STUART AYRES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Shannon Thompson and the Kingswood High School community on the establishment of two food and craft markets serving the residents of Kingswood.
- (2) Notes the other efforts underway at Kingswood High School to engage with the full spectrum of the local community, including their creative partnership with the Penrith Valley Men's Shed.
- (3) Encourages all schools across New South Wales to take part in projects to increase engagement with the community and maximise the utilisation of school grounds outside of school hours.

TRIBUTE TO MARY 'NANCY' RACKLYEFT

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Pay respect to Mary 'Nancy' Racklyeft, of Buxton, who passed away on 24 August 2011.
- (2) Notes that Mary Racklyeft lived in Buxton for 85 years, attended Buxton Public School and was involved with Red Cross and the Country Women's Association.
- (3) Acknowledges the great community service that she provided to Buxton and the Wollondilly region.

SNOWY SCHEME MUSEUM

Mr RICHARD AMERY—That this House notes:

- (1) That the Snowy Scheme Museum at Adaminaby was opened on 15 October 2011.
- (2) The significance of the museum as a historic record of the construction of the Snowy Hydro Electric Scheme.
- (3) That the museum also tells the role of post-World War II migrants in the development of one of Australia's greatest engineering feats.

TRIBUTE TO DR MALCOLM BORLAND, AM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Dr Malcolm Borland, AM, on his receipt of the Honoured Citizen of the City of Penrith Award.
- (2) Thanks Penrith City Council and in particular, Councillor Ross Fowler, OAM, for the initiative and commitment to see the award bestowed on a deserving citizen.
- (3) Thanks Dr Malcolm Borland for his drive in seeing the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre built in Penrith.
- (4) Sincerely thanks Dr Borland for his broader service to the community, including as President of the Australian Foundation for Disability since 1974, making him the longest serving president of any charity in Australia.

BRISBANE WATER OYSTER FESTIVAL

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN—That this House acknowledges the Brisbane Water Oyster Festival for showcasing the produce of Brisbane Water, Broken Bay and Hawkesbury River oyster farmers.

KOGARAH COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr MARK COURE—That this House:

- (1) Notes the important role that Kogarah Community Services plays in providing services to seniors including activities and social interaction in the St George area.
- (2) Commends the collaborative work done with local migrants studying English to produce a book of residents' stories to celebrate our multicultural community, which was published on 19 September 2011.
- (3) Looks forward to future projects to promote social cohesion, multiculturalism and positive interaction between older citizens and new migrants.

DILLY WANDERER MOBILE PRESCHOOL AND ROB MORAN

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the efforts of Rob Moran and the residents of Wollondilly involved in the 'Dilly Wanderer'.
- (2) Thanks those involved in bringing this mobile preschool service to the children of Wollondilly.
- (3) Acknowledges the great work done by Rob Moran in supporting the families of Wollondilly.

CARER ASSIST TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Mr GLENN BROOKES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Carer Assist, a branch of the Schizophrenia Fellowship, for providing 25 years of service within the Bankstown Local Government Area.
- (2) Notes the invaluable service provided by Carer Assist to carers and families of those suffering with a mental illness or other disability.
- (3) Notes that Carer Assist will be celebrating their 25th anniversary on 25 October 2011.
- (4) Extends its thanks to Carer Assist and best wishes for another 25 years serving our community.

PEAKHURST RETIREMENT VILLAGE

Mr MARK COURE—That this House congratulates the Peakhurst Retirement Village on the outstanding quality of service provided to older residents in the Oatley community over the last 30 years.

WOLLONDILLY SENIORS ADVISORY GROUP

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Wollondilly Seniors Advisory Group on receiving a grant of \$10,000 to help seniors identify problems that could be affecting their wellbeing.
- (2) Notes that the grant will enable seniors to increase awareness of important issues and develop a range of activities to reduce social isolation and strengthen community engagement and support.

MAMRE HOMESTEAD

Mrs TANYA DAVIES—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Mamre Homestead Chief Executive Officer, Rosemary Bishop, staff and volunteers on the Mamre Harvest Festival on 16 October 2011.

- (2) Notes that Mamre Homestead provides training opportunities, including supported employment programs for people with a disability, "Links to Learning" for school students at risk of not completing school, English language and settlement skills for Sudanese families and the African Employment program.
- (3) Thanks Rosemary Bishop for her leadership and vision that will see Mamre Homestead expand in its assistance to people, sustainable horticultural and dining experiences, sustainable life practices and healthy lifestyles.

RETIREMENT OF TERRY LIDGUARD

Mr GLENN BROOKES—That this House:

- (1) Notes that after 25 years of service, the Principal of the Georges River Grammar School, Mr Terry Lidguard is retiring.
- (2) Congratulates Terry Lidguard for his contribution to both the life of the school and to the community in general.
- (3) Acknowledges the achievements of Georges River Grammar School as an outstanding educational institution with New South Wales.

WOLLONDILLY HERITAGE CENTRE AND MUSEUM

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Thanks Wollondilly Heritage Centre and Museum for offering children who attend schools in Wollondilly and surrounding areas the opportunity to participate in workshops covering life in colonial Australia.
- (2) Notes and commends the Centre and Museum's many volunteers without whom this valuable program would not be able to continue.

WOLLONDILLY LIBRARY

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Wollondilly Library for the assistance it provides to students sitting their Higher School Certificate examination.
- (2) Commends the library in providing a range of resources to assist students with their studies.

MOTORBIKE RACER NICKY DILES

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates motorbike racer Nicky Diles, of Thirlmere, who will race in the 125cc class at the Australian Superbike Championships, at Phillip Island in November 2011.
- (2) Notes that he is currently ranked second in Australia.
- (3) Wishes him every success in representing New South Wales at these championships.

PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES ABORIGINAL ART PRIZE WINNER LEANNE TOBIN

Mrs ROZA SAGE—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Leanne Tobin, of Springwood, for winning the Parliament of New South Wales Aboriginal Art Prize 2011 with her work titled "Defending Country."
- (2) Acknowledges Leanne as an outstanding ambassador for the Darug people with her work in the community especially in the local schools.

PICTON BOWLING CLUB AND SETH MASON

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the women of Picton Bowling Club for their generosity in supporting Seth Mason who was diagnosed with T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in 2010.
- (2) Thanks Picton Bowling Club for donating \$400 to provide Seth with a scooter that will assist him.
- (3) Notes the struggle that many families, children and adults face with leukaemia in New South Wales and notes the community support that local organisations in Wollondilly provide to individuals in these circumstances.

GILAD SHALIT

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON—That this House:

- (1) Welcomes the recent release of Gilad Shalit to Israel and to his family.
- (2) Congratulates the NSW Jewish community for strongly advocating for Mr Shalit's cause and his release.

TRIBUTE TO ALLAN CARRIAGE

Mr JAI ROWELL—That this House:

- (1) Pays respect on the passing on 9 March 2011 of Aboriginal elder Allan Carriage of the Wadi Wadi community.

- (2) Notes Mr Carriage was a strong environmentalist and respected member of the community.
- (3) Notes he is survived by his wife Janet and that the family maintain a website in his honour.

Question put and resolved in the affirmative.

Community recognition notices agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Business Lapsed

General Business Order of the Day (for Bills) No. 1, and General Business Notice of Motion (General Notice) No. 60 lapsed pursuant to Standing Order 105 (3).

CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO BE ACCORDED PRIORITY

Workers Compensation Scheme

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) [3.23 p.m.]: In March 2011 the Liberal Party and The Nationals were elected to fix this State. We were elected to clean up the financial mismanagement of New South Wales and to make New South Wales number one again. That is what we are determined to do in government, even if it means making some tough decisions. I will highlight six reasons why the WorkCover system in New South Wales is broken and needs to be fixed. I will then ask, in establishing priority, why action has not been taken to date by those sitting opposite, those who had the opportunity to do so in government. First, the current WorkCover scheme is in deficit by some \$4.08 billion, which is clearly financially unsustainable. That view has been backed by analysis by WorkCover, by the independent scheme auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers, and by the Auditor-General.

Second, it has been estimated that New South Wales businesses are facing the prospect of immediate increases in premium of 28 per cent unless that deficit is brought under control. The Insurance Council of Australia chief executive officer has backed that analysis and said that we need this reform for WorkCover to remain viable. Third, premiums in New South Wales are already 20 per cent to 60 per cent higher than in Victoria and Queensland. While all of Australia has been affected somewhat by the international climate and investment returns, it is undeniable that the benchmarks set by Victoria and Queensland are very real and relevant to the New South Wales experience.

Fourth, any further increase in premiums in New South Wales would damage not only businesses in New South Wales but also the hundreds of thousands of people who are employed by those businesses, people whose jobs potentially would be threatened if those businesses moved interstate. Fifth, as the issues paper identified, the system, with lots of red tape, is difficult for all participants to navigate. Sixth, and perhaps most importantly, the scheme has lost its focus on returning people to work. It has increasingly led to the emergence of a lump-sum culture, as referred to by experts. The statistics show that injured workers are staying off work for longer, more injured workers are receiving lump-sum benefits than ever before and we are not rehabilitating workers sufficiently. Did the former Minister, the current Leader of the Opposition, have a chance to act? He did not even attend WorkCover meetings as an appointee on the Board of WorkCover and he did not do anything as a Minister in Cabinet. [*Time expired.*]

Minister for Resources and Energy, Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Central Coast

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON (Blacktown—Leader of the Opposition) [3.26 p.m.]: My motion deserves priority because the Premier promised that he would be whiter than white and that he would improve standards of behaviour from his Ministers. Today's performance confirms that there is a putrid stench on the Central Coast, thanks to one of his most senior Government Ministers, the member for Terrigal. The Premier is in on the joke.

Mr Greg Smith: Point of order: My point of order is about impugning the character of a member. The Leader of the Opposition should do that by way of a separate motion and not in this speech. He should be sat down.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member is quite correct. Under Standing Order 73 imputations of improper motives and personal reflections on members in this place are disorderly. I will ask the Leader of the Opposition to sit down if he continues to impute improper motives to Ministers.

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON: It is time for the Minister for Resources and Energy, the member for Terrigal, to make a full and frank statement to the Parliament about his involvement in this sordid affair. My motion deserves priority because today the Minister for Resources and Energy refused to answer questions—something that is unheard of. Normally the Minister talks until his time has lapsed but today he had prepared answers or he referred to his previous answer. My matter deserves priority because a lobbying business has been run out of his office.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the Leader of the Opposition of my previous comments. I expect a point of order to be taken.

Mr Chris Hartcher: Point of order: Because that is a grubby assertion I now exercise my right to demand its withdrawal.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has asked that those comments be withdrawn.

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON: Insofar as they relate, I withdraw them. The member for Terrigal was given the opportunity to answer and he refused.

Mr Brad Hazzard: Point of order: It is always appropriate to look back to wise Labor Speakers.

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

Mr Brad Hazzard: Speaker Ellis indicated that a personal attack is a serious digression and offends against Standing Order 73. The Leader of the Opposition should apologise and withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Order! I referred to Standing Order 73 and I warned the Leader of the Opposition that under the guise of a priority debate he should not be imputing improper motives to other members. The Leader of the Opposition has four seconds remaining in which to conclude his contribution.

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON: Madam Speaker— *[Time expired.]*

Question—That the motion of the member for Davidson be accorded priority—put.

The House divided.

Ayes, 65

Mr Anderson	Mr Fraser	Mr Roberts
Mr Annesley	Mr Gee	Mr Rohan
Mr Aplin	Ms Gibbons	Mr Rowell
Mr Ayres	Ms Goward	Mrs Sage
Mr Baird	Mr Grant	Mr Sidoti
Mr Barilaro	Mr Gulaptis	Mrs Skinner
Mr Bassett	Mr Hartcher	Mr Smith
Mr Baumann	Mr Hazzard	Mr Souris
Ms Berejiklian	Ms Hodgkinson	Mr Speakman
Mr Bromhead	Mr Holstein	Mr Spence
Mr Brookes	Mr Humphries	Mr Stokes
Mr Casuscelli	Mr Issa	Mr Stoner
Mr Conolly	Mr Kean	Mr Toole
Mr Constance	Dr Lee	Mr Torbay
Mr Cornwell	Mr Notley-Smith	Ms Upton
Mr Coure	Mr O'Dea	Mr Ward
Mrs Davies	Mr Owen	Mr Webber
Mr Dominello	Mr Page	Mr R. C. Williams
Mr Doyle	Ms Parker	Mrs Williams
Mr Edwards	Mr Perrottet	<i>Tellers,</i>
Mr Evans	Mr Piccoli	Mr Maguire
Mr Flowers	Mr Provest	Mr J. D. Williams

Noes, 23

Mr Barr	Mr Lalich	Mr Rees
Ms Burney	Mr Lynch	Mr Robertson
Ms Burton	Dr McDonald	Ms Tebbutt
Mr Daley	Ms Mihailuk	Ms Watson
Mr Furolo	Ms Moore	Mr Zangari
Ms Hay	Mr Parker	<i>Tellers,</i>
Ms Hornery	Mrs Perry	Mr Amery
Ms Keneally	Mr Piper	Mr Park

Question resolved in the affirmative.

WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME**Motion Accorded Priority**

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) [3.39 p.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) notes that experts estimate New South Wales employers face workers compensation premium increases of 28 per cent to tackle the \$4 billion deficit;
- (2) notes that New South Wales business groups estimate that New South Wales could lose 12,600 job opportunities if the scheme is not reformed; and
- (3) supports urgent reform of the workers compensation scheme to tackle this crisis.

As I indicated in establishing priority for this motion, New South Wales needs reform to occur and the current Government is determined to deliver that reform, including in the area of workers compensation. Some of this reform is not easy; some of it will affect individuals in our State. However, it is undeniable that, when faced with a clearly unsustainable situation, reform is needed. In New South Wales the workers compensation scheme, or WorkCover scheme, has a deficit of more than \$4 billion. That equates to some \$15,000 per employer or \$1,300 for every single worker covered by the scheme. The growth in the deficit from June 2011 to December 2011 cost New South Wales some \$9 million per day. That deficit is unsustainable and must be addressed.

In the absence of the deficit being brought under control, there would need to be a premium increase on affected businesses in this State of 28 per cent. That has been confirmed by a number of sources—experts such as those in the NSW Business Chamber, who have repeatedly indicated their strong concerns about the current situation. The premiums that apply to New South Wales businesses, businesses that sustain the health of our economy, are currently some 20 per cent to 60 per cent higher than in Victoria and Queensland—States that should be benchmarked with New South Wales in relation to premium levels. In Victoria the average rate is 1.338 per cent and in Queensland it is 1.42 per cent, compared with the average rate in New South Wales of 1.68 per cent. The New South Wales scheme covers three million workers with some 270,000 policies and is certainly one of the nation's most generous benefit schemes and systems. Any further increase in premiums in this State would not only damage New South Wales businesses but also cause them to relocate to States such as Victoria and Queensland, which in turn would mean that we would lose jobs for workers in this State. That is the natural consequence of a competitive environment.

The NSW Business Chamber has estimated that a premium increase of 28 per cent would result in a loss of 12,600 job opportunities from the New South Wales economy. Putting up premiums would be a lose-lose scenario. Perhaps most importantly, we need to focus on workers—getting people back to work through rehabilitation and by giving them incentives to return to a productive environment. Statistics show that injured workers are staying off work longer and are receiving more lump sum benefits than ever before. Why have we not seen action? In February this year Mr McCarthy, the retiring chairman of WorkCover, told the *Sun-Herald* that the situation was due to a combination of factors but primarily the neglect of former Labor finance Ministers Joe Tripodi and Michael Daley—who still sits in this House—who left the scheme's finances in a parlous state. He said:

They just weren't interested and did not listen to my warnings.

We need to act in this area.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) [3.44 p.m.]: I will make a brief contribution to the motion, noting that we are in the midst of a joint select committee inquiry into this matter. Yesterday the Joint Select Committee on the NSW Workers Compensation Scheme met for I think the fourth time. All meetings of the committee to date have been professional and courteous. The members who join me on the committee—the member for Cronulla, the member for Pittwater, the Hon. Adam Searle, the Hon. Trevor Khan, the Hon. Niall Blair, the Hon. Paul Green and the Hon. Robert Borsak—have approached this task in a collegiate and professional manner. As I said, all meetings have been professional and courteous, as was our first public hearing yesterday when witnesses were put under scrutiny—as they should be. It was an illuminating day.

It has been my experience in seven years in this place that sometimes Ministers send backbenchers to the House with prepared speeches that do not do the backbenchers justice. The speech we have just heard from the member for Davidson is a case in point. He has been sucker-punched by the Minister for Finance and Services, the Hon. Greg Pearce, who patently refuses to come out of his cave. He is either in the other place at question time or he is hiding. I cannot remember the last time this man appeared on a television screen. I do not remember the last time this man did a ring around or a stand-up or appeared in the media to undergo any sort of scrutiny whatsoever. That is the sort of Minister who has sent the poor old member for Davidson to give himself an upercut in this most public of forums.

The member for Davidson tried as hard as he could to give six reasons why the WorkCover scheme should be remodelled. Those six reasons were lifted word for word from a document entitled "NSW Workers Compensation Scheme Issues Paper", page 1 of 35. The paper was issued not by WorkCover but by the Minister. What concerns me most about this issues paper is that it has not been the subject of public consultation. For more than a century Labor members and unions, in particular, have worked hard to achieve great strides in the development of workers compensation laws not only in this State but also in this nation, to the extent that Australian workers compensation laws are the envy of working people across the international labour sphere.

If not for the fact that the Minister has been pushed, kicking and screaming, into a proper public examination of the WorkCover scheme, we would have seen the implementation of one of 16 recommendations that have not yet been tested publicly or actuarially by the Minister, who is seeking to ride on the back of Tory ideology to a place where he amends the scheme with no regard for workers. The punctuation mark on his disregard for workers is that he would serve up the tripe in recommendation (1), for example, which says that a key plank of any reforms should be to improve the benefits for severely injured workers and those who he says have an assessed level of whole person impairment of more than 30 per cent.

We heard evidence from lawyers yesterday—it is uncontroverted at this point; I do not want to pre-empt any further evidence that might come before the committee—that there is but a handful of people in New South Wales injured at work who are assessed as having more than 30 per cent impairment. That is the sort of cloak of darkness the Minister wants to bring to his reforms of the WorkCover scheme. Before the last election we warned the voting populace—they did not heed us in March of last year, but they will in due course as this Government continues to conduct itself in the way we said it would—that conservative governments, and the Liberal Party particularly, see people not as individuals with lives and families who need protection and support from government but as commodities. This report punctuates that ideological bent better than anything I could say in this place.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro) [3.49 p.m.]: How ironic to hear the member for Maroubra ask what the Government is going to do. When those opposite were in office and held the reins of this State and of government what did they do? On 19 February this year the ex-chairman of WorkCover, Greg McCarthy, was reported in the *Sun-Herald* as saying:

The 'neglect' of former Labor finance ministers Joe Tripodi and Michael Daley—

the member for Maroubra—the member for middle management—

had left the scheme's finances in a parlous state. They just weren't interested and did not listen to my warnings.

...

I have been constantly ignored.

...

WorkCover's executive management had been given no leadership from the government over the past few years.

In opposition Labor members throw grenades at the Government when they sat on a document, on reports and on the information provided by WorkCover experts that would have resolved the problem. If a government had

been handed a report that said a government entity had a deficit of more than \$4 billion, that the deterioration had started four years previously and that it had increased \$1.7 billion in six months, one would think the alarm bells would have been ringing and immediate action would have been taken. But no, those opposite did not do that—not the member for Maroubra, the then Minister for Finance. Labor did nothing about it; it was too hard. Those opposite put it back in the bottom drawer, in the too-hard basket. They were not interested in trying to resolve an important issue for the workers of this State.

What does it mean when a scheme is in debt for more than \$4 billion? It means that it is financially unsustainable. What about the key issues for the scheme? Will it get workers back to work in a timely manner? It is not financially viable and it is not price competitive with other States. At a time when we need investment in this State—when we must attract businesses and create jobs—we are adding yet another impediment to growth. Under Labor's regime, business was almost priced out of the market completely, with costs 20 per cent to 60 per cent higher than in other States. Most importantly—and it is ironic that Labor members talk about protecting the workers of this State—Labor did nothing to provide a safety net for the long-term permanently impaired. Labor members are all talk. When the member for Maroubra was the responsible Minister, he did nothing. He stuck it in the bottom drawer; it was all too hard. Once again, the Liberal-Nationals Government is back with mop and bucket, cleaning up the mess left by the Labor Party over 16 years.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) [3.52 p.m.]: As I speak today I feel compelled to clear the desk of the drivel uttered by the member for Monaro. This Government's deceit and lies are well and truly entrenched—and we see further evidence of that today. Just as the Government cited a \$4.2 billion black hole that did not exist—Labor left the State with \$1.264 billion in the bank and a triple-A credit rating—it is now claiming a \$4 billion deficit in WorkCover, potentially half of which PricewaterhouseCoopers has suggested might be due to poor investment returns. Apart from the fact that Ministers are lining up for the Independent Commission Against Corruption and failing to cite accurate figures, we see again this Government's failure to follow transparent processes. A parliamentary committee has been established to investigate the WorkCover scheme. I recently attended a hearing of the Committee on the Parliamentary Budgetary Office, which was well and truly stacked.

The Government had the numbers. Members turned up, we went through a process, heard all the evidence and although it suggested A, the net result was B. That turned out to be the contents of a speech given in this House three years ago by the now Minister for Education. So why did we bother going through the committee process? Opposition members wonder why we are bothering with the current process when the committee is clearly stacked. An issues paper was put on the table for the committee to consider. But the issues were not explored, written up or assessed by WorkCover. I wonder why. We will go through this shambolic committee process and the results will be the same. We need to think about the workers who will be impacted. I live in the Hunter Valley, where a number of workers are employed in incredibly dangerous industries. I could tell the House about Mick or Craig or Nick, but I will talk particularly about Mick.

Mick's back is completely ruined, and the injury happened at work. This bloke has a wife and young kids, and he will never work again because he was injured on the job. When we are considering reforming WorkCover we must think about the families that are affected—their houses, their mortgages and what it means for them. We need to understand that this is about people. There is no doubt that Samantha Barlow, the police officer who was bashed on her way to work in Kings Cross, was entitled to support from WorkCover. She worked hard and was able to return to work. My mate Mick, who was a coalminer in the Hunter, will never return to work, but Craig did. Craig worked hard, took two years off work, had a lot of physiotherapy and other treatment, and is now on the management team. There is no doubt that the WorkCover claims management process has some room for movement. The Government would be better off spending its time and energy on that issue rather than just hacking into the workers.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) [3.55 p.m.], in reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Maroubra, Monaro and Cessnock for their contributions to this debate. I truly hope that at last those opposite will recognise the urgent need to reform the workers compensation scheme in New South Wales to tackle what is undoubtedly a crisis situation. The member for Maroubra suggested that the Minister for Finance and Services was in hiding. What an absolute load of rubbish. Apart from the fact that as a member of the other place he obviously cannot come into this Chamber—although I am sure that he is more than happy to participate in a similar debate in the upper House—the Minister released an issues paper. The fact is that a consultative process is underway, including through a parliamentary committee. No decisions have been made by the Government other than that this system needs urgently to be reformed.

The Government has committed to working with employers, peak groups and individuals as well as employee representatives with regard to this desperately needed and overdue reform of the workers compensation scheme. The Government certainly looks forward to the parliamentary committee's report. I welcome the Premier's commitment today to see this reform process through before Parliament rises for the winter recess. Some people may not understand that the premium settings occur at the end of June for the coming year. So we must be able to demonstrate that there is reform to the workers compensation system that warrants premiums not increasing by 28 per cent, or anything like that, for businesses and for employees in New South Wales. It is important this House notes that New South Wales employers will face a 28 per cent increase in premiums to tackle the \$4 billion deficit if action is not taken. If the scheme is not reformed, New South Wales business groups and others will see the loss of up to 12,600 job opportunities.

Then we have the utter hypocrisy of the member for Maroubra, who is in the Chamber. He clearly failed to act as Minister for Finance—as pointed out by the former chair of the WorkCover Authority and as highlighted by the member for Monaro today. The member for Maroubra now serves on a committee where he has an opportunity to do something under the leadership of Minister Pearce and this Government. So let us see him and other members of that committee come back with some sensible reforms. The suggestion by the member for Cessnock that a loss of investment income is not a real loss shows why financial mismanagement was so endemic under those opposite. Certainly there are many case studies that demonstrate that reform needs to occur. We want to focus on looking after people, especially employees, but we have to do it in a sustainable manner.

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

Motion agreed to.

TATTOO PARLOURS BILL 2012

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 9 May 2012.

Mr JOHN FLOWERS (Rockdale) [4.00 p.m.]: I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. I commend the Minister for Fair Trading for introducing this bill, and I acknowledge that it follows other legislation brought forward by this Government to tackle gang crime in New South Wales. The bill creates a licensing and regulatory scheme for the carrying on of body tattooing businesses and the performing of body art tattooing procedures. There have been some unfortunate incidents in Rockdale as well as other electorates in New South Wales. One of the many strengths of this bill is that it breaks the link that exists between organised crime and the tattoo industry. In turn, violence and criminal activity will be considerably diminished in this industry. This will be achieved by establishing a new regulatory scheme for owners, operators and tattooists. As the Minister outlined, the bill provides for a ministerial review after five years from the date of assent. Within 12 months of that five-year period the report will be tabled in the Parliament.

The Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 creates two classes of licence: an operator licence, authorising the licensee to carry on a body art tattooing business at a specific premises; and a tattooist licence, authorising the licensee to perform body art tattooing procedures. An application for a licence is to be made to the director general. The term "director general" means the Commissioner for Fair Trading, Department of Finance and Services, or if no such position exists the Director General of the Department of Finance and Services. The bill provides that a sole operator will require only an operator licence. An application for a licence may not be made by an individual who is under the age of 18 years, an individual who is not an Australian citizen or Australian resident, or an individual who is a controlled member of a declared organisation. To confirm an applicant's identity, an applicant for a licence must consent to having his or her fingerprints and palm prints taken by a police officer. Such measures are important and necessary.

Those applying for an operator licence must also provide the address of the proposed licensed premises, the names and addresses of staff members employed or proposed to be employed at the premises and the details of close associates. A close associate is someone who holds a financial interest or can exercise power in the applicant's business. I mention part 3, division 4, which sets out the special conditions relating to operator licences. These include an inspection of financial records. Financial records must be made available for inspection by an authorised officer at the place at which they are kept at any reasonable time required by the officer by written notice served on the licensee. The bill proposes in division 4 that it is a condition of an

operator licence that the licensee must give written notice to the director general of a change in any of the particulars in respect of a licence, including any change of residential address by the licensee and any change in the particulars relating to the close associates of the licensee, and of the appropriate new particulars, within 14 business days of the change occurring.

As for staff members, the licensee must, within 20 business days after a change in staff employment, give written notice to the director general of that change. A staff member is anyone employed at the licensed premises. The licensee must ensure that a copy of the licence is conspicuously displayed at the licensed premises and that the licence number is included in any advertisement. The maximum penalty for an operator who operates a body art tattooing business without an operator licence is 100 penalty units, which is currently \$11,000 in the case of a corporation and 50 penalty units in any other case. This requirement also carries a continuing offence provision. As such, the penalty will continue to increase each day by 100 penalty units for a corporation for as long as the offence continues. In any other case the penalty will increase by 50 penalty units for as long as the offence continues.

The Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 also provides for police officers to enter, at any reasonable time, any licensed premises or any other premises that the police officer reasonably suspects are being used to perform body art tattooing procedures for fee or reward for the purpose of carrying out general drug detection using a dog or carrying out general firearms or explosives detection by using a dog. These are responsible enforcement provisions. Under this bill, the Commissioner of Police may make an interim closure order that a tattoo parlour be closed if the commissioner is satisfied that a body art tattooing business is being carried on at the premises without the authority of an operator licence or if the commissioner reasonably suspects that serious criminal offences are being committed at the premises.

Interim closure orders have effect for a period of 72 hours from the time they are served or posted. The Local Court may order long-term closure on the application of the Commissioner of Police. Tattoo parlours are often the target of serious crime, such as drive-by shootings, which can endanger innocent lives as well as damage property. Outlaw motorcycle gangs have strong links with the tattoo industry, and often tattoo parlours are a symbol of a gang's presence in a local area. The Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 is a response to community concerns about the influence of outlaw motorcycle gangs on the tattoo industry. This bill will give the police and other authorities the power to stop or limit money laundering, as well as drug and firearm trafficking. I have no doubt the residents of Rockdale fully support these measures, and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GLENN BROOKES (East Hills) [4.08 p.m.]: The community is sick and tired of drive-by shootings, violent attacks, fire bombings and arson. It is sick and tired of outlaw motorcycle gangs showing contempt for the law, the police and contempt for innocent bystanders who may be in the wrong place at the wrong time. The community is sick and tired of organised criminals using tattoo parlours as a front for their activities. The Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 establishes a licensing system for the body art tattoo industry to ensure that only lawful operators can work in and run those businesses. The licensing system established by the bill will require all body art tattooists and body art tattooing businesses to be licensed properly by NSW Fair Trading. Importantly, the bill also provides that a licence cannot be granted to an applicant unless the Commissioner of Police has deemed the applicant to be a fit and proper person. I am pleased that the bill provides for the Commissioner of Police to apply a character test because it means that it is more likely that people related to or associated with those involved in organised crime will be prevented from obtaining a licence.

Of equal importance, the bill provides the NSW Police Force with powers of entry and investigation. The bill also allows police to enter and investigate premises they reasonably suspect of being used for body art tattoo procedures. Those powers include the use of detection dogs for the purposes of looking for drugs, firearms and explosives. To make sure the licensing system hits its mark, the bill contains clear definitions for body art tattooists, body art tattoo procedures, and what businesses are considered to be body art tattoo businesses. The bill also makes a distinction between body art tattooing procedures and cosmetic tattooing procedures. Cosmetic tattoos include procedures to give a permanent make-up effect, such as the tattooing of eyebrows. Those sorts of procedures are often performed in a beauty salon.

The definition of cosmetic tattooing procedure also includes tattoos that are applied for medical purposes, for instance, to correct a medical condition or a post-operative outcome. It is appropriate that the new licensing system created under the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 will not cover cosmetic or medical tattoos. It is important for a licensing system such as this to recognise the role of other legislation in the regulation of body art tattoo businesses. In that regard, this bill provides that nothing in the Act limits any other requirement

imposed by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 or the Public Health Act 2010. In establishing the licensing system, the bill creates an offence of carrying on a body art tattooing business without a licence.

In addition to the requirement for businesses to be licensed properly, the bill provides that a person must not perform any body art tattooing procedure for a fee or reward without being licensed properly. The bill also makes it an offence to employ a person to carry out body art tattooing if that person is not licensed appropriately. However, situations may arise in which people or businesses are caught accidentally by the requirements of the new licensing system, therefore the bill also includes a regulation for exceptions to the licensing requirements. Because we live in a just and fair society, the bill contains a right of appeal provision that allows a person to apply to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal for a review of a refusal or failure to grant a licence, a condition imposed on the granting of a licence, or the suspension or cancellation of a licence.

The right of appeal does not include a controlled member of a declared organisation. This is an important bill that will help break the connection between organised crime and the body art tattoo industry. The bill will make sure that only fit and proper people operate and work in these businesses. The bill meets community expectation. The bill provides the police with the powers they need to tackle organised crime. The bill is a clear demonstration that the Government is taking steps to ensure law and order in New South Wales. I congratulate the Government on introducing this legislation and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN (Gosford) [4.15 p.m.]: I doubt whether any member of this place would not be aware of the strong links between tattoo parlours and outlaw bicycle gangs. This link must be broken and that is why I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. Tattoo parlours are a visible symbol or, to put it another way, almost an advertisement for the presence of bikie gangs in any specific area. Because of that perception tattoo parlours have been a target for violence, malicious damage, drive-by shootings, fire bombings and arson for years. It would be surprising if at least one tattoo parlour in any electorate had not experienced associated damage or violence in some way. When a bikie gang does not control a tattoo parlour it intimidates genuine operators by using standover tactics—threats and extortion. The real risk is that these tattoo parlours are used to launder the proceeds of crime.

The main purpose of the bill is to reduce the involvement of organised criminals in the tattoo industry in New South Wales by establishing a regulated scheme for owners, operators and tattooists. In short, this bill creates two categories of licence—one for the operator and one for the tattooist. Licensing tattooists will ensure that operators are not forced to employ gang members as tattooists; they will be able to confidently refuse to employ any unlicensed tattoo artist. Without further measures such as those contained in this bill, legitimate tattooists and other workers in the industry will continue to work in an unsafe environment, in fear of being firebombed or shot at. Owners and operators of legitimate businesses not affiliated with bikie gangs should not have to live in fear of being attacked, extorted or stood over. The only way to end this type of behaviour is to ensure that licence applicants and licensees are subject to criminal history checks.

The regulation process outlined in the bill is similar to the process that exists for firearms and for the security industry. The bill establishes NSW Fair Trading as the regulator. It provides for the Commissioner of Police to conduct fit and proper person, and public interest inquiries on licence applicants. It provides that the regulator is bound by the recommendations of the Commissioner of Police to grant or revoke a licence. It provides that the scheme will apply to existing and new operators. It creates new offences of operating a tattoo business without an operator licence, focusing on corporations, with a penalty of 100 penalty units and it also creates a new offence of being an employed tattooist without a tattoo licence, focused on the individual, with a penalty of 50 units.

Controlled members of a declared criminal organisation will not be able to hold a licence. However, the bill does not exclude businesses that provide cosmetic or medical tattooing from the scheme. As a failsafe measure, applicants have a right of appeal to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal, which has the ability to review decisions while at the same time protect the criminal intelligence that may have been used in reaching a decision. It provides police with a new power to use drug detection, firearm and explosive detection dogs in tattoo parlours at reasonable times and without warrant.

Police and Fair Trading officials, as authorised officers, will be empowered to enter tattoo parlours to conduct business record checks. The bill gives the Commissioner of Police power to order the immediate closure for 72 hours of unlicensed tattoo parlours or parlours in which illegal activity is occurring, and for longer on application to the Local Court. The bill imposes serious penalties on operators for continuing to

operate in closed premises, with increasing penalties the longer the offending conduct occurs. We on this side of the House do not want tattoo parlours to be de facto bkie clubhouses or shopfronts for illegal drug and firearm distribution. We on this side of the House do not want tattoo parlours to be used to launder the proceeds of crime.

We on this side of the House do not want citizens of New South Wales to be subject to violence, extortion threats, intimidation or indeed injury or death because they either work in the tattoo industry or happen to be working in the wrong place at the wrong time when an act of violence is perpetrated on a rival tattoo parlour. We on this side of the House do not want criminals or those with strong connections to criminals working in the tattoo industry. That is why we have introduced the bill. It will create a licensing regime for the tattoo industry and ensure that licences are granted only to fit and proper persons. It will ensure that the granting of a licence will not be contrary to the public interest. It provides that applicants must consent to having their fingerprints and palm prints taken.

The licence remains in force for a maximum of three years and is not renewable, but an application for a new licence may be made under the Act. Any changes to staff must be notified to the Commissioner for Fair Trading. A licence may be cancelled if false or misleading information was used to obtain the licence. Earlier in the debate several members highlighted the issues relating to genuine operators. I note that times have changed over the years, particularly in the tattoo industry, and that the youth of today have a fixation with body art. I recall that in my teens the only way to get a tattoo was at the local butcher on a Friday afternoon at the back of the shop. You could get your loved one's name printed on your arm.

Mr Richard Torbay: Name the butcher.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: The name on my arm is that of my wife and it has been there for 31 years. I thank the member for Northern Tablelands for making me admit that.

Mr Richard Torbay: I'll show you mine if you show me yours.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: He wishes. In my youth, the tattoo industry was nowhere near as extensive as it is today. It was something that boys in the local football club did. It was something different and something you did. Nowadays it is very different because young people are into body art. It is not my cup of tea. Unfortunately, one of the changes in the industry has been that the criminal element has become involved. This bill can only help us rid the industry of the criminal element that has encroached into many of these establishments over time. I commend the bill to the House. It is a positive action by the Government to ensure that those criminal elements are removed from tattoo parlours.

Mr TIM OWEN (Newcastle) [4.23 p.m.]: I am pleased to support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. As articulated by the Minister for Fair Trading, this bill is part of the Government's continued response to gang crime in New South Wales. It follows on from the Crimes Amendment (Consorting and Organised Crime) Act 2012, and the Crimes (Criminal Organisations Control) Act 2012, which were presented to this House earlier this year. In particular, the bill aims to break the stranglehold of bikies in the tattoo industry. As we all know only too well, there is a clear association and linkage between illegitimate tattoo parlours and bkie gangs. If we consider the events of the past two months alone, half a dozen shootings across New South Wales and Queensland have been aimed specifically at tattoo shops. Tattoo parlours are frequently the target of violent attacks including drive-by shootings, firebombings and arson.

Business owners attempting to operate a tattoo parlour without affiliation with organised crime have been subjected to extortion attempts and violence. Bkie crime is not isolated to New South Wales only; it also affects the other States, as was shown in the recent media coverage we have all seen. It is inappropriate in the extreme that organised criminals should be permitted to maintain such a stranglehold over any legitimate industry. In order to crack down on bkie gangs and outlaw violence associated with tattoo parlours, the bill introduces a licensing and regulatory regime for tattoo parlours and tattooists. The main provisions of the bill will see two categories of licensing introduced—one for the operator and another for the tattooist. All applications for licences will be made to the Commissioner for Fair Trading. An operator licence will authorise the licensee to carry on a body art tattooing business at a specific premises. A tattooist licence will authorise the licensee to perform body art tattooing procedures.

The bill allows the Commissioner of Police to conduct investigations into licence applicants and licensees to ensure that only appropriate persons hold such licences. Once the scheme commences, legitimate, licensed operators and owners of tattoo studios need a mechanism to ensure that their employees are not associated with organised crime. Licensing tattoo artists as well as operators ensures that legitimate operators can confidently refuse to employ unlicensed tattoo artists. Furthermore, applicants for operators licences must include the following information: the address of the proposed licensed premises, the names and addresses of each staff member employed or to be employed and specific details on close associates. In order to ensure each person's identity, an applicant must also consent to having his or her fingerprints and palm print taken. Fingerprints and palm prints will be taken using LiveScan machines located in a range of police stations across the State, making it easy for licence applicants to complete this part of the licensing process.

This mirrors the process already in place for security industry licence applicants and will ensure that a thorough probity assessment of each licence applicant can be conducted. If tattoo artists are not subject to the same checks as owners and operators, there is a risk that organised criminal groups can continue to extort legitimate owners by forcing them to employ gang members, which is in no way in the interests of the public of this State. Existing businesses and tattooists will be put on notice during the transition period that the new licensing scheme is coming in, and that they will have to apply for a licence if they wish to continue to operate. A government communications strategy will be put in place before the licensing scheme is up and running, and before penalties for operating without a licence come into force. Ample opportunity will be provided for those wishing to become licensed to apply to Fair Trading for a licence.

As I mentioned briefly, the Commissioner for Fair Trading may grant or revoke a licence after having considered and reviewed the report by the Commissioner of Police on whether an applicant is a fit and proper person. I also note that the bill provides protection for criminal intelligence considered by the Commissioner of Police or the Commissioner for Fair Trading. The Commissioner of Police is not required to give any reason for making a determination and recommendation that an applicant is not a fit and proper person or that granting a licence is contrary to the public interest if giving those reasons would disclose criminal intelligence or other criminal information. For the same reason, the Commissioner for Fair Trading is not required to give any reasons for his or her decision. In instances in which licence applicants disagree with a decision they will have an opportunity and the ability to appeal to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal [ADT].

The Administrative Decisions Tribunal has the ability to review decisions while ensuring criminal intelligence is protected. Of course, if someone is ineligible for a licence because he or she is subject to a control order under the Crimes (Criminal Organisations Control) Act, there can be no appeal to the tribunal. Tattooists and other workers should not have to go to work in fear of being shot or firebombed because of a biker war or criminal activities. By the same token, tattoo parlour business owners who are unaffiliated with gangs should not live in fear of being extorted, stood over or attacked. The only way to end this untenable situation is to ensure licence applicants, and licensees, can be subject to checks that consider criminal history and criminal intelligence.

The model the Government has adopted for tattoo parlour regulation is similar to what is already in place for firearms and the security industry. The O'Farrell Government believes that the serious criminal penetration of organised crime into the tattoo industry has resulted in tattoo parlours becoming an unsafe environment for staff of the industry in some cases. Additionally, the Tattoo Parlour Bill 2012 also creates new offences of operating a tattoo business without an operator licence with a penalty of 100 penalty units, and of being an employed tattooist without a tattooist licence—sole traders will require an operator's licence—with a penalty of 50 penalty units.

This particular provision will provide a strong deterrent because if the offence continues the penalty will increase by the same amount each day that that offence continues. Putting escalating penalties in place ensures that attempting to operate a tattoo parlour contrary to the licensing scheme carries penalties severe enough to make it financially unviable—even to the most cashed-up crooks. The Government is determined to get bikies, criminal intent and criminal gangs out of tattoo parlours, and this bill will put regulatory schemes in place to do just that. This bill is aimed at ending the link between the illegitimate tattoo industry and organised crime, and as a result, reducing the level of crime and violence associated with illegitimate tattoo parlours. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour—The Assistant-Speaker) [4.31 p.m.]: I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012, which was introduced following a spate of illegal activity, mainly across Western Sydney. I commend the police for their great work in discovering that a lot of biker wars and drive-by shootings are

related to tattoo parlours. Why is that so? It appears that tattoo parlours, especially in Western Sydney, have been shopfronts for criminal activities, such as money laundering and drug trading. This Government is now forced to impose regulations on a business that would normally be regarded as legitimate. I do not have a tattoo. I challenge other members, perhaps the member for Londonderry, to show us their tattoos. I do not know why one would want a tattoo, to stain one's body with something that God did not provide. Those who are unfortunate enough to have been born with birth marks spend a lifetime undergoing laser and other treatments to remove them, yet other people cover themselves with tattoos. Some people want tattoos, which seems very tribal.

This Government must provide our law enforcement officers with the tools to get rid of illegitimate shopfronts for criminal activity. I am sure that members who represent country electorates have tattoo parlours in their electorates. I hope that the criminal activity that is occurring in tattoo parlours in Sydney is not part and parcel of what goes on in the tattoo parlours in regional New South Wales. The message from this legislation is that when a police officer takes a dog onto the premises of a tattoo parlour it is because illegal drugs are being bought, sold or traded there. I read in the weekend newspapers that the largest tattoo parlour in the Southern Hemisphere, with which the Ibrahims—who are suspected of being involved in drug and money laundering activities—are closely associated, will be established in Kings Cross. We have seen the problems in Kings Cross of late, which have resulted in this Government barring the display of bikie colours because of the violence and the criminal activity that is associated with bikie gangs in Kings Cross.

It is unfortunate that the Government has to introduce this type of legislation to drive down crime rates in Sydney, especially Western Sydney. For the past 16 years of the former Government and during the term of this Government we have been fed up with reading about drive-by shootings or seeing them on the news on television. Recently police parked their van outside a Western Sydney tattoo parlour, which was the target of two previous attacks. The owner or licensee of that parlour, who has now been charged and put back behind bars at the insistence of members of this place—especially the Premier—firebombed that police vehicle. We charge our police officers day in, day out with protecting life and property. Yet criminal elements hide behind tattoo parlours. Bikie gangs appear to carry out the vast majority of these drive-by shootings and attack rival tattoo parlours, which is basically retaliation.

It is appalling that this Government has to introduce legislation to sort it out. We want to rid our State of the scourge of bikie gangs and drive-by shootings as reported in the morning's media. How long will it be before someone is killed? I am told that those who are shot are kneecapped, which goes back to the days of Prohibition in the United States of America. Is that what we are sliding back to? This society and this Parliament cannot allow that to happen. In a Brisbane shopping centre rival bikies took pot-shots at one another and an innocent female bystander was struck by a bullet. I do not want that to happen in my town, electorate, State or country. The only way that we can send a message to these criminals is by this Government giving powers to police who act on our behalf on a daily basis and put their lives at risk. I know that the member for Dubbo, the Parliamentary Secretary at the table, who is an ex-police officer, can attest to the fact that people are being shot.

Recently a 42-year-old police officer was killed in a tragic incident in Tamworth when he pulled over a motor vehicle. I do not know whether the person in the vehicle was a bikie, but it appears that drugs or some other illegal activity was involved. Now a mother and her children are left without a husband and a father because of illegal activity. We all know that we will not prevent road accidents and all criminal activity, but the viciousness and the savageness of the crimes that are going on in this State are reminiscent of what we have heard about when it was gang warfare in America. We must do everything we can to support the police to stop that sort of mentality developing and continuing to develop in our society. I commend the legislation to the House.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) [4.40 p.m.]: I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. This bill is welcome because, as many members have said, there is an undeniable link between tattoo parlours and unsavoury outlaw motorcycle gangs. As we know, tattoo parlours are a symbol of a gang's presence in an area and they cause a great deal of angst for locals and the police officers who are trying to uphold law and order. A few years ago—I think it was 2009—when I was a councillor on Randwick City Council a tattoo parlour operator applied to open a tattoo parlour on Coogee Bay Road. A merit assessment was carried out and the owner was known to a number of locals to be a law-abiding citizen, so the council had no reason to refuse the application. At that time there was no policy about how far a tattoo parlour could be from a school and so on.

Indeed, many of us were unaware of the links between organised crime and tattoo parlours. I do not wish to cast any aspersions on the owner of that parlour, but his premises were fire-bombed in December 2010.

Of course, we have now changed our opinion of tattoo parlours and whether they should be allowed to be established in close proximity to schools, churches, playgrounds and so on. A couple of weeks after the fire-bombing, in what was believed to be a related incident, someone drove through the shopfront of a tattoo parlour at Mount Druitt. Given the large number of fires and ramraids at tattoo parlours, the operators must be either very careless about fire safety or very unlucky. Of course, these events are linked to organised crime.

Mr Clayton Barr: They are not coincidences.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: No, they are not. The parlours are linked to organised crime and to bikie gangs and the operators are suspected of supplying and storing illegal weapons and supplying, storing and even manufacturing drugs. This legislation has been introduced in response to a request from the Police Force. The O'Farrell Government—including the Minister for Police, the Hon. Michael Gallacher, and the hardworking Minister for Fair Trading, the Hon. Anthony Roberts—has heard the requests for extended powers to crack down on bikie gangs and their illegal activities. This well thought out legislation will allow police officers not only to enter tattoo parlours, to close them down and to suspend a licence but also to inspect them using drug and firearm sniffer dogs. I do not think that that will alarm people, because drug sniffer dogs are frequently used on public transport and in licensed premises. Tattoo parlours are monitored by police because they are now seen as dangerous or suspicious places.

We all know that legitimate tattoo parlour operators do exist. They are genuine artists who are earning a living and trying to do the best they can by their industry. That industry's reputation has been dragged into the gutter because of the illegal activities that are being addressed in this legislation. If those legitimate operators refuse to be involved with bikie gangs they can be subjected to intimidation and extortion or forced to employ bikie gang members. We will not tolerate that in this State. The operators are too afraid to speak out and to stand up to the bikie gangs and they need the assistance of this Government and this Parliament. We must give police officers the power to crack down on illegal operators.

Some will say that outlaw motorcycle gangs are involved in a range of other business activities and question why the Government is focusing on tattoo parlours. The reason is that other industries do not suffer the same level of criminal penetration. The example I cited in Coogee indicates that there is an undeniable link between tattoo parlours and outlaw motorcycle gangs. There is also the risk that tattoo parlours will be used by bikie gangs to launder cash that is the proceeds of crime. This Government is determined to break the link between outlaw motorcycle gangs and tattoo parlours. The Police Force has also encountered a number of cases of members of bikie gangs standing over, threatening or extorting money from innocent small businesses—that is, the legitimate tattoo parlours—that have not been involved in organised crime.

Tattoo parlour licence applicants will be required to attend a police station to have their fingerprints and palm prints taken and a probity assessment will be undertaken before they will be issued with a licence. The police will use live scan machines that will be located in a range of police stations across New South Wales, which will make it easy for licence applicants to complete the process. The Government does not want to make the procedure onerous for legitimate operators; it simply wants to ensure that they can go about their business while the police crack down on the rogue elements. Some will say that this legislation will increase red tape, but we must be forever vigilant in fighting crime.

The member for Dubbo is a former police officer—he had a great career in the Police Force—and he knows that we must review legislation constantly so that we keep ahead of the villains who try to outsmart the police and who threaten the security of the citizens of this State. This legislation goes a long way toward empowering the Police Force to crack down on outlaw motorcycle gangs and to stop their involvement in the tattoo industry. It will allow police officers to clean up the industry so that legitimate, honest and committed small business people can get on with the job. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.49 p.m.]: I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. The Government is moving to regulate the body art tattoo industry by introducing a licensing scheme. This is to ensure that only legitimate business operators can continue to work and run these businesses. The licensing scheme will require all body art tattooists and body art tattooing businesses to be appropriately licensed by NSW Fair Trading. However, a licence cannot be granted unless the Commissioner of Police has deemed the applicant to be a fit and proper person. Tattoo parlours are known to be heavily associated with organised crime, particularly outlaw motorcycle gangs.

Having 22 years of policing experience—some of that in relation to organised crime when I was a member of the major crimes squad—I can stand in this House and unreservedly confirm that association. Tattoo parlours are frequently, and too often, the target of violent attacks, including drive-by shootings, fire-bombings and arson. Business owners attempting to operate a tattoo parlour without affiliation with organised crime have been subjected to extortion attempts and violence. Through this bill the Government aims to reduce the involvement of organised criminals in the tattoo industry across New South Wales by the establishment of a new regulatory scheme for owners, operators and tattooists.

The bill has five parts. The first part defines body art tattooists and body art tattoo businesses and procedures, and it provides the meaning of close associates, which is very important. Part 2 of the bill relates to offences of unlicensed body art tattooing. Part 3 articulates the licensing scheme. Part 4 covers enforcement processes. Part 5 is the miscellaneous section containing provisions for arrangements between relevant agencies entered into for the purpose of sharing information. The member for Coffs Harbour provided a very thoughtful contribution to this bill. He referred to tattoo businesses too often becoming shopfronts for criminality, and I do not think it could be described any better than that. Tattoo parlours have unfortunately too easily become a one-stop shop for criminal enterprises to occur. The bill aims to do a number of things, including creating two categories of licence—that of operator and that of tattooist.

The bill creates new offences carrying penalties of 100 penalty units for operating a tattoo business without an operator licence and 50 penalty units for being an employed tattooist without a tattooist licence. Sole traders will require an operator's licence. The bill establishes NSW Fair Trading as the regulator. It provides for the Commissioner of Police to conduct fit and proper person and public interest inquiries in respect of licence applicants. Similar scrutiny occurs in the liquor industry. It also provides that the regulator is bound by the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police regarding the grant or revocation of a licence, and I have complete confidence that the Commissioner of Police will play an important and sound role in relation to this bill. Controlled members of a declared criminal organisation will not be able to hold licences, which is very important.

This bill provides that the scheme will apply to new entrants and existing members of the tattoo parlour industry. It excludes businesses that provide cosmetic and medical tattooing from the scheme unless they also provide body art tattooing, in which case they must be licensed. The bill defines tattooing procedure, body art tattooing procedure and body art tattooing business, and differentiates body art tattooing from cosmetic tattooing. It has been very well considered to ensure that each of those arts is defined. Importantly, it creates a new power for police to use drug detection and firearm and explosive detection dogs within tattoo parlours at a reasonable time without warrant. It establishes police and fair trading officials as authorised officers and empowers those officers to enter tattoo parlours at a reasonable time to conduct financial business record checks, which is also an enormously important part of the bill.

The bill provides a right of appeal to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal regarding licence applications, but protects the confidentiality of criminal intelligence. It also gives the Commissioner of Police the power to order the immediate closure for 72 hours of unlicensed tattoo parlours or parlours where illegal activity is occurring. Closure for longer periods can be ordered by the Local Court upon application by police. It imposes serious penalties for continuing to operate in closed premises, and those penalties increase every day that the offending conduct continues. The introduction of this bill will raise many questions and it is appropriate that we explore those. One is: Why do tattooists, as well as owners and operators, need licences? The answer is simple. Once the scheme commences, legitimate licensed operators and owners of tattoo studios need a mechanism to ensure that their employees are not associated with organised crime. It is a form of protection for the business operator.

The licensing of tattoo artists as well as operators ensures that legitimate operators can confidently refuse to employ unlicensed tattoo artists. If tattoo artists are not subject to the same checks as owners and operators there is a significant risk that organised criminal groups can continue to extort legitimate owners by forcing owners to employ gang members. Tattooists will also have appeal rights to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal. We have an emerging problem in our society, across each of our communities, regarding organised crime and unlawfulness. As the member for Coffs Harbour said, we are going through a period of kneecapping which is similar to what occurred at the time of Prohibition when a man by the name of Capone existed. Capone was not brought down by way of arrest or charge on criminal enterprises that he was allegedly involved in—there were allegations of murder and various other things he was alleged to have done—but by the law enforcers of the day utilising existing legislation in relation to tax evasion.

I congratulate the Minister for Police, the Premier and the Cabinet on the introduction of this bill. It is one of a suite of legislative arms of support provided to our law enforcers and regulators essentially to kneecap the opportunities for crime that currently exist and the organised crime outfits that are able to operate freely behind cloaks of darkness and the facade of legitimate businesses. This is an important step. Members of outlaw motorcycle gangs are scum of the earth. They proudly wear a patch on their uniforms saying they are the 1 per cent that sit outside the law. They believe they are above the law. They should be held to account like everyone else when their behaviour impacts on the community. It is time for the Government and the community to take a stand. This bill is part of an important suite of legislation that will arm law enforcement agencies and the Government with the ability to protect our communities and put a halt to a number of aspects of the modus operandi of these offenders. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro) [4.58 p.m.]: In essence, the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 aims to reduce the involvement of organised criminals in the tattoo industry in New South Wales by establishing a new regulatory scheme for owners, operators and tattooists. Tattoo parlours are known to be associated with organised crime, particularly outlaw motorcycle gangs, and are frequently the target of violent attacks, including drive-by shootings, firebombings and arson. Business owners attempting to operate a tattoo parlour without affiliation with organised crime have been subjected to extortion attempts and violence. The strong links between the tattoo industry and outlaw motorcycle gangs need to be broken. Tattoo parlours are a symbol of a gang's presence in a particular area. For this reason they are often the target of violence and malicious damage, such as drive-by shootings, firebombings and arson.

Police are aware of incidents where members of outlaw motorcycle gangs have stood over, threatened and attempted to extort money from owners of tattoo studios who are unaffiliated with bikies. I have also heard stories of outlaw bikie gangs intimidating and threatening other motorcycle clubs, such as the Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club. It is inappropriate in the extreme that organised criminals should be permitted to maintain such a stranglehold over legitimate business. The Government believes that the serious criminal penetration of organised crime into the tattoo industry has resulted in tattoo parlours becoming an unsafe environment for staff in the industry.

Tattooists and other workers should not have to work in fear because of a bikie war. The only way to end this untenable situation is to ensure licence applicants and licensees can be subject to checks that consider criminal history and criminal intelligence. The model we have adopted for tattoo parlour regulation is similar to what is already in place for firearms and the security industry. Tattoo parlours are frequently a target of drive-by shootings and other attacks such as fire bombings and malicious damage. When tattoo parlours are targeted in this manner it is very likely that it is because they are owned by an outlaw motor cycle gang or because they are owned by someone unaffiliated with the gang who is resisting a gang's extortion and standover tactics.

Gangs will carry out drive-by shootings and other violent attacks against rival gangs or unaffiliated individuals that open a tattoo business on what they see as their turf. By regulating tattoo parlours we are trying to end the links between these businesses and organised crime and reduce the level of violence that goes with it. There is a real risk of tattoo parlours being used by bikies to launder the proceeds of crime. For this reason tattoo parlours are often the target of violence and malicious damage such as I mentioned previously—drive-by shootings, firebombings and arson. Police have also encountered a number of cases where members of outlaw motorcycle gangs have stood over, threatened and attempted to extort money from owners of tattoo studios who are unaffiliated with bikies. This legislation will actually address that.

Organised criminals should no longer be permitted to maintain such a stranglehold over any legitimate industry. The new licensing scheme makes no change to the current regulation that focuses on reducing the health risks associated with tattooing. Further, no training or competency requirements will be imposed on the tattooing industry under the new licensing scheme. Every licence application will be subject to consideration on fit and proper person and public interest grounds to ensure that the owners, operators, and employees of tattoo parlours are not involved in or associated with organised crime.

Tattooists will still have to meet the same hygiene standards and be subject to the same health inspections as they are now. The bill provides police with the power to shut down tattoo parlours that are operating contrary to the new licensing scheme, or if serious crimes are being committed there. Closure orders can be issued on an interim basis for up to 72 hours or police can apply to the Local Court for long-term closure orders. The reason for this is simple: these closure orders prevent people from operating in contravention of the new regulatory scheme and prevent parlours where crimes have been committed from continuing to operate. Existing businesses and tattooists will be put on notice during the transition period that the new licensing scheme is coming in and that they will have to apply for a licence if they wish to continue to operate.

This bill is about empowering our good men and women in cracking down on the spike of gang warfare and just adds to the additional powers, resources and legislative authority that the Government is providing to our police. For example, Operation Spartan, established in January following a spike in gun crime and increased gang-related activity, saw police hit the streets in big numbers—about 3,000 officers from across the NSW Police Force were tasked with flexing some law enforcement muscle. In the words of a senior officer, the best weapon police have in the fight against crime is "in your face policing". Operation Spartan officers carried out 1,871 inspections of businesses such as clubs, hotels and tattoo parlours, as well as 993 visits to individuals with links to gangs. In addition, they conducted 1,783 person searches and 419 vehicle searches. They seized 14 firearms, 17 knives and quantities of illegal and prescription drugs and recorded 1,401 intelligence reports.

The operation was a huge success as it was not just about arrests but about intelligence gathering too. Every new piece of information collected helps us to better understand these criminals, their gangs and their methodology. They are the keys to dismantling and disrupting criminal activity in this State. We will not rest until we have all illegal firearms and weapons off our streets and all the people involved in these crimes are found, locked up and put before a court. We are committed to ending the increasing gun crime and gang-related activity in this city and in this State. The Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 is just another tool in the box to achieve just that. I commend the Minister and his office for the fantastic work they have done to empower our police and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ANDREW CORNWELL (Charlestown) [5.04 p.m.]: I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. Many tattoo parlour operators are legitimate business people. Many tattoo parlours are legitimate businesses. However, there are strong links between the tattoo industry and outlaw motorcycle gangs and these links need to be broken. Tattoo parlours are a symbol of a gang's presence in a particular area. For this reason tattoo parlours are often the target of violence and malicious damage such as drive-by shootings, firebombing and arson. Police are also aware of numerous incidents where members of outlaw motorcycle gangs have stood over, threatened or attempted to extort money from owners of tattoo studios who are totally unaffiliated with bikies. It is inappropriate in the extreme that organised criminals should be permitted to maintain such a stranglehold over any legitimate industry. There is a real risk that tattoo parlours are used by bikies to launder the proceeds of crime.

It raises the question: Why should we licence owners and operators? Well, once the scheme commences, legitimate licensed operators and owners of tattoo studios will need a mechanism to ensure that their employees are not associated with organised crime. Licensing tattoo artists as well as operators ensures that legitimate operators can confidently refuse to employ unlicensed tattoo artists. If tattoo artists are not subject to the same checks as owners and operators there is a risk that organised criminal groups can continue to extort legitimate owners by forcing owners to employ gang members. Tattooists will have the same right of appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal as operators do. There is too little clarity and oversight of the commissioner's decision to issue a licence. The Government believes that the serious criminal penetration of organised crime into the tattoo industry has resulted in tattoo parlours becoming an unsafe environment for staff.

Tattooists and other workers should not have to go to work in fear of being shot or firebombed because of a bkie war. By the same token, tattoo parlour business operators who are unaffiliated with gangs should not live in fear of being extorted, stood over or attacked. The only way to end this untenable situation is to ensure that licence applicants and licensees can be subject to checks that consider criminal history and criminal intelligence. The model we have adopted for tattoo parlour regulation is similar to what is already in place for firearms and the security industry. In both of these schemes the regulatory authority does not have to give reasons. Licence applicants and licensees who disagree with certain decisions will be able to appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The tribunal has the ability to review decisions while ensuring that criminal intelligence is protected.

When tattoo parlours are targeted by drive-by shootings it is very likely that it is because they are owned by an outlaw motorcycle gang or because they are owned by someone unaffiliated with a gang who is resisting the gang's extortion and standover tactics. Tattoo parlours are a symbol of a gang's presence in an area. Gangs will carry out drive-by shootings and other violent attacks against rival gangs or other unaffiliated individuals that open tattoo businesses on what they see as their turf. By regulating tattoo parlours we are trying to end the links between these businesses and organised crime and reduce the level of violence that goes with it. The reason this regulatory scheme is necessary is that tattoo parlours are often associated with organised crime and bringing this bill in will enable a degree of control over them.

The humble tattoo has a long history. It has enormous cultural significance in many countries, for Maori communities and many Pacific Islander communities. I am probably the only person in this House who has actually applied tattoos as part of his professional career. However, mine are a circle with a line through them to indicate that the tattooed cat or dog has just been desexed. The tattoo has a long history. Indeed, the Romans tattooed their soldiers so they could be identified if they deserted, and they tattooed their slaves. Tattoos were used during the Holocaust to identify people of Jewish extraction who were unfortunate enough to be caught up in Germany or in other countries it occupied. Tattooing has become popular in the past 20 years or so. Indeed, in 2010 the first tattooed Barbie doll was released. There is a new one for all the kids of the world.

Mr Bart Bassett: Doll makers should be flogged.

Mr ANDREW CORNWELL: I acknowledge the interjection by the member for Londonderry. Recently we have seen such high-profile celebrities as David Beckham and Angelina Jolie sporting fairly famous tattoos. One former member of the Australian cricket team—I will not embarrass him by naming him but he was a constituent of the member for Wagga Wagga—got his Cricket Australia number, 356, tattooed on his arm only to find out subsequently that he was player number 357.

Mr Clayton Barr: It was Michael Slater.

Mr ANDREW CORNWELL: I acknowledge the interjection by the member for Cessnock. Tattoos have become culturally significant, and the tattoo industry is in demand. Young people like to go out and get ink done, so to speak. The tattoo industry is profitable. Unfortunately, because of the link between tattoos and bikies, the bikies are keen to dip their toe in the waters of the tattoo industry. This legislation is important. It provides the police and law enforcement agencies with yet another tool. It is another piece of the jigsaw to make criminal activities more difficult. As the member for Dubbo said, it is the Al Capone method: They did not catch him for murder; they caught him for tax evasion. Certainly, if we can tie up some of these organisations in red tape it will make the job of the police easier and give them another mechanism. I am a little concerned about one tattoo in this House. With the State of Origin match tomorrow, I am concerned about the maroon tattoo being quietly sported by the member for Newcastle.

Mr Ray Williams: Shame.

Mr ANDREW CORNWELL: I acknowledge the interjection of the member for Hawkesbury.

Mr Clayton Barr: Where is it?

Mr ANDREW CORNWELL: I have named him. I do not know where the tattoo is, but I think all maroon tattoos should remain north of the border, not south of it. Seriously, this legislation will provide the police with another tool, and I take great pleasure in commending it to the House.

Mr BART BASSETT (Londonderry) [5.12 p.m.]: I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. The member for Charlestown raised a couple of interesting points, including the fact that there is a Barbie doll with tattoos. I did not know that until today. The member for Charlestown said that many legitimate businesses have been performing the art of tattooing for decades—indeed, centuries—that the youth today are interested in having tattoos and that it is a cultural thing. The millions of Australians who watch *The Voice* could not miss Joel Madden, who certainly likes ink. Even members of his team, Team Joel, are getting tattoos—although I do not know whether they are temporary or permanent. That reinforces the point that tattoos are fashionable.

I put on the record that I do not have a tattoo to display. As tattooing is fashionable, it is important for legitimate businesses in the industry to be able to conduct their business and for people to go to them in the knowledge that they are above board. People can safely get a tattoo without thinking that perhaps someone will try to sell them drugs or they may be harmed in a drive-by shooting because of the infiltration of tattoo parlours by bkie gangs over the years. We have also heard about the problems for local government in terms of approving development applications for tattoo parlours. Under the new licensing scheme, with the Department of Fair Trading and the Commissioner of Police, local government will have more confidence about approving development applications for tattoo parlours.

In the past members of the community have considered that a tattoo parlour in the local area will attract trouble and gang warfare. Under this legislation, over time—it will not happen quickly—a community can once again be confident that having a tattoo parlour in the local main street is not code for having problems in the

main street. That is a very important issue for communities. An important aspect of this legislation is the continual clamping down on bikie gangs throughout Australia and in New South Wales in particular. As legislators, we must take every opportunity to ensure that police have the tools to break up bikie gangs and to stop them being able to legitimise themselves through businesses such as tattoo parlours, whether they are used for money laundering or retail fronts for drug sales or it is a territorial dispute. We need to get rid of that from our local communities. People must be confident that we are clamping down on the terrible behaviour of bikies gangs throughout Australia. This legislation is one way of doing that.

In terms of regulations and enforcement, publicans of licensed premises are regulated to ensure that people can walk safely into a public house knowing they can enjoy a drink without trouble. Police regularly walk through licensed premises to ensure that no offences are being committed or to search for drugs using drug detection dogs. That happens all the time. It is accepted as the norm and people feel safe when they see those activities occurring. The same thing should happen with tattoo parlours, which have been given a bad name by bikie gangs. Enabling police, without a warrant, to check licensed premises with drug detection dogs should give confidence to legitimate business operators and to clients that these businesses are being checked and are above board. I am pleased to support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. I congratulate the Government on the way it is moving forward to tighten controls in an attempt to wipe out bikie gangs throughout New South Wales and to make our community a safer place. I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) [5.17 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. As outlined in the overview of the bill, the object of the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 is to create a licensing and regulatory scheme for the carrying on of body art tattooing businesses and the performing of body art tattooing procedures. In simple terms, the bill is about making our community a safer place—no doubt not one member of this place does not want exactly that. That is why I am pleased to support the bill. We know from history that tattoo parlours are associated with organised crime and that this partnership can result in violent attacks, including drive-by shootings and arson. Unfortunately, too often innocent business operators and individuals get caught up in such attacks.

The Minister is therefore to be congratulated on taking steps to regulate the body art tattoo industry through a licensing scheme and to ensure that legitimate business operators can continue to run their businesses without fear. Clause 9 of the bill provides for the creation of two types of licences: an operator licence and a tattooist licence. Clause 6 creates new offences for unlicensed body art tattooing, with penalties applying: 100 penalty units for operating a tattoo business without an operator licence and 50 penalty units for being an unlicensed tattooist. Questions have been asked as to why a tattooist needs a licence in addition to the owner-operator having a licence. Legitimate licensed operators of tattoo and body art businesses need to ensure that the tattooists they employ are not associated with organised crime. It simply makes sense that the tattooist as well as the owner or operator are subject to the same checks if we want this legislation to be effective.

Clause 19 provides for the Commissioner of Police to conduct fit and proper person and public interest inquiries with respect to licence applicants. Clause 20 also allows the Commissioner of Police not to give reasons for refusing the granting of a licence, or for suspending or cancelling a licence, if to do so would result in the disclosure of any criminal intelligence report or other criminal information. Clauses 21 to 24 impose special conditions relating to operator licences, such as permitting the financial records of the body art tattooing business to be inspected and requiring the licensee to notify the director general of any changes in particulars in connection with the licence.

Licensees must also notify the director general of any changes in the employment of staff members and display a copy of their licence in the business. These are not onerous requirements; they are not limiting in any way, and legitimate operators should have no difficulty in complying with them. Clauses 31 to 35 will provide police officers with additional powers to enforce the new licensing regulation by allowing them to enter premises they reasonably suspect are being used to perform body art tattooing procedures for fee or reward. Failure to produce a licence will be an offence attracting 20 penalty points. It should also be noted that the bill excludes businesses that engage in cosmetic and medical tattooing— unless, of course, they also provide body art tattooing, in which case they will require a licence under the legislation.

Although many may consider the bill to be excessive in its regulatory nature, I reiterate that it is about protecting the community. We continually hear cries from the community for the Government to take effective steps to reduce the level of violent crime. This legislation is just another way that the O'Farrell-Stoner Government is working to assist our police to reduce organised crime while at the same time protecting legitimate body art tattooing businesses. I congratulate the Minister on taking the initiative to put an end to the

use of tattoo parlours as a front for organised crime. As I have said, I have owned a small business and I do not think the regulations are onerous. Regulation for these businesses is necessary, particularly when there is already a clear link between tattoo parlours and organised crime. I congratulate the Minister on the initiative and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith) [5.22 p.m.]: I make a contribution to debate on the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. It is important to recognise that the issue of crime is resonating across electorates throughout New South Wales and recently there have been particular issues involving organised crime. This Government is taking action to ensure that we make communities across New South Wales safer. We have heard about the involvement of tattoo parlours in drive-by shootings and the O'Farrell Government now seeks to put in place a strong regulatory regime for tattoo parlours and the tattoo industry. The Minister has done some good, solid work to ensure that no organisations can utilise tattoo parlours in their local community for purposes other than creating fantastic artwork. This is what people expect of government, especially State governments.

The bill creates a licensing framework around which tattoo parlours can operate. The framework includes two categories of licence: an operator licence and a tattooist licence. It also creates a number of new offences: operating a tattoo business without an operator's licence, which incurs 100 penalty units; and being employed as a tattooist without a tattooist licence, which incurs 50 penalty units. If tattooists can play a role in organised crime it is particularly important to identify who is running the tattoo parlours. Therefore, it is important to know the identity of the owner and operator of a particular tattoo parlour and of the tattooists.

The bill ensures that an appropriate government body will act as regulator, in this case NSW Fair Trading. Many members will have experience of a new tattoo parlour opening in their electorate and community debate about whether the development application was considered appropriately. Often questions will arise as to who will operate the tattoo parlour. Prior to this bill there was no regulatory framework to ascertain those details. Stronger regulation is required, especially in view of the significant role of organised crime and motorcycle gangs in the industry. Indeed, police have indicated that motorcycle gangs have adopted standover tactics: They have threatened or attempted to extort money from owners of tattoo parlours unaffiliated with the outlaw biker gangs. Such activity is completely inappropriate and highlights the need to regulate the tattoo parlour industry.

There has been little oversight with respect to the issuing of licences and so considerable work has been done to improve this situation. The Government believes serious criminal penetration by the organised crime network into the tattoo industry has resulted in tattoo parlours becoming more unsafe and a potential risk to the local community. Recently that has occurred with unfortunate regularity, with drive-by shootings, firebombings and malicious damage to tattoo parlours. Concerns have been raised about tattoo parlours being subjected to drug, firearms and dog searches, and questions have been asked about removing the requirement for a warrant. The Government considers a regulatory scheme is needed because of the close association between tattoo parlours and organised criminals, particularly outlaw motorcycle gangs. On numerous occasions these gangs have been found to be heavily involved in the manufacture and distribution of illegal drugs, and one might question the role that tattoo parlours play in that.

The Government has focused on tattoo parlours specifically because other industries do not seem to suffer from the same level of criminal penetration. The real risk is that tattoo parlours may be used to launder the proceeds of crime through what appears to be a legitimate enterprise. A continuing theme is the close association between the tattoo industry and outlaw motorcycle gangs. Other steps we are taking will ensure that applicants have to attend police stations so that police can take their fingerprints and palm prints to ensure we have a clear idea of who these people are. That is part of the new licensing regime. Applicants for a tattoo industry licence will have their fingerprints and palm prints checked against a national database as part of a probity assessment under the licensing framework that will be put in place for tattoo parlours. This mirrors a process that is already in place in the security industry, where there is an appropriate licensing regime and probity assessment of each person operating in that industry. It would be fair to say that in an attempt to shore up the tattoo industry we are applying to it some of the principles that apply in the security industry.

Some concerns have been expressed that the proposal to regulate the tattoo industry contradicts the Government's commitment to cutting red tape. However, we are bringing in legislation that responds to demands for a safer community. In order to do that we have to establish some sort of regulatory environment. Are there tattoo parlours operating outside engagement with organised crime? That is undoubtedly the case. Will they be paying a penalty by way of increased regulation for what has been happening in the community? That is an unfortunate consequence of this bill. However, in the electorate of Penrith—which I am lucky enough

to represent in this place—I do not think extra regulation will be seen as being too high a price to pay. If we can ensure there will be less criminal involvement in businesses that operate in the community by requiring existing tattoo parlour operators to have their fingerprints and palm prints taken, I think it will be regarded as a suitable outcome for our communities.

The bill is a good step forward in the protection of local communities. It is a response by the Government to the role that organised crime plays in the tattoo parlour industry. The Government is taking a strong stance against organised crime—something that this Chamber has tried to do on a number of occasions under previous governments. The bill is a continuation of New South Wales governments taking a strong stance against organised crime. The police have clearly identified that tattoo parlours have an unusual connection with crime. This regulatory framework will ensure that we understand who is operating these businesses so that we can keep the bad guys out.

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) [5.32 p.m.]: I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012, which is a response to events that are happening in electorates across New South Wales and indeed capturing the media's attention in some of the more populated Sydney suburbs. The Government is moving to regulate the tattoo art industry through the licensing scheme provided for in the bill. The bill will ensure that only legitimate business operators can operate these businesses and work in them. The scheme will require all body art tattooists and body art tattooing businesses to be appropriately licensed by NSW Fair Trading. However, a licence cannot be granted unless the Commissioner of Police has deemed the applicant to be a fit and proper person. Many industries across Australia are required to be licensed. Some of those industries have onerous requirements but I do not consider this bill to be onerous. I think it is appropriate when one considers that tattoo parlours have proliferated in recent years across New South Wales. I can attest to that in the electorate of Wagga Wagga and in other areas where tattoo parlours have proliferated and become the focus of local police because of the unsavoury behaviour that occurs in and around them.

The objects of the bill are to create a licensing regime for performing body art tattooing procedures and the carrying on of body art tattooing businesses and to provide for the Commissioner of Police to conduct investigations into applicants to ensure that only fit and proper persons are granted a licence. It also contains definitions to prescribe who are body art tattooists. The bill also provides, as a continuing offence provision, that a person must not carry on a body tattooing business, whether on the person's own behalf or on behalf of another person, without a licence. It also establishes a licensing regime, including the types of licence and the authorisation conferred by the licence. The bill also provides for enforcement by allowing the Commissioner for Fair Trading to issue interim closure orders in relation to premises if the commissioner is satisfied that a body art tattooing business is being carried out at the premises without an operator's licence or if the commissioner reasonably suspects that any serious criminal offences are being committed on the premises.

As I said earlier, trends are emerging across New South Wales about which the community is justifiably concerned, whether it be the proliferation of drugs, the supply of drugs or the terrible drive-by shootings that are occurring. The community wants action and this bill responds to people's concerns. It is only a matter of time before innocent people are hurt as a result of the actions of groups of bikies who are basically at war with each other over their turf and their ability to market drugs and guns and continue whatever other illegal activities they are engaged in. The community does not want that; people are sick of it. The bill will go a long way to giving the Commissioner for Fair Trading and the police—the people who are sworn to protect the community—the ability to ensure that those tattoo parlours that have been identified are dealt with accordingly.

As I said earlier, there are many industries that require licensing and criminal background checks. In many ways this bill reflects community expectations. One does not have to look too far to see that there are onerous requirements right across industry, which are often managed by NSW Fair Trading. The issue of background checks, which this bill addresses, is vital. It is important to know who is operating a business, what services they provide, whether they comply with strict regulations, and that the people involved are fit and proper persons. One has only to look at the alcohol industry to see that publicans and licensees are required to be fit and proper persons. Many industries have to meet those requirements and I have absolutely no problem in supporting the bill to ensure that the emerging tattoo parlour industry is brought under control. Legitimate operators must be able to operate without fear. If people are doing no wrong they have nothing to fear.

Yes, there is some red tape involved and as a Government we are committed to reducing red tape. However, in some circumstances it is necessary to regulate to ensure that industries comply with legislation and regulations. I make no apologies for this bill being brought before the House. I support the bill and commend the Premier, the Minister for Police and the Attorney General for ensuring that this kind of legislation is brought

before the Parliament to address the needs and concerns of the community. Members of the public are rightly concerned about the escalation of the bikie war, which, as I said before, has led to some very concerning events both here and across Australia. They are slugging it out for control of turf. They do not seem to care who they hurt. It is only a matter of time before an innocent bystander is caught up in this escalating crime. This bill is designed to send a very strong message to those illegal operators to pull their heads in. Legal operators have nothing to fear from this bill.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) [5.41 p.m.]: I support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012, which aims to reduce the involvement of organised criminals in the tattoo industry in New South Wales. We know that tattoo parlours are heavily associated with organised crime, particularly outlaw motorcycle gangs. We know that tattoo parlours are frequently the target of violent attacks, including drive-by shootings, firebombings and arson. We know that business owners attempting to operate a tattoo parlour, without affiliation with organised crime, have been subjected to extortion attempts and violence. The Government is moving to regulate the body art tattoo industry through a licensing scheme to ensure that only legitimate business operators can continue to work in and run these businesses. The licensing scheme will require all body art tattooists, and body art tattooing businesses, to be licensed by NSW Fair Trading, but a licence will not be granted unless the Commissioner of Police has deemed the applicant to be a fit and proper person.

What is the effect of the bill? The bill will create two categories of licence—operator and tattooist; create offences for operating a tattoo business without an operator licence and for being an employed tattooist without a tattooist licence; establish NSW Fair Trading as the regulator; provide for the Commissioner of Police to conduct fit and proper person and public interest inquiries in respect of licence applicants; provide that the regulator is bound by the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police regarding the grant or revocation of a licence; prevent control members of a declared criminal organisation from holding licences; provide that the scheme will apply to both existing and new entrants; exclude businesses that provide cosmetic or medical tattooing from the scheme unless they also provide body art tattooing, in which they must be licensed; and define "tattooing procedure" "body art tattooing procedure" and "body art tattooing business" and differentiate body art tattooing from cosmetic tattooing.

The bill will also create a new power for police to use drug detection, and firearm and explosives detection dogs in tattoo parlours at a reasonable time without warrant; establish police and Fair Trading officials as authorised officers and empower those authorised officers to enter tattoo parlours at a reasonable time to conduct financial business record checks; provide a right of appeal to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal regarding licence applications; give the Commissioner of Police the power to order the immediate closure for 72 hours of unlicensed tattoo parlours or parlours in which illegal activity is occurring—longer closures can be ordered by the Local Court on application from police; and impose serious penalties for continuing to operate in closed premises. These penalties increase every day the offending conduct continues.

It is necessary to regulate tattoo parlours because the strong links between the tattoo industry and outlaw motorcycle gangs has to be broken. Tattoo parlours are a symbol of a gang's presence in a particular area. Therefore tattoo parlours are often the target of violence and malicious damage such as drive-by shootings, firebombings and arson. Police are aware of numerous incidents in which members of outlaw motorcycle gangs have stood over, threatened and attempted to extort money from owners of tattoo studios who are unaffiliated with bikies. We cannot allow organised criminals to maintain such a stranglehold over any legitimate industry. There is a real risk also that tattoo parlours are used by bikies to launder the proceeds of crime. We want to license not only owners and operators but also tattooists to ensure that legitimate operators can confidently refuse to employ unlicensed tattoo artists.

If tattoo artists are not subject to the same checks as the owners and operators there is a risk that organised criminal groups will continue to extort legitimate owners by forcing them to employ gang members. The Government believes that the serious criminal penetration of organised crime into the tattoo industry has resulted in tattoo parlours becoming an unsafe environment for staff of the industry. Tattooists and other workers should not have to go to work in fear of being shot or firebombed because of some bikie war. By the same token, tattoo parlour business owners who are not affiliated with gangs should not live in fear of being extorted, stood over and attacked. The only way to end that is to ensure that licensed applicants and licensees can be subject to checks that consider criminal history and criminal intelligence. The model that is proposed to be adopted for tattoo parlour regulation is similar to what is already in place for firearms and the security industry.

There is no unfairness in subjecting tattoo parlours to drugs and firearms searches by trained dogs. This regulatory scheme is necessary because tattoo parlours are so closely associated with organised criminals. On numerous occasions the gangs have been found to be heavily involved in the manufacture and distribution of illegal drugs and the possession of, and trading in and using of illegal firearms. The bill aims to end that link and to reduce the level of crime associated with tattoo parlours. Permitting the use of dogs trained to detect drugs and firearms in tattoo parlours gives police the power to target those areas in which they know illegal activity is likely to be occurring. We do not want tattoo parlours to be de-facto bkie clubhouses, or shopfronts for illegal drug and firearm distribution.

As I said earlier, cosmetic and medical tattooing will not be captured by the new regulatory regime. We are focusing particularly on tattoo parlours because other industries do not suffer from the same level of criminal penetration as tattoo parlours. The real risk is that tattoo parlours are used already by bikies to launder the proceeds of crime. Applicants for tattoo industry licences will be required to have their palm and fingerprints checked against a national database as part of the probity assessment for a licence by using LiveScan machines that will be located in a range of police stations across New South Wales, making it easy for licence applicants to complete this part of the licensing process. This mirrors the process already in place for the security industry and will ensure that a thorough probity assessment of each licence applicant can be conducted. This Government is committed to reducing red tape and I agree this is an extra level of regulation, but in this case the regulatory burden is minor compared with the benefits of this new scheme.

The scheme aims to reduce the level of gang involvement in the tattoo industry and, as a result, reduce gang violence and improve the safety of workers in the tattoo industry and the safety of the general public. The regulatory burden is a small price worth paying compared with these benefits. The new licensing scheme will make no change to current regulation focusing on reducing the health risks associated with tattooing, and no training or competency requirements will be imposed on the tattooing industry under the new licensing scheme. Tattooists will still have to meet the same hygiene standards and be subject to the same health inspections as they are at the moment. The bill will provide police with the power to shut down tattoo parlours that are operating contrary to the new licensing regime or if serious crimes have been committed there. The straightforward reason is that the closure orders will prevent people from operating in contravention of the new scheme, and will prevent parlours in which crimes are being committed from continuing to operate.

The bill introduces escalating penalties that are severe enough to ensure that operating a tattoo parlour contrary to the licensing scheme is financially unviable, even for the crooks with the most cash. The legislation also requires a licensee to report any employee changes. That provision is designed to ensure that all employees are taken into account when the Police Force carries out fit and proper person and public interest checks. It will prevent the real owner of the business who is a member of gang from being employed in a nominal role—for example, as a secretary or a cleaner—while in reality that person is running the business on a day-to-day basis. The legislation also contains a transition period during which existing tattoo businesses and tattooists will be put on notice. I commend the bill to the House. [*Time expired.*]

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.51 p.m.]: It is my pleasure to support the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012. This is an important bill because the Government is determined to reduce organised criminal involvement in the tattoo industry. The Coalition went to the election promising the electorate that it would build this State and protect its citizens. First and foremost, people going about their business, including taking their kids to school, travelling on public transport and working, want to do so in the knowledge that they are safe and secure. While organised criminal elements are involvement in the tattoo industry the people of this State will not be safe and secure. This bill ensures that only legitimate tattoo parlour operators can be involved in the tattoo industry in New South Wales. As my colleagues have already stated, licensing of an industry is a legitimate, common and age-old mechanism by which to protect the community from illegitimate operators.

We license a number of other sectors, including the real estate industry and the building industry. The introduction of such regulatory powers is not uncommon when governments wish to protect the community. This Government is committed to that goal and that is why the Coalition is now in power. Legitimate business owners should not be worried by the bill; indeed, they should welcome it. If they have nothing to hide, they have nothing about which to be concerned. This legislation has been introduced in response to the involvement of outlaw motorcycle gangs in crime generally and, in particular, in the drive-by shootings that have been so extensively covered in the media. I speak regularly with the Rose Bay Local Area Command and the officers tell me that people in my electorate are concerned about their safety as they go about their daily lives. That concern has been generated by the connection between outlaw motorcycle gangs and the tattoo industry.

It is the need to ensure that our community is safe that has led to the introduction of this legislation. We know that tattoo parlours are a symbol of a gang's presence and that tattoo parlours—legitimate or otherwise—are often the target of violence, malicious damage, firebombings, arson and drive-by shootings. Those events generate fear in the community. The Police Force is aware of numerous incidents involving members of outlaw motorcycle gangs standing over, threatening and extorting money from the owners of tattoo parlours that have no affiliation with bikie gangs. It is inappropriate that organised criminals should be permitted to maintain such a stranglehold over what could be a legitimate industry. This bill will also address the risk of bikies using tattoo parlours to launder the proceeds of crime.

As my colleagues have already stated, this legislation creates two categories of licence to cover operators and tattooists. It also provides for the imposition of 100 penalty units for operating a tattooing business without an operator licence and 50 penalty units for employing a tattooist without a licence. The bill establishes NSW Fair Trading as the regulator. Of course, that agency regulates many activities that the Government deems must be regulated to ensure community safety. It also empowers the Commissioner of Police to conduct fit and proper person tests, which are a familiar mechanism used to ensure that the most appropriate people are appointed to certain positions. The commissioner is also empowered to carry out public interest inquiries about licence applicants. The bill provides that the regulator is bound by a recommendation to revoke a licence made by the Commissioner of Police, in whom we place a great deal of trust.

Importantly, the bill provides that controlled members of criminal organisations, as defined in the legislation, will not be able to hold a licence. That is the fundamental purpose of this legislation. Both existing and new entrants to the industry will be subject to the scheme, which is only fair given the circumstances facing this State. This measure is a clean sweep because everyone in the industry will be impacted. The bill also includes an exemption for those businesses that legitimately provide cosmetic and medical tattooing unless they also provide body art tattooing. The Police Force will have new powers to use drug, firearm and explosive detection dogs in tattoo parlours at a reasonable time after notice of a warrant has been given. Police Force and NSW Fair Trading officials will be established as authorised officers and will be able to enter parlours to conduct financial and business record checks.

The bill contains safeguards in the form of rights of appeal to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal about licence applications. That is important because, although we are setting up a rigorous regulatory regime for tattoo parlour operators and tattoo artists, we must ensure that people are protected from unfair decisions. The Commissioner of Police will also have the power to order the closure within 72 hours of an unlicensed tattoo parlour or a parlour at which illegal activities are being carried out. I note that longer closures can be ordered by a Local Court on an application by the Police Force. The bill provides serious penalties for continuing to operate closed premises and those penalties will escalate every day if the offending conduct continues. People who know more than members of this House have established that strong links exist between the tattoo industry and outlaw motorcycle gangs. That link must be broken for the protection of our constituents and to restore public trust that our community is safe. Tattoo parlours are evidence of local gang activity and there is a real risk that they are used to launder the proceeds of crime.

I strongly support this bill. The measures it contains are reasonable and are often used by governments to regulate industries, such as the real estate and building industries. They are legitimate mechanisms that are designed to ensure that those involved in certain businesses are trained appropriately, do the right thing and meet certain criteria. Having said that, we have means of appeal to the courts of the land to protect those who may feel they are impacted adversely by some of the provisions in the bill. I say no more than that I strongly endorse the bill, its provisions and its balance. The regulation is something that is required given that, at the end of the day, the people that elected this Government in March 2011 want to live in safe communities. They want us to return to our electorates and say that we have done our best to provide the safest communities in which they deserve to live. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Fair Trading) [6.00 p.m.], in reply: As members have heard, the key objective of the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2012 is to establish a licensing scheme for body art tattooists and body art tattoo businesses to ensure that only legitimate business operators work in and operate these businesses. The provisions contained in the bill will ensure that the licensing scheme is restricted to body art tattooing procedures and businesses, and not to people who carry out cosmetic tattoos or tattoos for medical reasons. The provisions will also ensure that only fit and proper persons are granted and can hold a licence. I am confident that this bill will effectively empower the NSW Police Force and NSW Fair Trading to take the necessary action to remove criminal elements from this industry in New South Wales. In doing so, the people of New South Wales will benefit from safer streets and shopping areas.

Legitimate industry participants will be able to operate without fear of reprisal or blackmail from outlaw motorcycle gangs. This bill sends a clear message that New South Wales will not tolerate the unlawful actions of a small minority. I will make a few remarks about the two tests that the Commissioner of Police can apply when deciding whether a licence should be granted, refused or revoked by the Commissioner for Fair Trading. These may be called the fit and proper person test and the public interest test. The police commissioner will be empowered to look into each of these matters, but may make an adverse security determination on the basis of either or both of the two tests. The bill does not seek to define or particularise the meaning of what would be against the public interest in this regulatory regime. It is deliberately broad to allow the police commissioner sufficient scope to get crime gangs out of this industry and keep them out. We trust that the Administrative Decisions Tribunal will keep this in mind when hearing any appeals against adverse determination.

The public interest test is not intended to be focused on issues particular to the art of tattooing or to concern itself with the competence of those performing the service. It is designed to address the criminal matters currently surrounding the industry, such as extortion, money laundering, personal violence, firearms crime, illicit drug offences, arson and so on. Applicants who are part of this criminal world can and should be refused a licence on public interest grounds. The fit and proper person test will often cover the same kinds of criminal activities as those just mentioned. However, there may also be cases in which an applicant is not connected with organised crime gangs, such as bikies, but is still deemed to be not fit and proper. For example, an applicant may have a long history of receiving stolen goods or involvement in fraud offences. In respect of both tests, the commissioner may have regard to the person's criminal history and any criminal intelligence concerning them. The latter is vital.

We know bikie gangs use "clean skins"—an apt term in the current context—to act as fronts for them in their businesses. These people are chosen precisely because they have no criminal record. However, if the commissioner has credible evidence of their links to bikie gangs, under this scheme he may refuse or revoke their licence. In her speech supporting this legislation, the member for Bankstown expressed a concern that close associates are not defined sufficiently in the bill and asked that the Government consider extending the definition to incorporate close relatives of tattoo parlour operators. The member is concerned that members of outlaw motorcycle gangs may use relatives to register businesses. As long as a person holds a relevant financial interest, is able to exercise any power over the business or will hold any relevant position in the business, that person will be captured by the current definition of "close associate".

This includes persons who are close relatives. The names and addresses of these persons must be provided to NSW Fair Trading and will be included in police checks. I thank the member for Bankstown for her support for and significant contribution to this matter. When a person fails to nominate close associates and NSW Fair Trading or the NSW Police Force become aware of this, it may be grounds for cancellation of a licence. The Government is of the view that the bill is sufficiently robust to catch close relatives with its fit and proper person and public interest tests, as I have outlined, without further amendment. I will also say a brief word about the status of employees in tattoo parlours. Unless they are employed as tattooists, they do not have to be personally licensed. It would be impractical and unreasonable to demand that anyone who works in a parlour—for example, a cleaner—should have to be licensed.

However, as members would be aware, there is a risk that the person who really runs the show is employed in the parlour in some non-licensable capacity, for example, a receptionist or a bookkeeper. The bill provides that the names of all employees must be provided to the Commissioner for Fair Trading who will then advise the NSW Police Force. The Commissioner of Police may make further checks regarding these employees if it is deemed prudent to do so, and material relating to those employees can form part of his reasons for making an adverse security determination. However, unlike the case with licensable persons, it will be up to the police commissioner's own risk assessment as to which employees deserve full scrutiny and which employees do not. I turn to one of the specific issues raised by a number of Opposition members. The member for Bankstown would like the Government to address the potential for this bill to be challenged in the courts.

As the member would be aware, all legislation, once passed, is subject to legal challenge, for that is the basis of our democratic process. The Government is well aware that outlaw motorcycle gangs are well resourced and, in the past, have been willing to use those resources in the courts to challenge legislation that is not in their interests. However, the Government has sought to draft this legislation—as with all its legislation—as robustly and rigorously as possible in order to resist such challenges by persons who would seek to defeat it. The regulatory scheme that the bill creates is modelled in part on other schemes that are already in place and have been operating effectively for some time. For example, provisions relating to the protection of criminal

intelligence and criminal information in reviews of licence decisions are substantially similar to those within the Security Industry Act 1997. However, the Government stands ready and willing to resist any such challenge to this vital legislation.

I take this opportunity to thank the members for Bankstown, Hawkesbury, Fairfield, Riverstone, Shellharbour, Epping, Keira, Oatley, Myall Lakes, Granville, Orange, Baulkham Hills, Rockdale, East Hills, Gosford, Newcastle, Coffs Harbour, Coogee, Dubbo, Monaro, Charlestown, Port Macquarie, Vacluse, Londonderry, Cronulla, Penrith and Wagga Wagga for their wonderful contributions to this debate. I also take this opportunity to thank all those from NSW Fair Trading and the NSW Police Force who have contributed to the development of this bill, which will help to break the nexus between outlaw motorcycle gangs and the ownership of body art tattoo parlours, and ensure that legitimate operators can run those businesses effectively. I commend the bill to the House.

Question—That this bill be now read a second time—put and resolved in the affirmative.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Motion by Mr Anthony Roberts agreed to:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council with a message seeking its concurrence in the bill.

FIREARMS AMENDMENT (AMMUNITION CONTROL) BILL 2012

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 10 May 2012

Mr RICHARD AMERY (Mount Druitt) [6.09 p.m.]: I make a brief contribution to the Firearms Amendment (Ammunition Control) Bill 2012, which, as indicated by other Opposition members, we will not oppose. The object of the bill is to amend the Firearms Act 1996 to prevent the sale of ammunition by a licensed firearms dealer to a shooter unless the purchaser is the registered owner of or has a permit to acquire a firearm that takes the ammunition, in addition to the existing requirement that the purchaser must hold a licence or permit for a firearm that takes the ammunition. That is a fairly brief description. Most people looking at that would say it seems fair enough. The Opposition is not opposing the bill, as I have already said. From listening to the debate in the Chamber and in the public I am unclear why we are supporting a bill which clearly is such nonsense.

The bill, if Government speakers are to be believed, is part of a package of reforms to stop drive-by shootings. How this bill does that is unclear. The bill seems to suggest that offenders are registered firearm owners and use registered firearms in the commission of their crimes. The first question is how many licensed shooters among those arrested so far for these drive-by shootings are, first, a licensed shooter, and, second, have a registered firearm or are using a registered firearm? The question actually is almost as silly as it sounds. Today I lodged that very question on notice. I will be interested in the answer. In view of the objectives of the bill, I would just like to see how the bill will affect me as a licensed shooter. I own, among others, a 12 gauge shotgun, a couple of .22 rifles and a .22 magnum. The bill restricts me to buying ammunition for those firearms. As I said, on the face of it, that seems fair enough. But how does that stop criminal activity? Again, I am at a loss to explain.

For example, the bill would prevent my buying .410 shotgun shells as a gift for a family member and take them to the country, despite the fact I have owned a firearm since the age of 13 years. Again, it is an inconvenience—probably no big deal—but I cannot see how it is preventing drive-by shootings and crime. How does this restriction on me and other legal gun owners curb drive-by shootings in Sydney, western Sydney and so on? Clearly it does not. Silly laws like this are raised and passed to give the impression that we as legislators

are doing something, doing anything. We hurt, annoy, upset and infringe on the activities of the innocent whilst the guilty just particularly laugh at us.

From the reforms that followed the Port Arthur massacre to now we continue to create administrative nightmares for decent law-abiding citizens and tie up police resources that could be better put to use against the real gun offenders. Police want all those laws. Gun control lobbies want these types of laws. Because of the emotion behind certain offences and crimes we are all frog-marched as legislators—both sides of the political fence—into supporting them. That is why, I assume, the Government is introducing the bill and the Opposition, of which I am a member, is supporting it. I do not know why, but we will not oppose the bill. We do have to be seen to be doing something and that is why both sides of the House will support this legislative piece of nonsense.

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour—The Assistant-Speaker) [6.13 p.m.]: It was interesting to listen to the member for Mount Druitt. I remind him of when he was in government and I put a question on notice similar to the one that he mentioned today. I asked the then police Minister, Mr Whelan, how many criminals had handed their guns in. I was told that the question was frivolous and should not have been asked and therefore did not get an answer. I agree with every sentiment the member for Mount Druitt has expressed here today. If you had 80 drive-by shootings in western Sydney in the last 12 months at an average of 10 shots that involves 800 rounds of ammunition. I guarantee that there are hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition out there at the moment unaccounted for, illegally obtained and owned by people who intend to utilise firearms in an illegal manner.

This piece of legislation will do nothing but impose restrictions on people in my electorate, good honest citizens who are farmers, who need a firearm for vermin control, or sporting shooters who belong to one of several sporting shooting clubs in my electorate. I know these people personally, have done for many years, even before I was in politics. Like the member for Mount Druitt, I was taught how to use a gun by my father—at the age of seven. I had my first single-shot Lithgow Small Arms .22 at the age of 12 and I was taught responsible ownership of firearms. As a result of previous legislation passed by this House and the fact that I was no longer a registered primary producer my licence was withdrawn.

I could have fought the case but I did not do it. I no longer have any weapons. When our home burnt down a number of years ago I had two cows calve whilst we were not living at the property; we were in temporary accommodation. One had her calf savaged by wild dogs and she was a frail cow anyway, and she went down—who knows why. I had to get the vet out to euthanase that cow and it cost me \$300. A fortnight later the other cow calved. She got stuck in a creek. It was 24 hours before I found her. I got her out of it but she eventually was so weak I had to once again get the vet out to euthanase her, at a cost of \$300. If I still had my single-shot .22 I could have euthanased that cow myself at no cost.

As I said in the previous debate on this issue, we have a duty—we have an obligation—to ensure that every citizen lives in safety. We have an obligation to ensure that the police are given every piece of legislation they need to stop the drive-by shootings and other shootings. In Brisbane an innocent bystander was injured. But I do not believe this legislation will take one stray gun off the street or will take one bullet out of the hands of the criminals who wish to use them illegally. What we do need is stronger powers for the police. Why do we not bring back the old 21 Division? If outlaw motor cycle gangs are in behind the drive-by shootings—it appears more obvious each day that this is the case—why do we not hold them to account?

We know where their clubhouses are. I commend the police in my electorate for recently knocking over the Lone Wolf motorcycle gang headquarters in an industrial estate and seizing illegal firearms and drugs. Give the police the powers of entry. Give the police the authority to go in and act how they need to act to keep us safe. As the member for Mount Druitt said, if he wanted to take a box of .410 cartridges—the .410 used to be known as a snake gun when I lived in the western districts—out west and give them to someone he cannot do it under his current licence. If you are a licensed shooter the police know where you live. If you are a licensed shooter you have a responsibility: you have to understand the use and the owning and storage of firearms in the correct way.

This legislation is going to make it hard for gun dealers, for farmers and for sporting shooters. Even under the new legislation, when someone orders 200 rounds a crooked dealer can write the order out without the customer seeing. The dealer could add 250. He could do that for people purchasing. Then he has extra rounds that he can slip out without anyone knowing. At a shooting range on a weekend—they may be using bench rest

.22s or pistols or shotguns for clays or centre fire rifles on the long range—thousands of shells are used. No-one really picks up and counts each shell that has been fired. This legislation will not account for spent cartridges.

If the legislation provided that every cartridge case had to have an identification number on it, I could understand how that may go some way toward resolving the ammunition issue. The vast majority of ammunition used in Australia is manufactured in Australia. Only a few weeks ago the police, through intelligence, found that a crime ring was bringing pistols into Australia through Australia Post, bringing in illegal firearms and ammunition. I guarantee that this legislation will not stop that sort of activity. However, if there is a way to empower the police and give them the resources to do something about illegal firearms and the illegal activity created by people with illegal firearms we should do that. I have been told in the past few days that there will be a clay pigeon contest of some note—I do not know whether it is international or national—in Sydney in the near future.

Mr Richard Torbay: An Olympic sport.

Mr ANDREW FRASER: Yes. How many shells will be fired during that competition? Some 45,000 shells will be fired. With figures like that, this legislation will not fix the problem. I feel sorry for the honest sporting shooters and farmers in my electorate, who will have an impost because of this legislation. As the member for Mount Druitt said, as legislators we will pass the legislation through the House and we will feel good about doing so. But in reality this legislation will not stop one drive-by shooting or one illegal round of ammunition being fired.

Mr Brad Hazzard: Come outside.

Mr ANDREW FRASER: The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Infrastructure New South Wales said that I should come outside. I was brought up in Newcastle and I have spent most of my life in the bush. I have shot pigs. The member for Northern Tablelands was born in Coffs Harbour. I have shot most calibre rifles and guns during my life. I believe I am a safe user of firearms. When I owned firearms I stored them correctly and within the law. But criminals will take no note of this legislation. They have not taken note of other legislation which is already in place. Paul Whelan told me that my question was frivolous. I guess the member for Mount Druitt will get the same answer. In reality, no criminals will hand in ammunition. They will continue to obtain ammunition illegally, as they have obtained firearms illegally. At the end of the day this legislation will be passed. The only people who will be inconvenienced by it are retailers and firearms owners, be they farmers or sporting shooters. I am saddened by this legislation.

Mr RICHARD TORBAY (Northern Tablelands) [6.22 p.m.]: I oppose the Firearms Amendment (Ammunition Control) Bill 2012. I agree with the member for Coffs Harbour and the member for Mount Druitt. The Government is sponsoring the bill and the Opposition is supporting the bill, although Opposition members spoke well against the contents of the legislation, which will not meet the Government's desired outcomes. The bill was first introduced in the other place. I read all bills in detail. The first word I jotted in my notes after reading this bill was "Why?" Why would the Government introduce legislation that will do absolutely nothing to reduce crime, including the drive-by shootings in Sydney and the outlying metropolitan areas, which is the claimed intent of this legislation?

I would never without proper consideration stand in the way of legislation that meaningfully reduces crime or has that as its purpose. This bill does not do that. What it will do—we have heard some comment about this, and I suspect it is the reason behind the bill—is give the Government an opportunity to say to the public and to newspapers that it is doing something about the drive-by shootings that have plagued Sydney and outlying metropolitan areas. The bill, by its nature, will also defame law-abiding citizens, namely, sporting shooters and farmers, and others who overwhelmingly undertake the ownership of firearms in a law-abiding, professional and appropriate way. Also, by requiring detailed records to be kept, the bill is imposing additional red tape and bureaucracy—red tape that the Government has always insisted it wants to reduce. In this legislation we add a lot of red tape to each location where ammunition is sold.

This information is currently held by police, and that is appropriate. However, the bill will provide a database or a shopping list for criminals in numerous retail outlets, because the specific details relating to types of firearms, ammunition and where they are kept will be located in the premises. It is a shopping list for criminals in a much more widely available range of places. How that can be seen as more safe is beyond me. Clearly, this legislation is policy on the run. It is ill considered and it will not have the impacts that the Government desires. If this legislation had been properly considered it would not be in its current form.

I acknowledge the amendment, which was pushed hard by Government members in the upper House, to make a slight change to the provisions relating to the purchase of ammunition by individuals. However, that change has weakened further the case for this legislation, given that the amendment was carried in the other place.

The amendment simply reduces the potential impact of the legislation and demonstrates the lack of consideration and thought that has gone into this bill. It is for those reasons that I strongly oppose the bill. I do not think it is a good look for a government to impose what is clearly policy on the run. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that this bill is about saying that something is being done, but it will not have any impact on reducing crime or drive-by shootings. I am sure other members have received representations similar to those I have received from law-abiding sporting shooters and farmers. They have not been involved in the drive-by shootings. These law-abiding citizens obviously feel aggrieved by this legislation. I think the bill should be withdrawn and proper consideration should be given to something that will work. This bill most certainly will not work, and I urge members not to support it.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Brad Hazzard and set down as an order of the day for a future day.

ACTING-SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): Order! Government business having concluded, the House will now consider the matter of public importance.

RSPCA MILLION PAWS WALK

Matter of Public Importance

Mrs ROZA SAGE (Blue Mountains) [6.27 p.m.]: I am pleased to speak about the Million Paws Walk, which took place on Sunday 20 May. The Million Paws Walk is a major fundraising event held by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals [RSPCA]. The organisation was formed 130 years ago and is highly respected in animal welfare circles. The day was a fun day for our furry four-footed friends and their two-legged carers, as well as a celebration of responsible pet ownership. The Blue Mountains Million Paws Walk, which I attended, was held at Melrose Park in Katoomba. The organisers commented that it was one of the biggest turnouts, with hundreds of people and their pets in attendance. Most of the pets out on the day were dogs, with a couple of intrepid ferrets making an appearance. At the oval there were various stalls, including the local RSPCA cake stall, local pet businesses and the Central Blue Rotary Club, with which I was also involved, which was responsible for the catering.

It was a great morning with the walk around the oval, obedience displays from the local dog clubs and displays of agility. Dogs were judged in many categories and prizes were given for the dog with the best smile, the blackest blue cattle dog, the dog with the shortest legs, the dog with the most spots, to name a few. There was a special category for ferrets, all adding to the fun of the day. The Million Paws Walk brings awareness to the important work that the RSPCA undertakes in providing care for about 44,000 sick, injured and stray animals each year, as well as supporting the daily battle to stop animal cruelty. The New South Wales Coalition Government recognises the important and valuable work of the society. Prior to the March 2011 election the now Premier toured the shelter at Yagoona and announced a \$7.5 million commitment. At the time the RSPCA chief executive officer, Mr Steve Coleman, posted a media release on the RSPCA website, which said:

"We've been lobbying the government since 2008 for a one-off funding allocation to help fund the rebuild," said Mr Coleman. "But we've been met with a silence up until now."

"This is the first time that any political party has committed funds of this magnitude to the RSPCA and we all have reason to celebrate today," said Mr Coleman.

This commitment has been delivered, with two equal payments, one this financial year and the other next financial year, as announced in December 2011 by the Premier and the Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson. The Yagoona shelter cares for about 18,000 animals each year and is the largest animal holding facility in the southern hemisphere. It has the capacity to house 900 dogs and 300 cats at any one time, as well as a large number of livestock, birds and other small animals. With this grant the shelter will provide a new veterinary clinic, education centre, community pet friendly park, rehabilitation centre and holding facility for animals involved in inspector cases.

Animal welfare is an issue that the New South Wales Government takes very seriously. Recent statistics for the euthanasia of cats and dogs in New South Wales pounds are shocking, with 33 per cent of dogs

and 70 per cent of cats arriving at a pound later being euthanased. The Government initiated the first ever in New South Wales Companion Animals Taskforce seeking community input on future pet policies to reduce the number of dogs and cats euthanased in pounds. The taskforce has brought together leading animal welfare experts, including the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League, the Cat Protection Society, the Australian Veterinary Association, pet breeders and local government representatives, including council rangers.

The taskforce is chaired by my colleague the member for Charlestown, Andrew Cornwell, who was a vet prior to entering politics. It is currently taking submissions from the general public and is travelling around New South Wales holding community consultations. Submissions close on 1 July, so I encourage people with an interest in animal welfare to contribute. The taskforce is examining all issues related to euthanasia of pets and unacceptable breeding practices. I know from firsthand experience the care and the dedication of all staff at the RSPCA shelters and I can speak of the Blue Mountains shelter at Katoomba, where earlier this year I visited with my youngest daughter to adopt a kitten. I congratulate the RSPCA on the wonderful work it does and thoroughly congratulate it on the Million Paws Walk on Sunday.

Ms NOREEN HAY (Wollongong) [6.32 p.m.]: The Illawarra RSPCA Million Paws Walk was held at Reddall Reserve on Sunday 20 May 2012. This is a beautiful spot where people can enjoy the day on the picturesque foreshores of Lake Illawarra. There was the option of a mini-walk of approximately two kilometres for old or very young dogs or walking the loop twice for a four-kilometre walk. The Illawarra RSPCA Million Paws Walk is a fun day out for families and people of all ages and is an opportunity for the Illawarra RSPCA shelter and volunteer branch to raise vital funds for the RSPCA and to promote responsible pet ownership. The event was hosted by local radio breakfast broadcaster for i98FM Bianca Dye.

As well as being a fun-filled day for two-legged and four-legged friends, people had the opportunity to enjoy a number of activities. There were food and beverage stalls including a sausage sizzle, a jumping castle, a dog obedience display, games to be enjoyed with dogs, Harley-Davidson rides, face painting, Oz Ball, which is a giant water ball of fun, dog washes by Aussie Pooch, free vet advice, an auction of desexing, vaccinations and vet services, market stalls and discounted microchipping by Shellharbour City Council. Particular interest was shown in the fancy dress competition. Moneys raised through entry fees, merchandise sales and individual fundraising actively assist the RSPCA to continue its operations, programs and services, as well as supporting the daily battle to stop animal cruelty. I agree with the comments of the member for Blue Mountains that economic euthanasia for animals is terribly sad.

We should all take note that not everyone can afford to have their animals treated because of the high cost of vet fees and so the question of economic euthanasia raises its head quite often. Without the assistance and specialty services provided by the RSPCA, many elderly people, pensioners and the like would unfortunately lose their pets. Members of the Rural Fire Service were on hand on the day should their services be required. The registration fee was \$10 and in attendance also were Bark Busters, pooch washers and the Naughty Dog Whisperer in the Illawarra, Sandra Mullaly. She has had a couple of my naughty dogs on more than one occasion. She is very good but my dogs were a bit slow on the uptake. Hundreds of walkers were involved in Sunday's event. Prizes were given for the best dressed dogs and there appeared to be many dogs dressed as fairies with wings and ballerina tutus.

My Great Danes would have had some difficulties wearing ballerina tutus but there were security dogs. The highlight was when the Tibetan spaniel of my staffer, Kiley Martin, Cimba, who weighs in the region of eight kilograms, and my Great Dane pup, Trampus, who is 12 months old and weighs approximately 80 kilograms, walked side by side. I do not want to take away from those who have cats, but I have three Great Danes and I am very proud to say that those dogs are well loved. Their ownership makes me aware of the expense involved with sick dogs, dogs that need help, dogs that may be mistreated or suffer from cruelty and the magnificent work of the wonderful volunteers involved with organisations such as the RSPCA, particularly in the Illawarra. Indeed, they also rehome many cats, dogs and other animals. I refer in particular to the elderly, frail and disabled who may need assistance. This is why the RSPCA should be given as much money as people can afford to donate to carry out its great work.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.37 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to speak to this matter of public importance on the Million Paws Walk and to follow my parliamentary colleague the member for Blue Mountains, who is from a neighbouring electorate. I know that she is passionate about the Million Paws Walk, as is the member for Wollongong. I am glad we did not have her Great Danes walking around in tutus. That is a very scary thought, especially if their owner dressed up in a tutu as well. The RSPCA

is a wonderful organisation, a community-based charity that works to prevent cruelty to animals. It actively promotes the care and protection of animals. The Million Paws Walk held last Sunday is a nation-wide initiative and is the biggest fundraising event held by the RSPCA each year.

Across the State many walks were designated to raise much-needed funds and thousands of people across the State registered their dogs, fundraised and participated in the various walks. They raised funds for those less fortunate animals held in RSPCA care. The primary aim is to drum up funds for the organisation but another is to raise awareness of responsible pet ownership. The Million Paws Walk was begun in 1994 in Queensland by Dr Cam Day, so it has been taking place for some time. It is estimated that each year 44,000 animals need to be found shelter. The RSPCA Million Paws Walk has already raised \$135,997 online, so this is a fantastic initiative. I went on the weekend to the walk that was held in Bathurst on the banks of the Macquarie River. My family and I joined hundreds of pets and pet owners who turned up on the day to take part in the walk.

There were dogs of all sizes, ages and breeds. It was probably one of the biggest annual doggy days out that we have had in Bathurst. We did not have dogs in tutus in Bathurst as the member for Wollongong did in her area—it was probably a bit cold—but we had dogs in prams, dogs being carried by their owners and some dogs that were taller than their masters. I have a beautiful little dog, a King Charles Cavalier cross Bichon Frisé, which my family took in the walk. We registered very early and donated money. Raffles were held on the day and everybody was there—teams, businesses and corporates were involved in raising funds. The raffle was drawn at the end of the day and I was very fortunate to win a bed for our dog, Cleo, which she is enjoying very much. I just hope the dog is not in the house while I am here in Parliament.

Mrs ROZA SAGE (Blue Mountains) [6.40 p.m.], in reply: What a wonderful charity the RSPCA Million Paws Walk is. It brings people together. It was lovely to hear what a dog lover the member for Wollongong is. When I was growing up we had Dobermans so I really like the bigger dogs, but the member for Wollongong has three Great Danes and that is a lot of dog. The member for Bathurst has his Cavalier King Charles cross Bichon Frisé. The RSPCA shelters at Illawarra, Bathurst and Katoomba all had a wonderful day. That was the whole focus of the day. People come together with their "fur children", because they are so greatly loved by their owners. The member for Dubbo is another dog lover. He has a picture of his dog on his iPad—that is real commitment—and a lovely dog it is.

The RSPCA is a wonderful charity because it looks after the 44,000 pets that are sent to shelters across the State. It is a tragedy that many of them are strays and others are given up by their owners. Many of the animals are euthanased. The Government is seeking through the task force to prevent that from happening: it is so sad that pets are put down, often for no good reason. People had a lot of fun during the Million Paws Walk at each location. The whole community was involved, including the Rural Fire Service, radio broadcasters and private companies that provide dog washing and other services. The RSPCA did extremely well and to have raised \$135,000 online is amazing. It is all for a really good cause. The RSPCA does a fabulous job in all animal welfare areas. I commend the organisation and congratulate it on a wonderful day that was had by all.

Discussion concluded.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TUGGERAH LAKES LOCAL AREA COMMAND

Mr GARRY EDWARDS (Swansea) [6.44 p.m.]: I regret to advise that there is not a single reference to a dog or a tutu in what I am about to say. Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command, which is well known to you, Madam Acting-Speaker, is tasked with protecting the communities at the southern end of my electorate and it is that local area command I wish to acknowledge today. I refer to the current situation relating to crime trends within that local area command. Under the leadership of the ever-approachable Tuggerah Lakes commander, David Swilks, the command has seen the incidence of crime in a number of categories diminish, and it is my understanding that community engagement in reporting crime is steadily increasing. It is positive outcomes such as these that have compelled me to speak today on behalf of the Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command.

Since December 2011, 15 new probationary constables have been allocated to the Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command. These new police officers have assisted the local area command to operate at full operational strength and to tackle crime categories aggressively. Since we came to government in March 2011

the command has experienced a consistent lowering in the number of incidents of assaults, malicious damage and stealing from motor vehicles. The command has also increased the number of search warrants executed upon the homes of criminals, from 30 in 2008 to 74 in 2011. Thus far this year the command has executed 19 search warrants. These warrants were for crimes including armed robbery, drug supply, goods in custody and receiving stolen property. Search warrants send a strong message to criminals that there is nowhere they can harbour illegal firearms, stolen goods or illicit drugs.

The command has had a number of major breakthroughs in tackling drug distribution networks throughout the Wyong region. From December 2011 through January 2012, police uncovered six homes in established residential areas that had been gutted and converted into premises for growing commercial hydroponic cannabis and manufacturing drugs. Drugs seized during these raids had an estimated value of \$5 million. Other inquiries in January and February 2012 led to the execution of numerous search warrants and the seizure of 674 cannabis plants, 10 kilograms of cannabis leaf and six kilograms of cocaine. During late 2011 and January 2012, the Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command along with neighbouring commands in the Hunter region experienced a number of robbery offences where firearms were used. Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command was assisted by State Crime Command to set up Strike Force Blumer, which culminated in the arrest and charging of six individuals for their involvement in five of the above offences. To date there have been no similar offences committed in the Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command since these arrests. All offenders are currently before the courts.

I am advised by Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Commander David Swilks that the command has taken a proactive approach to remain engaged with the community. Tuggerah Lakes police hold regular meetings with school principals and local precincts, and consult with the community about relevant policing issues. The command also endeavours to ensure consistent policing throughout its geographical area and, when able, utilises its mobile command post or mobile police station to visit the more remote locations in the southern end of the Swansea electorate. I was proud to attend the official opening of the new Wyong Police Station on 17 April 2012 with Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione and Commander David Swilks. This state-of-the-art facility will allow specialist and support police teams to be housed under one roof, and can only mean that the villages surrounding Wyong will enjoy more efficient and effective policing responses.

This week a public meeting is to be held at Wyong Police Station to launch the Eyewatch initiative. Eyewatch is designed to encourage the public to report crime on the Facebook social networking site. Information travels very fast on social networking sites, and police are attempting to tap into this very powerful form of communication. The success of this new initiative of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon. Michael Gallacher, is entirely dependent upon the willingness of the public to support our police and to report all incidents of criminal activity. I both thank and congratulate Commander Swilks, along with all the other police officers from the Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command who put their hands up every single day to serve and protect our communities.

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.49 p.m.]: I commend the member for Swansea for bringing to the attention of the House the outstanding work and achievements of the Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command under the leadership of the very fine Superintendent Swilks, my former colleague. The member for Swansea told us about project Eyewatch, and I join him in congratulating the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on this wonderful initiative. It also operates in Narromine and Dubbo within the Orana Local Area Command in my electorate. It was great to hear that the 15 probationary constables allocated to the Tuggerah Lakes command, the attention to detail and initiatives such as Strike Force Blumer are having a positive impact within the communities served by the Tuggerah Lakes command. I commend the member for Swansea for his support of his local police. I also congratulate all the boys and girls in blue at Tuggerah Lakes.

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN McCORMICK, OAM

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) [6.50 p.m.]: I pay tribute to a great former member of my local community, Mr Kevin McCormick, OAM. Mr McCormick passed away on Thursday 17 May 2012 after a short stay in hospital. In his obituary published in the *Daily Telegraph* on Saturday 19 May Mr McCormick was endearingly referred to as "Mr Bankstown". The obituary noted that Mr McCormick was "A truly gentle man who will be sadly missed and is now an integral part of the history of Bankstown." I had the pleasure of knowing Kevin McCormick for more than 10 years, during my time as Mayor of Bankstown and a councillor at Bankstown City Council. Mr McCormick was a founding member of Bankstown Sports. He remained extremely proud of his membership number at Bankstown Sports—he was member No. 2. In recognition of his years of service to Bankstown Sports he was made a life member in 1976.

Kevin McCormick was born on 29 July 1929. He grew up in Finley, a small town in the Riverina region. Mr McCormick's father was a schoolteacher. The family moved first to Nowra, where Kevin completed schooling, and then in 1946 moved to Randwick while Kevin studied at the Hawkesbury Agricultural College. In 1947 the family moved to Bankstown. After leaving school Kevin got a job at Proud's the jewellers, where he worked for 38 years. Mr McCormick's work at Bankstown Sports spanned four decades. In total, he gave 39 years of his life in service to Bankstown Sports. Mr McCormick served as a director and vice president of Bankstown Sports. Finally, he served as president of Bankstown Sports from 1987 to March 2006.

During his unprecedented 21 years as president Mr McCormick's stewardship at Bankstown Sports saw it grow into the institution it is today. During his time as president of Bankstown Sports he supported community projects worth more than \$1.5 million. From 2001 to 2006 alone Bankstown Sports gave \$700,000 to Bankstown hospital and \$2.78 million to Bankstown City Aged Care. Mr McCormick help build ties with the community. He helped to establish strong relations between Bankstown Sports and the more than 70 local schools in the Greater Bankstown area. Mr McCormick was at the forefront of engaging with the local community.

In recognition of his commitment to local sport, on 8 February 2000 the Bankstown Memorial Oval grandstand was named after him. Bankstown Cricket Club decided it would be called the Kevin McCormick Grandstand. Mr McCormick foresaw the need to provide support for our ageing population and served as a board member for Bankstown City Aged Care, where he made a dynamic contribution to that great local organisation. In 1998 Kevin was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to sport and the community. Mr McCormick was considered an elder statesman in the New South Wales club movement. In 2007, following his retirement as President, ClubsNSW conferred upon Mr McCormick the Outstanding Contribution to the Club Movement award. According to the President of Bankstown Sports, John Murray, Mr McCormick was an institution in Bankstown. He said:

Kevin McCormick was a driving force at Bankstown Sports. He was at the forefront of connecting with local sporting groups and schools and supporting the local community.

Chief Executive Officer of Bankstown City Aged Care Terry Madden praised Mr McCormick's contribution to Aged Care in Bankstown, saying:

Kevin will be sorely missed as a great local Bankstown identity, a strong community advocate, a true believer in Labor and a man whose legacy is writ large by his deeds. He was a great man.

Many in my local community have spoken in praise of Mr McCormick. In particular, people have told me that Mr McCormick was a friend to all. He genuinely wanted to help people and would talk to anyone. He was a humble man and was well known in my community. He never had a bad word to say about anybody. Mr McCormick will be greatly missed by the Bankstown community. His loss is a tragedy for the Greater Bankstown area, the sporting and community sectors, and the club movement. I extend my sincerest condolences to his long-term partner, Margaret, and to their families.

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.55 p.m.]: On behalf of the Government I thank the member for Bankstown for bringing to the attention of the House the passing of this remarkable local hero, Kevin McCormick. His significant contribution to his community was recognised with a Medal of the Order of Australia and the naming of a grandstand after him by the Bankstown Cricket Club. Mr McCormick, who came from Finley, was of good regional stock and he carried those attributes with him throughout his remarkable community service. I am sure that he will be sorely missed but his contribution to the Bankstown community and his legacy will act as an inspiration to other members of that community.

TRIBUTE TO RON HILL

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) [6.56 p.m.]: For 40 years Mr Ron Hill from Figtree, which is in the southern part of my electorate of Keira, has been a telephone counsellor for Lifeline. He has been at the end of the phone helping people during some of their darkest periods. Ron was instrumental in getting Lifeline up and running in the South Coast region. In the past 40 years he has saved hundreds of lives. He has dealt with suicides, drug and alcohol problems and a range of other issues, such as financial and emotional problems. Ron's support for Lifeline counsellors and the work of Graeme Gould and other Lifeline staff was recognised recently at a function that I attended. Our community should be very proud of Ron Hill. When I heard Ron's story I was somewhat taken aback. I could only imagine the assistance he has provided to families, the number of people he

has saved and the young people thinking of suicide whom he has talked to in a calm and assuring manner, bringing them out of a big black hole and giving them hope.

Like me, Ron was a teacher at a number of local schools. He now resides with his family at Figtree. I put on the *Hansard* record my sincere congratulations to Ron Hill on his 40 years of service as a Lifeline telephone counsellor, supporter and worker. We all value Lifeline and have constituents who are in a better place because of its work. Ron Hill has helped people whose lives were gloomy; they were in a black hole as a result of drug and alcohol abuse and mental health issues. Our community is extremely proud of Ron. I know that all members of his House have people like Ron Hill in their electorates. It is important to recognise the work of Lifeline South Coast, and particularly of Ron Hill. They help people during their darkest hours. The number of lives they save is immeasurable, as is the contribution that people like Ron Hill make to the betterment of society. I know all members of this House recognise the important role that Lifeline plays in our communities.

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Parliamentary Secretary) [7.00 p.m.]: On behalf of the Government I thank the member for Keira for bringing to the attention of the House the outstanding contribution made to Lifeline by his constituent Mr Ron Hill from Figtree. As the member said, that wonderful organisation benefits us all and its contribution to our community is immeasurable. I recently participated in a Lifeline fundraising event organised by the Rotary Club of Dubbo Macquarie. I join the member for Keira in urging all members to support this wonderful cause and volunteers such as Ron Hill.

CAMPBELLTOWN ELECTORATE EVENTS

Mr BRYAN DOYLE (Campbelltown) [7.02 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to inform the House about some of the great things that have happened recently in Campbelltown—that fabulous opal of the south west. On Monday last week I visited the Macarthur Diversity Services Initiative to celebrate the efforts of volunteers. The organisation's mission is to assist disadvantaged and marginalised people by providing services that facilitate acceptance and inclusiveness, develop individual, family and community resilience, and build enduring relationships. I was proud to present Joe Asfoura with the Macarthur Diversity Services Initiative Volunteer of the Year Award. Joe was born in Palestine and has lived in the Macarthur area for more than 20 years with his lovely wife, Amparo. During that time he has taught English to migrants and helped them to assimilate and to become good citizens.

On Tuesday I visited Northcott Disability Services, which you, Madam Acting-Speaker, know very well. It provides support to people with a range of disabilities and to their families and carers. The organisation often deals with people suffering from rare and lesser known disabilities and offers them services that only it provides. I was proud to attend a celebration morning tea for volunteers and to thank them for their tireless efforts as part of National Volunteer Week. The following day I was blessed to attend the Kids of Macarthur Health Foundation sportsmen's dinner held at the Ingleburn RSL Club, another great facility in Campbelltown—the opal of the south-west—that provides facilities to assist the local kids. The Kids of Macarthur Health Foundation raises funds for vital medical equipment for the Campbelltown Hospital. The dinner was hosted by David Marsh and Darryl Brohman, who is known as the "Big Marn" and is heard on 2GB. West Tigers team members also turned out in force to support the event. I was proud on behalf of the Parliament and the Premier to present a \$5,000 cheque to Bruce Hanrahan, the chairman of the foundation. That money will greatly assist the work that the foundation does in the community.

On Wednesday 16 May I opened a Sector Connect function held to thank volunteers for their work. Perhaps most touchingly, I sang the national anthem with a lovely young lady, Aimee Hannan, a courageous and talented performer who is recovering from a serious injury and is still wheelchair bound. Our duet was her first public performance and I am glad that I could emulate the great singing style for which the Attorney General is renowned. I was at the Ingleburn RSL Club again the next day to commemorate the Battle of Coral-Balmoral, which occurred during the Vietnam War. I was pleased and proud to stand with members of the RSL sub-branch and the women's auxiliary, who are our veterans' unsung supporters. It was touching to see the American, Australian and New Zealand flags raised together and to hear the national anthems of those nations that have stood together to defend liberty.

On Thursday night I was guest of honour at the annual Wollongong Diocesan Education Mass conducted at Mary Immaculate Parish Church at Eagle Vale. The mass was presided over by Bishop Peter Ingham and local priests. During the mass, two new principals were commissioned by the bishop and Mr Peter Turner, the director of schools. All the new teachers in the Catholic education system were also blessed by the

bishop and commissioned to their teaching task. I was also pleased to take my daughter to see a performance of the Agatha Christie thriller *The Unexpected Guest* at the Campbelltown Town Hall Theatre, of which I am a patron. It is wonderful to acknowledge the enormous number of people in Campbelltown who give so much to our community. That is one of the reasons that I am so proud to be the local member.

DUBBO SHOW

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Parliamentary Secretary) [7.05 p.m.]: We all love good country shows because they evoke nostalgic feelings of happy childhoods. Country shows have a real charm about them. Some equate show time with fast rides, sideshows and Dagwood dogs. However for many the local show honours the agricultural scene. I spent the weekend on the back of a mighty steed—a horse—assisting the ringmaster during a wide range of events at the Dubbo Show. My inner thighs have never felt worse. It has been a while since I rode a horse, but I was honoured to take part in what is known as one of the major agricultural shows in the State. I took pleasure showing the Minister for Primary Industries, the Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson, who officially opened this year's show, how successfully the Dubbo Show combines traditional elements with exhibits and entertainment and attracts people year after year. This year the *Better Homes and Gardens* production team filmed an episode of its popular Logie award winning show.

For 139 years the Dubbo Show has been a focal point of community activities within the district. From humble beginnings in 1872, the show is now recognised as one of the top five shows in New South Wales and the premier inland show. The Dubbo Show Society has a long and proud tradition and its members should be impressed with the weekend's event, which attracted more than 17,000 people. As mentioned, the show pays tribute to the agricultural scene. It is important that agriculture is recognised and appreciated for the vital role it plays in the health and wealth of our country. The local show is an event at which we can celebrate excellence in agriculture displayed through the many exhibits, animals, machinery and competitions such as—my favourite—wood chopping, sheepdog trials and cooking displays, and Fast Eddy attended this year. Promoting agriculture ensures that rural communities and agricultural industries continue to thrive. Shows are also places where traditional crafts such as spinning and weaving are demonstrated in an effort to keep these historical skills alive.

Many successful shows are staged throughout the Dubbo electorate; but country shows survive only thanks to hardworking volunteers. Pauline and Trevor McAllister were awarded with honorary life membership of the Dubbo Show Society, and I offer my sincere congratulations on their outstanding efforts. The Yeoval Show was held earlier this month while I was attending to my duties in this place. The Parkes Show Committee will celebrate its 131st anniversary this year. I attended the Parkes Show last year and was astounded by the dedication of the hardworking volunteers. The show committee has 75 voluntary members supported by approximately 150 stewards and a membership of 1,200 families. The show has been cancelled only twice in its history—once in 1942 because of the Second World War and in 2007 because of the equine influenza outbreak. I am proud to be a part of a community that supports its local show. I am praying that the Parkes Show Society does not ask me to ride a horse because that would aggravate my sore hips. I look forward to attending shows that will be held at Forbes, Narromine, Tullamore, Trundle, Peak Hill and Parkes towards the end of this year.

Private members' statements concluded.

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (BIOSECURITY) BILL 2012

Message received from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 7.10 p.m. until
Wednesday 23 May 2012 at 10.00 a.m.**
