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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 10 September 2013

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

DANNY BUDERUS

Mr TIM OWEN (Newcastle) [12.06 p.m.]: Today I reflect on the career of Danny Buderus, one of Newcastle's favourite sons. On Sunday I joined with thousands of adoring fans who had the pleasure of watching Danny Buderus run onto the grounds of Hunter Stadium for the final time. The club legend has had an illustrious career and I take this opportunity to reflect on some of his greatest achievements. The Taree United junior—a future captain of Australia, New South Wales and the Knights—burst onto the rugby league scene while attending St Francis Xavier's College, Hamilton. In 1995 and 1996 he toured with the Australian Schoolboys teams. Two years later, under the guidance of Mal Reilly, the 19-year-old made his Australian Rugby League debut against the now defunct South Queensland Crushers in round 3 of the 1997 season. Later that year the Knights went on to play their first grade grand final, but Buderus had to wait another five years before experiencing premiership glory, when in 2001 he starred in the club's 30-24 win over the Parramatta Eels. Earlier that year, 23-year-old Buderus had his first taste of representative football, playing in the annual Country versus City Origin match and also making his international debut for Australia. He represented his country every year until 2006, playing a total of 24 games for the Kangaroos.

The following year, 2002, the hooker made his first appearance for New South Wales and represented the Blues in every game until he left for the English Super League in late 2008, playing a total of 21 games for New South Wales. In the same year, Buderus celebrated his 200th game for the red and blue. In 2003 the inspirational leader replaced injured Andrew Johns as captain and led New South Wales to victory in 2004. The inspirational leader holds the record for the most appearances as captain for the Blues and the most consecutive appearances for New South Wales. In 2004 Buderus became the third Knights player, after Paul Harragon and Andrew Johns, to captain Australia and during the Tri-Nations tournament he led the Kangaroos to a 44-8 victory over Great Britain. Much to the joy of Knights' members and supporters, the hooker was granted a release from his third and final year at Leeds to return home and finish his career where it all started. Buderus returned to the Knights in the same manner that he left: as an inspirational leader who was willing to put his body on the line for the team. His form earned him selection in the 2012 Country Origin side but, unfortunately, he was forced to withdraw due to injury.

The standing captain signed a one-year contract extension for the 2013 season, but before returning to the field he faced another setback in round 3 which forced Buderus to undergo a second surgery on his back. Given the rehabilitation needed to recover from a second operation, most players would have considered retirement, but Danny was determined to finish his career on his own terms and returned to the field in round 16. The veteran hooker celebrated his 250th game for the red and blue and became the club's most capped player when the Knights scored a crucial victory over Cronulla in round 22. Former teammate and close friend Andrew Johns, who had previously held the record for most games played for the Knights, joined Buderus at Hunter Stadium the following week when the club paid tribute to the father of three. Along the way Buderus, who is held in high esteem not only for his actions on the field but also for his character off the field, has been named the Dally M Hooker of the Year three times as well as the Dally M Representative Player of the Year and the Dally M Player of the Year in 2004.

The Newcastle Knights' convincing win against the Eels last Sunday was especially significant for Buderus, who kicked his first and only goal in front of former team members who had assembled for the Old Boys Day. Reflecting on his career, Danny Buderus told the *Newcastle Herald*, "All I ever wanted to do was to pull on that jersey and play for the fans. It's always filled me with a lot of pride to pull that jersey on"—and today is no different. Danny Buderus, you have filled all Novocastrians with a great sense of pride; you are one of the game's true gentlemen and an inspiration to us all to never give up, even when the going gets tough. Congratulations and thank you for a job well done, mate.

TRIBUTE TO BERYL BEDFORD

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) [12.11 p.m.]: I want to pay tribute to a longstanding friend of the community of Bankstown, Mrs Beryl Merle Bedford. Mrs Bedford passed away peacefully in hospital on Wednesday 28 August at the age of 86. Mrs Bedford was born in Newtown in 1927 and married Mr Jack Bedford, OAM, in 1947. In 1959 they moved to Bankstown and started their family. Mrs Bedford had a high profile in the Bankstown community due to her active involvement in the Returned Services League [RSL] movement, her many charitable endeavours and her business acumen.

As testament to her character, Mrs Bedford opened a dress shop in the Padstow shopping precinct at the incredible age of 72 and ran it until her retirement. When she first thought about opening the shop, Mrs Bedford called her son John and asked, "Should I do this? I might be a bit old". John gave his mother the wise advice that there is no age limit in starting something new and that if she did not take the leap she might regret it. Luckily for the Padstow community, Mrs Bedford took the leap and very successfully ran the dress shop for eight years, with a business partner. Prior to opening her own store, Mrs Bedford worked in a fashion shop in Padstow. All of her customers, who knew and loved her well, followed her straight to her new shop because of her strong reputation.

Bankstown City Council recognised her business by presenting her with a Bankstown City Local Business Award. This award is given to local businesses that push the boundaries in excellent customer service and community work. Mrs Bedford was very well known to her loyal customers, and it is no surprise that she was nominated for and won this accolade. Mrs Bedford, of course, will be remembered most for her generous nature. If the local RSL sub-branch wanted to organise a fundraiser to support the sick, elderly or needy or to promote the interests of our returning defence force personnel, they could always count on the support of Mrs Bedford in helping to raise funds. Those who knew her will always fondly remember her generous nature.

In 2006, Mrs Bedford was placed on the International Women's Day Honour Roll, which recognises and celebrates women who have made an outstanding contribution to their local communities. Mrs Bedford was nominated for her involvement in the community and the fashion industry. The vision, leadership, commitment and support provided by the women on the honour roll has enriched New South Wales, and the success story of great role models such as Mrs Bedford has been a source of inspiration to many women. I have a fond recollection of Mrs Bedford as the typical life of the party. When she accompanied her husband, the President of the Bankstown RSL Sub-branch, to events, Mrs Bedford always knew how to put a big smile on everyone's face and ensured that they were having a good time. Through this simple gesture Mrs Bedford became known as a deeply caring, engaging and vivacious woman throughout the community. She always knew how to make people feel very welcome.

It is a sad time for our community, as was demonstrated by the hundreds of people who attended her funeral to pay their respects to such a generous, loving and vivacious woman. Mr and Mrs Bedford, who married in 1947, enjoyed a long partnership. I have no doubt that Jack Bedford, OAM, will be going through some very hard times now. I extend my sincerest condolences to him and his three children, John, Julie and Darren, five grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren. Mrs Bedford was a kind-hearted, honourable and tenacious woman who will be sorely missed. She leaves behind a legacy of which her family and fellow members of the Bankstown and shire community can be extremely proud. In her later years, Mrs Bedford moved to Menai. On behalf of her family, I have had the honour to say these few words about her in Parliament. I pay tribute to a great woman. Vale Beryl Merle Bedford.

TAMWORTH ABSOLUTELY EVERYBODY SPRING BALL

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) [12.15 p.m.]: On Saturday 31 August the third annual Absolutely Everybody Spring Ball was held at Tamworth Town Hall. The theme of the night was creating a true sense of community, and it was a wonderful and special evening at which Belle Freeman and my wife, Anna,

and I were guests of honour. I pay special tribute to the ball committee: Matt Old of Northcott Disability Services, Janice Roser of House with no Steps, Fiona Hemmings of Fiona's Minibus Rentals, Graham Dooley of Challenge Community Services, Robyn Kaluder of Kaluder Dance School, Michael Ticehurst of Lifeline Northwest NSW, Anna Cloake of Best Employment, and Chris Buckman of Challenge Community Services. The first Absolutely Everybody Spring Ball held in 2011 was a State finalist in the 2011 NSW Disability Innovation awards in the category of Excellence in Regional Innovation. This event has gone from strength to strength.

For months in the lead-up to the ball Robyn Kaluder worked very hard with the debutantes and their partners to get their dance steps just right. They danced to the music of the legendary John Muller Band, led by John Muller, with Phil Reading on base and Lou Farina on drums. The debutantes and flower girls looked beautiful. I note in the House the debutantes and their partners: Kaitlyn Alderton with Aden Cassidy; Kayley Cambel with Nathan Cook; Renee Morrow with Aaron Hemmings; Kellie Norman with Peter Hutchings; Naomi Brown with Michael Egan; Serena Kelly with Warren Seaman; Anthea Mills with Mark Grant; Jodie Walters with Richard Anderson; Elizabeth Boughton with Glen Bacon; Gillian Manchee with Peter Shirdon; Carlene White with Richard White; Debra Ryan with Albert Chapman; Aloise Graham with Jonathan Taylor; and Carrie Andren with Steven Nelson.

The dance celebration participants were a sight to behold. They were radiant and showed great emotion and a sense of delight in the dance. The dance celebration participants, all former debutantes, were Emma Plowman, Jessica Lloyd, James Maiden, Ashleigh Lloyd, Olivia Slade, Angela Warden, L'Tisha Ryan, Danny Stanley, Sean Ticehurst and Eli Pike. The night created a true sense of community, a feeling of belonging, a feeling that we matter to one another and to the team, and a shared faith that our needs will be met through our commitment together. I thank the providers, supporters, family and friends who took part in this magnificent night and who participated not only on the night but also in preparations in the lead-up to the event. I sincerely thank them all. It was indeed an honour and a privilege for my wife, Anna, and I to be special guests on this particular night, and I look forward to the fourth annual Absolutely Everybody Spring Ball Debutante Ball coming up in 2014.

TRIBUTE TO NANCY HILLIER, OAM

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) [12.19 p.m.]: Last weekend New South Wales and the community of the City of Botany Bay lost a very special lady, who passed away at the age of 89 years, Nancy Hillier, OAM. Nancy was an honourable woman. When I remember Nancy the following words come to mind: courage, tenacity, generosity, passion, honesty, integrity and intelligence. Although remembered for many things, Nancy is mostly remembered for her services to conservation and the environment in the Botany Bay area and local community. Her efforts resulted in her being awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia. Nancy was an environmental activist long before it became trendy or fashionable. For more than 40 years, Nancy was at the heart of almost every environmental issue concerning the relationship between industry, community and government. She was involved in many campaigns in the Botany community.

Nancy's stance was brave and courageous. She led the opposition to the expansion of Port Botany in the 1970s. Nancy led the way in every conceivable protest against the overdevelopment of industrial areas, the overdevelopment of noxious and polluted areas, and the overdevelopment of high-rise residential buildings. For campaigners protesting in that area in the 1970s, death threats were a normal part of life. As a wife and mother, Nancy faced many of those threats. Nancy did more than just protest; she was involved in legislative and other procedural changes which will have long-term impacts on the conduct of future environmental impact studies and commissions of inquiry in this State. Nancy was at the forefront of local resident opposition to the expansion of the Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport. She led a protest of 10,000 people blockading the Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport because its proposed expansion impacted negatively upon the local community.

Her community campaigns revolved around environmental issues and the damage caused by decades of ICI operations—now called Orica—as well as other noxious and hazardous industries. Much of the rehabilitation of formerly poisoned land that is occurring today is due to the contribution of Nancy Hillier. She was at the forefront of community campaigns. Throughout her long campaigns, and with the support of the local community, she persuaded the local council to make many procedural concessions. These stand as an everlasting tribute to her. All her life Nancy was a battler. Losing her father when she was eight years of age, Nancy left school and started work at the age of 14 to help out her mother and siblings. Nancy learnt much from her mother, who worked to keep the family educated, well fed and housed. From an early age she was aware of injustice and was smart enough to realise that some injustices could be righted. Nancy was a very

private person, particularly when it came to her personal feelings, and always protected the welfare of her family, to whom she was devoted. She was a loyal and caring friend to those fortunate enough to earn her friendship.

In many respects, Nancy epitomised our community. Nancy was hard, tough and uncompromising when she needed to be, but she also had compassion and love for our community and its residents. Like our community, she went through good times and bad. She not only witnessed the renaissance of our community but was one of the driving forces of that renaissance. It is not trite to say that the City of Botany Bay would not be the place it is today were it not for Nancy. It is my privilege to say that Nancy was my friend and mentor. When I was elected Mayor of the City of Botany Bay at the age of 27, Nancy Hillier was one of my greatest influences. Nancy was never afraid to pick up the phone and tell the young mayor that he had messed up, that he was off track or that he needed to do something. Equally, she would quietly let you know when you had done something well. Nancy Hillier was and always will be an amazing lady. She was a "diminutive giant". I consider myself lucky to have known someone like Nancy Hillier and her family. I extend my deepest sympathies to Nancy's family and friends and formally recognise her lasting legacy. May Nancy rest in peace and be remembered for the wonderful, passionate and inspirational woman that she was.

REVVED UP PROGRAM

Mr GLENN BROOKES (East Hills) [12.24 p.m.]: I thank the Hon. Anthony Roberts, Minister for Fair Trading, for his commitment to the people of East Hills and, in particular, the youth of my electorate. Minister Roberts recently visited Condell Park, East Hills Boys and East Hills Girls high schools and presented the Revved Up Program to year 11 students at all three schools. The program involves a forum in which students are advised about what to look for when purchasing their first car. Both Minister Roberts and I advised the groups on the pros and cons and allowed them the opportunity to voice their concerns. Buying their first car is a major milestone in a young person's life and it can often be daunting. Minister Roberts was there to offer advice at a time when it was needed most, and we as a Government are doing our best to ensure that our young people are not blindsided or ripped off. We are giving them the skills they need and the questions to ask to ensure that buying their first car is a smooth transaction.

I know all too well what does and does not work for students in a classroom and how some students cannot engage via traditional teaching methods. I can see the positive learning benefits that this style of engagement has for the students and the effective way it gets our message across. One of the students commented to me how good it felt to be placed on the same level as a Minister of the Crown and how Minister Roberts was able to make the students feel like they were part of the conversation—they were being listened to and not just talked at. The boys and girls at the high schools responded so positively to the program that Minister Roberts has agreed to take this program to all the local high schools in the East Hills electorate.

BRAVEHEARTS MID NORTH COAST

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) [12.27 p.m.]: In my role as a member of Parliament I am invited, as are other members in this House, to be part of a range of community events and organisations. I try, wherever possible, to be as supportive as I can because I know that each and every organisation, no matter how large or small, is responding to the needs of our broad community. When I was invited to be part of the inaugural committee for a Mid North Coast chapter of Bravehearts, I jumped at the chance. This important organisation aims to put an end to child sexual assault in our society and, in doing so, make Australia the safest place in the world to raise a child. For the past few months, a number of like-minded community representatives have been meeting, seeking sponsorship and planning for the launch locally of Bravehearts.

After many early morning coffees and careful planning, Friday 30 August saw the launch event in the auditorium of the Port Macquarie Panthers Club. Whilst most do not get the chance to hold a breakfast in an auditorium, we certainly needed the space—with almost 300 people attending the event and showing their support for Bravehearts. During the morning, we heard the shocking statistics for child sexual assault. In Australia it is estimated that one in three girls and one in six boys will be subjected to sexual assault before they reach their eighteenth birthday. We were also told that in most cases the perpetrator will be known to the victim. We heard from the founder and Executive Director of Bravehearts, Hetty Johnston. Hetty established the organisation in 1997 after her own daughter disclosed that she was a victim of sexual assault at the hands of her grandfather. It was shocking to hear that this man had also sexually assaulted almost every female child in the family, and had been doing so for many years.

Discovering that apart from the police there was no active support group to help in such a terrible situation, Hetty set about establishing Bravehearts to actively support and advocate for the rights of children and families impacted by sexual assault. Today Bravehearts has offices across Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, with plans for the movement to reach out into every State of Australia. Locally the support has been simply fantastic, with a dedicated committee chaired by Dr Gary Turnbull and supported by a group of very passionate people including Pix Jonasson, David Gillespie, our new Federal member, Kylie Biltris, Erica Nelson, Trudy Gallaher, Susanne Tillman, Bob Wilson, Louise Rakowski, Malcolm Neale and me. We are all very determined to see that Bravehearts succeeds locally. We are off to a flying start as over \$10,000 was raised at the breakfast event, with substantial cheques being received from Port Panthers, Wauchope Safety House and B & B Electrical.

The Hastings people are renowned for their compassion and generosity. I acknowledge the support of local businesses Laing and Simmons, McDonald's, St George Bank and Rotary Sunrise. One of the ways in which Bravehearts tackles child sexual assault is through recognising the importance of prevention and education. The organisation provides programs designed to equip children with the knowledge and skills they need to avoid risky situations and give them an understanding of their rights to protect their own bodies. Bravehearts has also shared its education programs with other countries including the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom in a global effort to make the world a safer place for children.

As a parent I will do whatever I can to safeguard our young children from this appalling crime and support education programs that give them the skills and knowledge to protect themselves. Recently I visited Port Macquarie Community Preschool to experience the Ditto's Keep Safe Adventure show and witnessed first-hand the excellent way the clear message is delivered to children about how to stay safe. Twelve months ago Hetty Johnston declared a desire to make Australia the safest place in the world for children with this wonderful dynamic organisation. With the wonderful support of communities like the Hastings community we are well on the way towards achieving that goal. As the Speaker is aware, tomorrow evening a cocktail party will be held in the Strangers Dining Room for the Friends of Bravehearts. I extend an invitation to all members of this House and the other place. Radio announcer Ray Hadley will be the master of ceremonies. I urge all members to attend and to show their support for Bravehearts.

Mr DONALD PAGE (Ballina—Minister for Local Government, and Minister for the North Coast) [12.31 p.m.]: On behalf of the Government I thank the member for Port Macquarie for drawing our attention to the wonderful efforts of the Bravehearts movement in the prevention of child sexual assault. I congratulate all involved in the creation of the Mid North Coast Chapter of Bravehearts. It is a shocking indictment of our society that one in three girls and one in six boys are subject to sexual assault. All members would strongly support the activities of Bravehearts. I certainly will be attending the function tomorrow evening to support it.

SUGARLOAF STATE CONSERVATION AREA MINE SUBSIDENCE

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) [12.32 p.m.]: I raise the concerns of Lake Macquarie residents about the impact on the Sugarloaf State Conservation Area as a result of mine subsidence and a subsequent mismanaged remediation attempt. I also want to explain why these incidents demand an urgent reconsideration of proposed changes to planning laws that will place economics above environmental considerations in the assessment of future mining developments. In October 2012 there was a major subsidence incident in the Sugarloaf State Conservation Area as a result of longwall mining operations by the Glencore Xstrata-owned West Wallsend colliery. The subsidence was well above predicted levels and exceeded the thresholds of acceptable subsidence set out in the mine's approval conditions. The subsidence included a landslide about 120 metres long by 17 metres wide and caused cliff face collapses. The damage was exacerbated by a catastrophic remediation attempt on 4 June this year that resulted in about 12 truckloads of cement grout leaking into an ephemeral watercourse, creating a 400-metre concrete creek.

Recently I inspected this damage and was amazed that such a mistake could have been made in such an environmentally sensitive area. Fortunately, due to the unseasonable dry spell we have had the creek is currently dry but any extended period of rain is likely to see impacts from this carried further downstream. I was advised by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in a briefing at my office last week that the grout will be removed entirely, probably taken out of the area by helicopter. I welcome this development but question why the Office of Environment and Heritage did not make an order for a clean-up until the damage was revealed by the *Newcastle Herald* late last month. Perhaps the timing is coincidental but it certainly adds to the doubt about the incident. Disclosure—or more specifically the lack of it—has been an issue throughout this regrettable episode. It ultimately fell upon the local newspaper to bring to public attention both the significant destruction of the

landscape from subsidence and the subsequent damage caused by the grout overflow. Not only was the public kept in the dark; so too were key stakeholders including senior National Parks and Wildlife Service staff and members of the mine's community consultative committee who were unaware of the extent of the incident. This is not good enough. For the benefit of public interest and safety the subsidence should have been revealed quickly and through appropriate channels.

This event, unfortunate as it is, is a timely reminder of the reason we have stringent controls and regulations on mining to minimise its impact on communities and the environment. While this event was being managed out of the public gaze, the New South Wales Government was developing a raft of amendments to its mining State environmental planning policy that will elevate the importance of economic benefits over other factors determining applications for planning approval of major mining projects. In welcoming the amendments, mining interest groups, including the New South Wales Minerals Council, have flagged the proposed policy shift as a means of removing roadblocks to investment and helping to prop up the downturn in the industry. It is true that the mining industry is in a period of adjustment as it transitions from growth driven by investment in new developments to greater economic reliance on production and export. But this comes on the back of a period of high growth and prosperity driven by unprecedented demand particularly from China. A slowing was entirely expected and is no cause to push the panic button. It certainly does not justify a reappraisal of planning regulations to stimulate development above all other considerations.

There is no doubt that economic stakes in this debate are high and I am not insensitive to the impact of such losses. It suits the agenda of some in the mining industry to paint anyone who raises legitimate questions about the impacts of mining as anti-mining. I am not against mining—far from it, in fact. I support mining as the most feasible solution we currently have to satisfying our energy needs. I support it as an industry that provides jobs and contributes greatly to our country's prosperity. But we cannot rank the importance of economic considerations over and above the health and wellbeing of our communities and the protection of our environment. This incident is of a nature that rings warning bells and I believe raises enough questions that there should be an upper House inquiry into the incident and response.

This is not about gaining political mileage or trashing the mining industry; this is a sensible course of action that would provide a forum for proper, transparent investigation into the Sugarloaf incident and give further guidance for future mining in environmentally sensitive areas. With growing cynicism about the way in which mines are approved and regulated, and with the proposed State environmental planning policy amendments still causing concern, the Government could only benefit in the public's eyes by holding such an inquiry. I therefore call on the Premier to restore faith in the process by establishing an upper House inquiry into the impacts on the Sugarloaf State Conservation Area.

ALBURY GOJU KAI KARATE

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) [12.37 p.m.]: Throughout the year I am privileged to attend many community events so often I am amazed at the tremendous efforts of volunteers and the success that they bring to our communities. These stories lack the conflict to make it to the daily news which is a shame because they show how wonderful our young people are and how incredibly hardworking are our volunteers. A case in point is the August celebration of 50 years of Goju Kai Karate Do in Australia.

Over two days in August the Albury Dojo in Chenery Street welcomed 135 students—from 4th Dan black belts to white belt beginners—to spend time learning from Grand Master Yamaguchi, world director of the International Karatedo Goju Kai Association [IKGA], 8th Dan Ingo de Jong Hanshi—IKGA Vice President Europe—and many other leaders of this sport and discipline. Goju Kai Karate-Do is one of the original karate schools of teaching. Today this traditional style is taught in almost every country and is ideal for physical and mental self-development, teaching defence and self-learning rather than aggression. Wayne Farrah, leader at the Albury Dojo, told me:

The sessions taught by world-class instructors have left a lasting impression of what can be achieved in life through self-discipline, dedication and respect.

Grand Master Yamaguchi is the third son of the founder of Goju Kai Karate Do, Grand Master Gogen Yamaguchi. He followed his father as President of the International Karatedo Goju Kai Association and is regarded as one of the five top traditional masters of the modern era still instructing. Grand Master Yamaguchi challenged all present to care for the environment, contribute and make the world a better place. He said, "That is your challenge and my challenge. It is our challenge." Grand Master Yamaguchi offered the students the benefit of his almost 70 years of experience, which was a rare thrill for those who love this martial art. Part of

the instruction included exhibitions of traditional kata movements, some of which had not been seen before outside Japan. These special moments, along with karate sessions taught by world-class instructors, gave the students an in-depth and truly international understanding of aspects of Goju Kai Karate Do.

While much focus is rightly placed on the physical aspects of karate, the visit to Albury by these high-level masters placed equal emphasis on the mental and even spiritual elements. Key words over the two-day meeting were, "Achievement in life through self-discipline, dedication and respect." Ingo de Jong Hanshi thanked the students and instructors from Albury, saying "... in all my years of travelling the world with Saiko Shihan teaching, I and the other senior instructors have never seen him so relaxed and happy. I attribute this to the Australian relaxed way of life." The practice of karate might not have a widely understood reputation as a relaxant, but the peaceful Albury setting certainly helped. The Albury facility, which boasts two internal dojos, an open-air training square and a wonderful Japanese garden so impressed the Grand Master that he declared it "the best IKGA dojo in the world."

As I move through the Albury electorate meeting enthusiastic sportspeople, arts practitioners and volunteers, it never ceases to amaze me how simple passion can overcome the obstacles of distance and difficult access to resources in order to produce something which is not only truly world class but also amazingly world leading. An interesting aspect of the assessment of the karate facility by this group of international visitors was that it does not rest entirely on the size of the training rooms or the quality and value of the materials used to construct the dojo. As with karate itself, there is both an outward and an inward view. Yes, the physical bricks-and-mortar appeal of the Albury dojo made an impression but so too did the local students and leaders. As it was put to me, the masters were impressed by the attitude of the children and their parents and the way in which everyone pulled together. There can be no finer tribute than this to a community sporting group.

Of course, the hosts also took their overseas guests on a driving tour of Albury. I am told that Master Ingo de Jong Hanshi was so taken by the natural beauty of the area that he has already made plans for a return visit with his wife, Anne. The vast size of the Hume Weir caught their eye, but even this could not compete with taking photos of the kangaroos at Latchford Barracks. During my visit to the Albury dojo to take part in the celebrations I was also impressed by the number of young participants and what might be called the forceful serenity that the place had. It truly is a remarkable sporting complex. Back in 2006 when I officially opened the Albury dojo for the Albury Academy of Sport who would have guessed that one day the centre would work with so many enthusiastic young people and welcome such a number of world karate leaders to our regional city. I congratulate everyone on their fantastic work. I encourage all practitioners of karate to get in touch with the Albury Academy of Sport and consider making a visit to our world-leading karate dojo.

TOWARDS THE MORNING SUN ART EXHIBITION

Mr BRYAN DOYLE (Campbelltown) [12.42 p.m.]: Towards the Morning Sun, which will run from 6 September to 21 October, is a contemporary Pacific art display at the Campbelltown Arts Centre. On Friday 6 September the exhibition was officially opened. The welcoming ceremony started in the forecourt, which was transformed into a sandy dance floor illuminated by ghostly red and yellow lighting. Uncle Ivan Wellington conducted a smoking ceremony and performed the welcome to country. Twenty Aboriginal dancers then descended from the hills and danced on the sandy floor. A Maori elder received the welcome and then we followed the dancers into the art centre to listen to speeches, have photos taken and enjoy the exhibition. As the member for Campbelltown and Chair of Ministerial Consultative Committee for Maori and Pacific Communities, I was proud to attend the opening event with the Premier, and Minister for Western Sydney, Barry O'Farrell, the member for Camden, Chris Patterson, the Mayor of Campbelltown, Councillor Sue Dobson, Councillor Paul Hawker, and General Manager Paul Tosi.

Towards the Morning Sun explores the practice and process of artists who engage with and deeply explore what it means to be part of the Pacific. It is wonderful to have the work of artists from around the Pacific on display at Campbelltown—that great opal of the south-west and the best part of the Macarthur region. The exhibition features the work of Niki Hastings-McFall, Eric Bridgeman, Latai Taumoepeau, Torika Bolatagici, Maureen Lander, Rosanna Raymond, Samuel Tupou, Salote Tawale and Brett Graham. It spans the mediums of performance, printmaking, installation, photo media and video and is an exhibition not to be missed.

Many of the works are the result of artists' residencies during which they worked closely with local community groups of Pacific heritage around the greater Sydney region. For example, Canberra-based Tongan artist Samuel Tupou worked with local Tongan community groups to create narratives that complement his

series of colourful pop-inspired tapa screen prints. In her work Melbourne-based Fijian artist Torika Bolatagici explored the militarisation of the Pacific through digital and film-based images presented as light boxes. Auckland artist Niki Hastings-McFall, as part of her *Polynisation* series, has constructed an amazing recreation of a 1950s living room in which the walls and furniture are covered with traditional Pacific lei flowers. The contrast of colours in the decor is extremely striking. Niki also worked with local Samoan women to "lei bomb" other areas of the Campbelltown Arts Centre, including a cypress tree facing onto the Japanese gardens. It was a fusion of Polynesia and colonisation.

Brett Graham's work features a large military tank with hand carved Maori warrior patterning covering the entire vehicle. During the opening Latai Taumoepeau staged an endurance performance when she lashed herself to the underneath of a large block of melting ice using traditional Tongan ropes. On Saturday 7 September a free community forum was held so that the artists could talk with the community and celebrate the opening of the exhibition. The show's Australian based but New Zealand born curator, Ms Keren Ruki, is of Tainui descent and is also a practising contemporary artist.

Michael Dagistino—a local boy from Bradbury—is the manager of cultural services at the Campbelltown Arts Centre. It is one of the major cultural venues in the mighty Macarthur. The centre provides services to a community that spans the Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly local government areas. The arts centre consists of exhibition spaces, workshop and studio spaces, a 180-seat performance studio, residency apartments, a sculpture garden, the famous Japanese garden, an amphitheatre and cafe. It is located at the intersection of Old Camden Road and the Moore Oxley Bypass, off Appin Road. I encourage everyone to travel down the old M5, or the M31 as the Hume Motorway is now known, to visit Campbelltown—that great opal of the south-west—and to enjoy the great art on display just as the Premier and I did.

GLEN INNES EXAMINER BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) [12.47 p.m.]: Last Friday evening I had the pleasure of attending the tenth consecutive *Glen Innes Examiner* Business Awards at the Glen Innes and District Services Club. As with the previous nine awards nights, this year's event sold out within a week of tickets going on sale and this year more than 400 locals came together to celebrate success in business over the past 12 months. The award nominees are submitted by the community and each year the judges have a huge list of candidates from which to whittle the final field down to a manageable level. The community's engagement with these awards would be the envy of many much larger communities. For its size, the Glen Innes community punches far above its weight.

The *Glen Innes Examiner* Business Awards has become the community's night of nights. The event provides a time and a place for people to come together to celebrate the past year and the future opportunities. The awards have always encouraged young people in the business world who are either starting their own business or working as an employee in an existing business which fosters staff or students. It was terrific to see the young people take such pride in their achievements, and I commend the organisers for continuing to encourage this important aspect of the awards. This year's awards attracted a record 221 nominations from 112 businesses. Thirty-three of them were first-time nominees. The 20 categories of awards were proudly supported by 14 local business sponsors.

I pay tribute to the *Glen Innes Examiner* team, which did a mountain of work to organise the awards night and to ensure its success. The team includes: Lisa Reed, the manager, who was the master of ceremonies; Donna Ward, the editor; Simon McCarthy, journalist; Melissa Grennan, who works in the advertising section; and Irene Penn, who works in the classified section and in administration. They did a magnificent job on the night and in the weeks leading up to it. The ceremony was made all the more successful by guest speaker Mick Colliss, who came all the way from Western Australia. Mick, who is the vice-captain of the Australian Sudoku Team, regaled us with his tale of success and entertained us with his dry wit. Before hearing Mick I did not know that Australia had a sudoku team.

Cuisine Cafe was the big winner on the night, picking up the most outstanding business and best restaurant awards. Owners Ann Challender and Mark Pettit thoroughly deserve the accolades and are supported by a professional and dedicated team. Everyone visiting Glen Innes should try the coffee—they will not be disappointed. Colin Say and Company Pty Limited won the best established business award and Video Ezy took out the best business demonstrating workforce diversity award. Peter and Rebecca Davis have done a great job at their store. Cuisine Cafe was again in the limelight when employee Tamara Ferguson won the best young employee award. The self-employed young person award went to Felicity English from The Red Chair Hair

Gallery and the best apprentice award was won by Dean Swaffer from Glen Severn Holden. The best trainee award was won by Susan Benton, while Emmaville Central School student and valued Salon 242 employee Anna Garth won the best school-based trainee or apprentice award—again, a thoroughly deserved accolade.

Glen Innes Masonic Village won the best business fostering staff and student development award. The best new business award was won by Nathan and Kassi Jenkins Jenko's Plumbing, which was a popular win. The best merchandising shop presentation award was won by The Bee's Knees. Well done Mel Lindsay, who was very excited about her win. The made in Glen Innes Severn award was won by Moore Venison. Graham and Rosemary Moore are doing a great job with their new business. I would like to see venison served in the Parliament House dining room because it is lean and healthy meat and it is from Glen Innes. The innovation award was won by Starlogixs Electronics; the best business from home award was won by Charlotte Lillian; the best tourism business award was won by Fossicker Caravan Park; and the best community tourism award was won by the twenty-first Australian Celtic Festival. The festival will be held again in May 2014 and I encourage everyone to attend. The senior pride of workmanship award was won by Noel Schmidt from Garden Court Centre, who was another popular and worthy winner. The award ceremony brought the Glen Innes community together and it was a great night. There is no bigger event on the local calendar. I congratulate all the award winners and everyone in business in Glen Innes. I again congratulate the *Glen Innes Examiner* team on an extremely successful night.

Mr CRAIG BAUMANN (Port Stephens—Parliamentary Secretary) [12.52 p.m.]: I thank the member for Northern Tablelands for informing the House about the Glen Innes business awards ceremony and congratulate him on his support for businesses in his electorate. I attended the *Port Stephens Examiner* small business awards function held on 4 September and it was also a great success. There were 550 attendees and 14,000 locals voted for their chosen business. I will inform the House about that function in due course. I congratulate the member on bringing the Glen Innes function to the attention of the House.

IRISH DIGNITARIES ROYAL NATIONAL PARK VISIT

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) [12.53 p.m.]: On Friday 23 August the Australian Ambassador to Ireland and the Irish Minister responsible for the environment visited the Royal National Park, which is in my electorate of Heathcote. I had the pleasure of representing the Government and the Minister for the Environment during the visit. Mr James Deenihan, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, who has been in the Irish Parliament for more than 30 years, was a delightful guest. He was accompanied by the Australian Ambassador to Ireland, Mr Noel White. The visit was organised so that Mr Deenihan could see how the Royal National Park has increased visitations over the past two years and examine the natural environment. We inspected some of the lookouts along the coastline, including at Wattamolla, which is a popular picnic area. The precinct has been proposed as a possible "glamping" area. Glamping is five-star camping with luxury tent accommodation and a chef.

The Minister compared our national parks with Ireland's six national parks—Ballycroy, The Burren, Connemara, Glenveagh, Killarney and Wicklow Mountains. The Irish people do not pay to enter any of their national parks and as a result resources and infrastructure are under pressure. In 1969, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature recommended that all governments agree to reserve the term "national park" for areas sharing a number of characteristics. They include areas where one or several ecosystems are not materially altered by human exploitation and occupation; where plant and animal species, geomorphological sites and habitats are of special scientific, educational and recreational interest or contain a natural landscape of great beauty; where the highest competent authority of the country has taken steps to prevent or eliminate as soon as possible exploitation or occupation in the whole area and to enforce effectively the respect of ecological, geomorphological or aesthetic features that have led to its establishment; and where visitors are allowed to enter, under special conditions, for inspirational, educational, cultural and recreational purposes. It is the policy of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, endorsed by successive Irish governments, to abide by the criteria and standards for national parks as set by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Ireland is home to 28 species of land mammal, more than 400 species of birds, more than 4,000 plant species and more than 12,000 species of insect. The Minister said that if we want all of this to survive we must ensure that there are enough suitable areas for all species to flourish. Recent economic success in Ireland has placed strains on the environment that have never been experienced in the past. At the same time, farmers who own the land that is home to much of the wildlife are themselves facing an uncertain and difficult future. As agriculture changes, conditions for much of our wildlife also changes. While technological advances provide

new environmental opportunities—for example, wind farms provide great possibilities for green energy—they also cause disturbance in hitherto isolated and untouched mountain areas. Conserving species in their natural habitats requires a strategic approach to succeed.

The Minister was extremely interested in the similarities between our Royal National Park and national parks in Ireland. One strategy to ensure the survival of species is to conserve habitats in designated conservation areas. That is being done in Heathcote in the Royal National Park, the Heathcote National Park and the Dharawal National Park. There are so many national parks in my electorate that it is hard to believe there is any room left for people. The Irish National Parks and Wildlife Service is responsible for the designation of conservation sites in Ireland. The service works with farmers, other landowners and users and national and local authorities to achieve the best balance between farming and land use. The Minister is very aware of the impact that human habitation has on the natural environment and pointed out that the Irish and Australian people take a similar approach to the issue. My wife joined me on the visit to the Royal National Park and the Minister was impressed by her support of my efforts. However, my bubble was burst when she told him that she came for the lunch.

GOLDEN ROSE CHILD CARE CENTRE

Mr TONY ISSA (Granville) [12.58 p.m.]: I recently had the pleasure of the visiting the Golden Rose Child Care Centre in Granville. The centre is run by the Missionary Sisters of Mary Queen. This devoted group of nuns take care of between 15 and 30 children between Monday and Friday. The centre was opened in 1992 and since then has cared for hundreds of children, mostly from the surrounding area. It operates from two small properties located at 22 and 24 Waratah Street, Granville. The two properties have been joined together to give the children the feeling that they are at home. The sisters always have supported low-income families by offering them discount fees while at the same time maintaining very high standards of care. As well as providing long-term day care for the children, the nuns provide an educational program that aims to stimulate learning across all areas of a child's development. They aim to provide appropriate learning opportunities that care for the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each child in their care. Naturally they cater to the different cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children in their care.

The sisters are originally from Vietnam. The principal house of the mother community of the order is in the archdiocese of Saigon. Saigon fell shortly after the victory by the North Vietnamese in April 1975, and some sisters escaped the threat of the Vietnamese war by moving to Australia. It is hard to believe that the Vietnam conflict lasted more than 19 years and was ultimately lost by the United States of America. This order of nuns lived through that conflict and offered help to many people left stranded and displaced by the war. That experience gave the nuns the compassion and dedication they needed to deal with children from a range of backgrounds.

The children attending the Golden Rose Child Care Centre are from a variety of backgrounds and speak a variety of languages. On the day I visited the school, I was very moved when the children sang a variety of religious songs and a four-year-old Christian boy recited the Lord's Prayer in Vietnamese. The five sisters at the centre do a wonderful job in caring for and educating the children. I would like the House to take note of the work they are doing for the community in my electorate as well as for the future of the children. The children are not only are receiving religious instruction but also being taught the principles of compassion and humility, which are characterised by the order.

I am grateful to have this opportunity to congratulate the sisters at the Golden Rose Child Care Centre on the wonderful work they are doing in caring for the children, who will become valuable members of the community in years to come. It was a pleasure for me to visit the centre, meet the children and to see firsthand how they are thriving under the care of the nuns. I acknowledge the importance of the many childcare centres operated by community organisations and nuns and the service they provide to communities. For many years when I was a councillor on the Parramatta City Council I worked closely with many community organisations that applied for permission to operate childcare centres to provide a service to the community, especially to low-income families who paid subsidised rates. I am pleased to acknowledge in this House the contribution to the community made by the Golden Rose Child Care Centre in my electorate of Granville.

BLUE MOUNTAINS ACCOMMODATION AND TOURISM ASSOCIATION

Mrs ROZA SAGE (Blue Mountains) [1.03 p.m.]: I have mentioned on many occasions in this House that the lifeblood of the Blue Mountains economy is the tourism industry, so it was with great pleasure that

I attended the annual general meeting and dinner hosted by the Blue Mountains Accommodation and Tourism Association at the Chalet Guest House and Studio at Medlow Bath, which is owned and operated by David Scotman. The Chalet Guest House and Studio was built in the nineteenth century and is one of the very charming older houses in the Blue Mountains. It is surrounded by beautiful manicured gardens and has a tennis court.

The association was formed in 1982 although in a different guise: Originally it was confined to accommodation services in the Blue Mountains. In 1991 it was incorporated as the Blue Mountains Accommodation Association. The big change came in January 2012 when it entered into an arrangement with the regional tourism organisation, Blue Mountains Lithgow and Oberon Tourism, to found a vertically aligned local tourism organisation. The change means that all Blue Mountains tourism operators are now represented by the Blue Mountains Accommodation and Tourism Association.

The Blue Mountains Accommodation and Tourism Association is very much a tourism-focused industry-led organisation. The role of members at the local level is addressing the experience for visitors who intend to come to the area and when the visitors arrive. This focus on customer service has made the Blue Mountains area one of the best performing tourism destinations in the State. It is pleasing that Destination NSW statistics show the domestic overnight visitation rates increased by 16.1 per cent and that visitor nights spent in the Blue Mountains region increased by 12.8 per cent, while domestic day-trip visitors' spending increased by 24.4 per cent and international visitation rates increased by 12.3 per cent. All of those increases are a direct result of the quality of the tourism experience and reflect the quality of Blue Mountains tourism operators, most of whom are members of Blue Mountains tourism associations.

The Blue Mountains Accommodation and Tourism Association has been very proactive in utilising digital media to improve its share of the tourism market. I was very pleased to attend the launch of its "Get in now" website app, which utilises the quick response code technology marketing tool that I have mentioned previously in the House. The app allows the user to link into members who advertise on the site, providing an easy seamless way to find accommodation, attractions and other facts about the Blue Mountains. As I have mentioned previously, I am extremely proud to represent an iconic tourist area with tourist operators and organisations who are so proactive and enthusiastic in marketing and promoting the beautiful Blue Mountains.

On the night of the dinner it was my duty to draw the winner of the final Privileged Guest Passbook prize that is offered to those people who stayed at one of the participating accommodation establishments. The Privileged Guest Passbook is a way of encouraging visitors to stay another night in the Blue Mountains and its slogan is "I wake up in the Blue Mountains". The prizes for the lucky winners were accommodation at the Shelton-Lea Bed and Breakfast Guesthouse, which is owned by Jenny and Paul McLaughlin; dinner for two at the Rooster Restaurant, which is owned by Michael Hagbeck; and a \$100 gift voucher to spend at the Yindi Day Spa, which is owned and operated by Amanda Hersey. The winners were from Penshurst—that is really good because they will enjoy another Blue Mountains experience—and had stayed at Whispering Pines, which is owned by Bill and Marie McCabe.

An important part of the night was the announcement of the new life membership awards. The recipients had devoted many years and much blood, sweat and tears to the association and Blue Mountains tourism in general. The recipients were Maurice Cooper and Kerry McKenzie from Bygone Beauties at Leura and Bill and Marie McCabe from Whispering Pines at Wentworth Falls. Both couples are very worthy recipients and were presented with artwork by Rob Fisher, who has a gallery at Blackheath. Rob is a photographer who uses his photos as a base for his artwork. Both couples were presented with specially commissioned photos of each of their businesses. Prior to the dinner, the association held its annual general meeting to elect office holders. The new office bearers are president Eric Sward, vice-president David Holmes, secretary Chris Cannell, treasurer Bill McCabe, and members of the management committee are Lorette Seckold, Charles Degotardi and David Scotman. The chairperson of the membership committee is Marilyn Arnott, the editor of the newsletter is Roby Wilkinson, the public officer is Ron Jones and the social convenor is Jenny McLaughlin. I congratulate the Blue Mountains Accommodation and Tourism Association.

PARRAMATTA STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) [1.08 p.m.]: I draw to the attention of the House the outstanding work of the Parramatta State Emergency Service team and its recent victories in the New South Wales Disaster Rescue Competitions. An article in the *Sun Parramatta Holroyd*, under the headline "Parramatta SES wins Western Sydney Rescue Competition", states:

Parramatta SES ended Hawkesbury's 25-year-reign as the regional winners of the Western Sydney State Emergency Service [SES] Annual Rescue Competition held at Penrith ...

Captain David Henry led the seven-person team, with Tony Khoury, Marty Arango, David Hill, Vic Weller, David McTaggart, and Pip Wells, all combining their efforts to do Parramatta proud once again. The competition events, whilst lighthearted, are based upon real-life scenarios and the possible disasters our brave State Emergency Service volunteers can and do encounter in their tireless efforts on the job. The New South Wales State Emergency Service Sydney Western Region held the regional competition at Cranebrook on 6 April 2013 and I recognise the member for Londonderry, Bart Bassett, and the member for Penrith, Stuart Ayres, and thank them for their stewardship of the fine area of Cranebrook.

On that autumn day the competition was fierce, with teams coming from Ashfield-Leichhardt, Auburn, Canada Bay, Hawkesbury, Strathfield, and The Hills. And, of course, there was the mighty Parramatta squadron. The Hawkesbury team were odds-on favourites to take the trophy once again, having been crowned champions for 25 years in a row. However, the Parramatta team, led by David Henry, showed the true Parramatta fighting spirit that our great city is renowned for, smashing the competition and walking away with the trophy. What an outstanding victory for this team and for Parramatta. I wholeheartedly congratulate the team on their great efforts and for making us all proud, and I also congratulate all participants from the Western Sydney teams on taking part and making the competition so strong.

Just like Parramatta, the State Emergency Service team did not stand still and rest on their laurels. Just last month they competed in the New South Wales State Emergency Service Disaster Rescue Competition, representing the might of Western Sydney in the statewide competition. Battling it out through the trench rescue and foot entrapment scenarios, land searches, and height and depth rescues, David Henry's Parramatta team, in their first ever statewide competition, put in another stellar effort, finishing runners-up to Port Macquarie by the narrowest of margins. The Parramatta State Emergency Service unit meets every Wednesday evening for training. The unit consists of 77 active and reserve volunteers, who give up their valuable time to help out our community when we need it most. Currently situated in the grounds of Parramatta jail, their work is vital to our community and I commend all those who volunteer at the Parramatta State Emergency Service for their selfless commitment to our community.

I also acknowledge the work of the management team at Parramatta State Emergency Service, who do a great job in running this top-flight unit, and I thank local controller Peter Cunneen and deputy local controllers Vic Weller and Roweena Cunneen for their efforts. I look forward to next year's State Emergency Service Disaster Rescue Competition and seeing Parramatta's State Emergency Service team again representing the capital of Western Sydney in such fine form. I congratulate them on their outstanding victory, hard work and dedication to our community. I am sure those in the Chamber today will join with me in thanking not only the Parramatta State Emergency Service but also the members of the State Emergency Service throughout the State for the wonderful work that they do.

Members can follow the activities and events of the Parramatta State Emergency Service on their Facebook page. If they look up the New South Wales State Emergency Service Parramatta unit they will be able to see what they are up to. Just last week they were at the Northmead Public School fair. They showed off their boats and rescue equipment in displays. They participated with other good organisations like New South Wales Fire and Rescue, Northmead Scouts and Girl Guides and other community organisations which were part of those activities. I am sure everyone in this House will join me in thanking the Parramatta State Emergency Service and the membership of the entire New South Wales State Emergency Service for their outstanding selflessness and for the good deeds that they do in times of difficulty—through storms, floods or other disasters.

PRIME MINISTER ELECT TONY ABBOTT

Mr MIKE BAIRD (Manly—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) [1.13 p.m.]: It is a privilege to note for the House a significant event on the northern beaches on the weekend. We have many great people, many great communities and many great community events on the northern beaches, but today we should be paying tribute to Tony Abbott for his election as Prime Minister of the country from his electorate of Warringah. Mr Abbott has been elected eight times by the people of Warringah, and in an election on the weekend he became the leader of the incoming Government. I pay tribute to him. Tony Abbott is a remarkable man. I have had the privilege to get to know him personally during my time in this place. The more time I have spent with him the more impressed I have become with him. He has immense talent. He was a Rhodes scholar, and that is testament to the talent he has beyond his sporting abilities. He has incredible resilience. I remember the Tooheys advertisement, which repeated quite regularly, "They said he'd never make it." There were many people—even within our party but also members of the Opposition and people in the broad community—who said that Mr Abbott would never make it to this position. His incredible resilience has taken him there.

Mr Abbott is also a man of immense compassion. That is often missed in the media commentary. One of the challenges in this place is to get voters to understand the character of members—to understand what makes them tick. Tony has incredible compassion. Locally he has delivered a substantial amount of support and resources for some of the most incredible charity groups, including the women's shelter that has become a key party of the Manly community. Through Pollie Pedal, Mr Abbott has delivered significant resources and support, and the shelter is incredibly grateful for that. Mr Abbott is involved with the Pioneer Clubhouse, which is an amazing group that comes together to support those recovering from mental illness. The group provides people with the capacity to get back to employment. During the campaign Mr Abbott confirmed that he had an ongoing commitment to Bear Cottage, the only children's hospice in New South Wales. It is an amazing place of hope despite the potential for great despair. Tony Abbott was very pointed in making a significant contribution to them. That came on top of his support over many years in the electorate of Warringah.

Mr Abbott will, as Prime Minister, spend one week a year with Indigenous Australians in their communities. This goes well beyond being a token gesture; it is something that he has lived and breathed in his time in public office. It shows that he will not change when he takes up the role of Prime Minister of the country. It is very clear that Mr Abbott wants to serve. He has shown us exactly that through his actions. He is not taking on this office with a sense of hubris; he is taking it on with deep and genuine humility. We have already seen that. Mr Abbott understands the responsibility that comes with the office of Prime Minister. He will do the job with amazing compassion and use his talents to serve responsibly. We are certainly proud of him. In a broad context I think he will bring a fresh approach to interaction between the State and Federal governments. He understands that the way to get New South Wales moving is for the Federal Government to work in partnership with this State.

His contribution to infrastructure is going to make a huge difference, day in and day out, to many communities across this great State. He has already articulated that he wants to be the infrastructure Prime Minister. Ultimately, a constructive approach between the Commonwealth and the State will mean that we will be able to achieve far more than we ever could when acting individually. I say to everyone in New South Wales, particularly to those in the Warringah community, that it has been an incredible privilege for me to get to know the incoming Prime Minister personally during his journey. I say very clearly to everyone in Warringah and across this State that Mr Abbott will not let them down. He will do this job with remarkable diligence, passion and compassion. I pay tribute to him and the remarkable achievement of becoming the twenty-eighth Prime Minister of this country.

Mr CRAIG BAUMANN (Port Stephens—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.18 p.m.]: I thank the Treasurer, the member for Manly, for his contribution. We have many things in common. We both have coastal electorates—mine is paradise; his is overdeveloped beach. We have two very good local Federal members—he has Tony Abbott; I have Bob Baldwin. Both had resounding results and they are both Liberals, but I think that is where the similarities between the two end. Everyone on this side of the House is very pleased to see the success of Tony Abbott. He is a wonderful guy. He is a Rhodes Scholar and a wonderful rugby player. In fact, the Wallabies might need him if he has time off from his NSW Rural Fire Service and surf club duties, which I know he will pursue. I thank the member for Manly for his tribute, and I am sure everyone on this side of the House concurs.

[Acting-Speaker (Ms Melanie Gibbons) left the chair at 1.19 p.m. The House resumed at 2.15 p.m.]

The SPEAKER: I thank my Deputy-Speaker, Mr Thomas George, for his wonderful effort in the chair during my absence. I also thank all members, particularly members of the Opposition, who cooperated with him so well.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following bills reported:

Marine Parks Amendment (Moratorium) Bill 2013
Protection of the Environment Operations Amendment (Illegal Waste Disposal) Bill 2013
Road Transport Amendment (Electronic Traffic Infringement Notices Trial) Bill 2013
State Emergency and Rescue Management Amendment (Co-ordination and Notification of Rescues) Bill 2013
Totalizator Amendment (Exclusivity) Bill 2013

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF MIRANDA**Resignation of Graham Annesley**

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that on 3 September 2013 I received a letter from Graham Annesley resigning his seat as member for the electoral district of Miranda.

Vacant Seat**Motion by Mr BRAD HAZZARD agreed to:**

That the seat of Graham Annesley, lately serving in this House as member for the electoral district of Miranda, hath become, and is now, vacant by reason of the resignation of the said Graham Annesley.

MINISTRY

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: I advise the House that:

- (1) On 28 August 2013, Her Excellency the Governor accepted the resignation of the Honourable Graham Annesley, MP, as Minister for Sport and Recreation, and as a member of the Executive Council.
- (2) On 30 August 2013, Her Excellency the Governor appointed the Honourable Gabrielle Cecelia Upton, MP, as a member of the Executive Council and as Minister for Sport and Recreation.
- (3) Mark Raymond Speakman was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Tertiary Education and Skills with effect on and from 2 September 2013.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The member for Cabramatta will come to order; it is not like him to be disruptive.

BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY WARNING**Ministerial Statement**

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL (Ku-ring-gai—Premier, and Minister for Western Sydney) [2.27 p.m.]: As a result of very high fire danger conditions, a number of fires are burning across New South Wales, including greater Sydney, the Illawarra and the Hunter. Currently 59 bushfires or grassfires are burning across the State, of which 40 are not contained. NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW, and the National Parks and Wildlife Service are responding with 521 firefighters and 208 appliances. Strong, gusty north-westerly winds continue to affect fire grounds, which are not expected to abate until later this evening. A southerly change is expected to come through the greater Sydney Basin between 5.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. Advice received at 1.30 p.m. today is that two fires are at emergency warning level: the Richmond Road fire in the Hawkesbury local government area and the Tickner Road fire, Castlereagh, in the Penrith local government area.

An emergency warning has been issued for the Tickner Road fire, which is burning around properties on Devlin Road and towards homes on Nutt Road. Residents have been alerted via the Emergency Alert system—that is, the SMS system. An emergency warning has been issued also for the Richmond Road fire, which is burning in the area of Bennett Road, Windsor. The fire is burning under strong northerly winds and there is potential to impact on properties around George Street and the Bligh Park area. Residents in the area have been alerted via the Emergency Alert system. Four fires are at watch and act level: Hawkesbury Road fire in the Blue Mountains local government area; Leets Vale fire in The Hills; Pony Club fire in Cessnock; and Grange Avenue, Marsden Park fire in the Blacktown council area. Currently five fires are burning within the Cessnock council area and seven in the Lake Macquarie local government area. However, no immediate threats are posed from these fires at this time. The next update will be from authorities at 3.00 p.m.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**Notices of Motions**

Government Business Notices of Motions (for Bills) given.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**Routine of Business**

[During notices of motions to be accorded priority]

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. I call the member for Kiama to order for the first time.

QUESTION TIME

[Question time commenced at 2.27 p.m.]

GUN CRIME

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON: My question without notice is directed to the Premier. Given the continued wave of gun violence on our streets since he came to office, will the Premier support Labor's bill to give our police tough new search powers?

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: It is nice to get a question from the Leader of the Opposition as they have been so rare in recent times. Only those opposite are disappointed with the efforts of the New South Wales police to crack down on gun crime across this city. Only those opposite failed to support the rearrangement within the New South Wales police that has Deputy Commissioner Nick Kaldas in charge of Operation Talon to address gun crime across Sydney.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: Only the Opposition through the member for Toongabbie. What is remarkable about the member for Toongabbie is that he was emotional on television on Saturday night. He must have been the only bloke in the country emotional about getting rid of an incompetent Federal Labor Government that, frankly, did nothing for this State. As the Commissioner of Police has repeatedly said, drive-by shootings in this city are down this year from the figures recorded last year. As reported by the media, drive-by shootings in this city are down following the rearrangements within the police and their renewed effort, led by Deputy Commissioner Kaldas, supported by the Commissioner of Police and the Minister for Police.

I go to the bill that was proposed the day that the South Australian Attorney General was visiting this building. That bill was not the work of the former Government but the work of the South Australian Attorney General, which was slipped to those opposite. I have some advice on that legislation and that advice does not come from those opposite or from parliamentary officials. The advice comes from police. The first piece of advice about the legislation proposed by those opposite is that because it can be used only by the Commissioner of Police and it cannot be delegated to other senior officers it will be unworkable.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: I will continue to take my advice on these matters from police, not those opposite.

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

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: Just as I will continue to take my advice on anti-corruption issues from the Independent Commission Against Corruption, not those opposite, despite their detailed knowledge of what is happening at the commission.

FEDERAL ELECTION 2013

Mr GLENN BROOKES: My question is addressed to the Premier. How will New South Wales benefit from the new Federal Government?

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members who behave in an unparliamentary manner will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: I thank the member for East Hills for his question, particularly because he has a strong small business background. The member for East Hills understands the importance of a strong economy and the opportunities that a strong economy creates. It was clear on Saturday that people voted for a strong economy. It was a fantastic weekend. The member for Oatley had a great weekend because the Dragons won. It is a red and white letter day when the Dragons win. The member for Penrith is excited because, with all due respect to the Treasurer, Penrith had a great victory of the heart. The Boomerangs won in Moree—they beat Gwydir.

Dr Andrew McDonald: Point of order: The Premier has been speaking for a minute and has not answered the question. He is talking about the football.

The SPEAKER: Order! It was a wideranging question.

Dr Andrew McDonald: The football was not part of the wideranging question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier's answer is relevant to the question asked. There is no point of order.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: Hills Sports High School, which is a great western school, won the under-18s Super Sevens contest in the electorate of the Minister for Sport. Other things happened on the weekend. I join the member for East Hills in congratulating Tony Abbott, Warren Truss, and the Federal Liberal Party and The Nationals on their tremendous victory. This State welcomes the fact that we now have a mature Government in Canberra that will deal with issues seriously and deliver benefits for the people of this State. The change of Government is good news for people across New South Wales, and a great result for the infrastructure needs of New South Wales and the jobs that that infrastructure will deliver. The Labor Government has been a handbrake on the economy of New South Wales and the national economy. It failed to deliver its promises that were made in 2007 and 2010 to invest in infrastructure in this city, and that has held back economic growth in a self-defeating way. That is about to change.

Yesterday I spoke to the Prime Minister elect and I am pleased to confirm that he is wasting no time in getting down to business. He understands the importance of delivering infrastructure to this city and this State because of its potential to boost the national economy. He has provided a strong commitment to work with the New South Wales Government to deliver the major projects that we know will grow both the State and national economies. One election commitment was for \$1.5 billion to be allocated to WestConnex. Saturday's election result means that \$1.5 billion for WestConnex is now secured. That is on top of the \$1.8 billion that this Government has in the budget for the project. It is a significant down payment on the 33 kilometre project, which will now forge ahead.

Federally, Labor was never serious about the WestConnex project. It attached a host of conditions that would have added between \$5 billion and \$8 billion to its offer of assistance. It used an old Labor trick that came to the fore during the election campaign whereby that money was pushed out beyond the forward estimates into the never-never. It is time those opposite came clean regarding WestConnex. Despite their promises in Government, they now oppose the North West Rail Link. Is it their position to support WestConnex or not? Are they going to assist people in Sydney's west and south-west to receive the much-needed relief as a result of the former State and Federal Labor governments' failure to invest in road infrastructure?

The SPEAKER: Order! Ministers and shadow Ministers, including the Leader of the Opposition, will cease arguing across the Chamber.

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: The Federal Coalition is committed to providing more than \$400 million for a link between the F3 and the M2. Once it is through stage 3 of our unsolicited bids proposal, the New South Wales Government, the Commonwealth Government and the private sector will work together to deliver a project for a continuous motorway between Western Sydney, south-western Sydney and the Central Coast, which is a great initiative for people who live in the Central Coast, the Hunter, and in the west and south-west. The project is in the final stages of consideration. [*Extension of time granted.*]

The Federal Coalition Government is also committed to providing funds for key local road projects such as \$53 million for Narellan Road and \$35 million for Jane Street in Penrith. I am delighted that we went to the Federal election campaign with both sides signed up to the better education agreement. Under my Government, led by the Minister for Education, New South Wales was the first Government in the country to

sign up to the agreement. We on this side take education very seriously. We on this side are determined to ensure that our public education is just as good as any private school across this State so that parents have a real choice about where to send their kids to school.

I was delighted to join Tony Abbott on the campaign trail and to see the positive reaction he was getting across this city and this State. That is in contrast to Labor's Federal leader, whose major contribution in Sydney was to propose the closure of the Garden Island naval base, thereby axing 4,000 jobs. On the projections to date, half of the seats won by Tony Abbott—nine out of 16—have been delivered in New South Wales. The Nationals managed to wrench the seat of New England and the seat of Lyne, back from the Independents. The seat of Page has returned to The Nationals. Whether we are talking about the seats of Banks, Lindsay, Dobell, Robertson or Reid—and, I predict, Eden-Monaro and Barton—we can say that the Liberal Party and The Nationals had a good day on Saturday. The important benefit to come out of that result is not for the political parties but for the people of this State, who will start to get their fair share of resources.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much audible conversation. Members who behave in an unparliamentary manner will be removed from the Chamber immediately, regardless of whether they are on three calls to order. This is my final warning. Members will not argue, shout or hurl insults across the Chamber when Ministers are answering questions.

OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANG LEGISLATION

Mr GUY ZANGARI: My question is directed to the Attorney General. On 25 March he was asked why the Government had failed to declare a single bikie gang as a criminal organisation and he said, "We are ready to go." Given that there have been a further 57 shootings since he made this commitment, why has he still refused to act?

Mr GREG SMITH: I am most amused when Opposition members get up and talk about bikie gang applications and matters of that sort because I seem to remember that in the 16 years that they were power bikie gangs gained control of this city.

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

Mr GREG SMITH: The Labor Party, with the member for Toongabbie as Premier, raced through some legislation—

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

Mr GREG SMITH: —in one day.

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

Mr GREG SMITH: The former Government rushed it through and what happened? It had to be amended again. The then Premier, Nathan Rees, said it was very urgent on that day. The legislation had to get through in April 2008, or whenever it was. It took 18 months before an application was made. Eighteen months—that was urgent, was it? I realise it would take a long time—

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

Mr GREG SMITH: —because it is up to the Commissioner of Police to make the application, not the Attorney General, not the Premier and not anyone else.

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

Mr GREG SMITH: We would be foolish not to learn from the errors made by the Rees Government in its legislation. We would be most foolish—

[Interruption]

And no tears for me today please.

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

Mr GREG SMITH: Don't cry for me Argentina. What happened to the former Government's legislation? It was crushed.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129, relevance. The Attorney General is not being relevant to the question. In particular, I asked him why has still refuses to act.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister's answer is relevant to the question asked. I call the member for Monaro to order for the second time.

Mr GREG SMITH: Of course, any attempt to attack me is really an attack on the police. This Opposition has been attacking the police ever since it failed to win office; ever since there was an enormous tsunami in 2011—

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

Mr GREG SMITH: —and Labor members were virtually drowned. The Labor Opposition now has 20 members and they just potter on. They go around and upset people who have been shot at. They go to their homes and say, "Isn't it awful? Aren't the police doing a terrible job?" That is their theme. They introduced useless legislation and they dare to criticise the Commissioner of Police. How dare they. He is doing his best. As the Premier has said, the police are fighting a magnificent fight against gun crime. Operation Apollo and Operation Spartan, which were established to tackle gun crime and criminal gangs, have made more than 1,000 arrests, laid close to 2,000 charges and seized a substantial number of guns. Established in 2012, Operation Apollo has seized illegal guns with an estimated value of more than \$434,000 and more than 80 firearms, including numerous handguns. It was the Federal Labor Government that cut back the Customs and Border Protection Service and cut \$60 million in resources, and this country was flooded with weapons. And the Labor Opposition is criticising us. We are the redeemers of this State; we have saved this State from the corrupt Opposition—

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

Mr GREG SMITH: Our Commissioner of Police will bring his application when he is ready.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Kogarah to remove herself from the Chamber until the conclusion of question time.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Kogarah left the Chamber at 2.43 p.m.]

The SPEAKER: Order! I have warned members about arguing across the Chamber. I remind members that interjections are disorderly at all times.

FEDERAL ELECTION 2013

Mr THOMAS GEORGE: My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. What does last Saturday's Federal election result mean for regional New South Wales?

Mr ANDREW STONER: I know that the people of regional New South Wales are just delighted that once again we have a responsible and stable Government in Australia. How do I know this? Because the tale was told at the polling booths on Saturday right around regional New South Wales, starting with the seat of Page in the area of the member for Lismore and the member for Clarence. The Nationals secured a terrific victory with a very strong swing against the Labor incumbent. The new member, Kevin Hogan, achieved a terrific result, with a swing of nearly 7 per cent. In Lyne Dr David Gillespie has been elected, which is another gain to The Nationals. In New England the inimitable Barnaby Joyce, with a two-party preferred vote of around 52 per cent—

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

Mr ANDREW STONER: That was a terrific result not just for Barnaby Joyce, but for the people of the New England electorate. Cowper is another seat retained with a strong swing by The Nationals. We saw the

same result for Calare, Parkes and Riverina. Along with that we saw some massive swings in other seats, in particular the Hunter, where The Nationals candidate Michael Johnson recorded the largest swing in New South Wales of nearly 9 per cent against Labor's sitting member and the former Minister for Agriculture, Joel Fitzgibbon. There is a message in there for the member for Cessnock, I must say.

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

Mr ANDREW STONER: Of course, regional Liberal members of Parliament were elected in Hume and Gilmour and that is almost certainly the case—

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

Mr ANDREW STONER: —in Eden-Monaro.

Ms Carmel Tebbutt: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129, relevance. The Deputy Premier was asked what the benefits were for regional New South Wales. He has been speaking for two minutes and he has not yet outlined a single benefit. We all know that there are no benefits and he is struggling to answer the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! It was a wideranging question. The Deputy Premier is being relevant to the question asked.

Mr ANDREW STONER: You should just be patient, Carmel, because I was getting to that. I have demonstrated with that preamble that there is a unity of representation across regional New South Wales in the new Federal Government, and that unity can only be good for regional New South Wales. The Federal Liberal-Nationals Government has a strong set of policies and a strong priority for funding of regional development and regional infrastructure.

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

Mr Nathan Rees: An airport.

Mr ANDREW STONER: Good news—I will get to some of those particular items of regional infrastructure where we have already seen the benefits of a new era of co-operative federalism with the new Federal Government. I hear that the member for Toongabbie wants to talk about the performance of Country Labor in the weekend's election.

Mr Darren Webber: What performance?

Mr ANDREW STONER: "What performance?" is the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Monaro to order for the third time. I call the member for Marrickville to order for the second time.

Mr ANDREW STONER: I mentioned the seat of Hunter. There was an 8.6 per cent swing against so-called Country Labor.

Mr John Robertson: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I have ruled that the Minister's answer is relevant to the question asked. What is the member's point of order?

Mr John Robertson: It is Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier is being relevant to the question asked. There is no point of order.

Mr John Robertson: It is completely unclear how gloating for 3½ minutes is any way relevant to benefits for regional New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition may call it gloating; I call it relevant. There is no point of order.

Mr ANDREW STONER: I know the Leader of the Opposition does not want to hear this; he should be grateful that I do not talk about his statistics.

Mr John Robertson: Point of order: It is unparliamentary to incite interjections as the Deputy Premier is doing.

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

Mr ANDREW STONER: The Leader of the Opposition is very sensitive. I am told that he was the only person more invisible than Jaymes Diaz during the Federal election campaign. I could go on to talk about swings across the board against the so-called Country Labor faction. [*Extension of time granted.*]

I thank the member for Lismore. I know that he is interested in this subject, and I am getting to the specific details about infrastructure. I will not talk about the abysmal performance of The Greens in the Federal election held on the weekend. It is no secret that both Prime Minister elect Tony Abbott and Deputy Prime Minister elect Warren Truss intend to lead an infrastructure-focused government—a government with strong regional representation and the priority of developing regional Australia. This will help to reinforce the strong work being done by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government. I will touch upon some of the projects that the Abbott-Truss Federal Government has committed to in regional New South Wales. There is \$5.6 billion to complete the duplication of the Pacific Highway. This restores the 80:20 funding split between the Federal and State governments. We have been arguing for a long time that that should be the case, but the arrangement was dismantled by the former Federal Minister Anthony Albanese.

There is \$300 million for a national bridges renewal program. This will supplement our Bridges for the Bush program. There is \$15 million to enable construction of the final stage of the Moree bypass—I know the member for Barwon is very interested in and pleased about that commitment. There is \$15 million for roads in the Federal electorate of Gilmore, \$3 million for roads on the Central Coast and \$10 million towards the third river crossing at Nowra. There is \$300 million for inland rail from the Port of Brisbane to Melbourne, including the identification of a preferred corridor from Moree to the Port of Brisbane. That is just a sample of the projects that we will see in Australia's regional infrastructure-led recovery under the incoming Federal Government. What a good thing this will be for the regions.

ALCOHOL-RELATED VIOLENCE

Mr NATHAN REES: My question is directed to the Premier. Given there was yet more alcohol-fuelled violence over the weekend in the Sydney central business district, including an attack on George Street that left a man in a coma, when will the Premier stop succumbing to pressure from the liquor lobby and take action to curb alcohol fuelled violence on Sydney's streets?

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: That question comes from a man who only a month or so ago promised that Labor would take to the next election a policy of having no more 24-hour hotels. The bad news for the Opposition is that that policy is already in place. This man has no credibility on this issue. I make the point again that we will continue to take our advice on this and other matters from police and other appropriate authorities. If those opposite want to see what can be done, then they should go to Kings Cross and have a look. According to the last figures I saw, there has been a 40 per cent reduction in the violence and other antisocial behaviour that preceded the unfortunate death of Thomas Kelly. No-one pretends that this issue is easy to deal with. According to the information I received, the last assault—the assault that affected a constituent of the member for Camden earlier this week—occurred at 10 o'clock at night. It was not midnight, it was not 1.00 a.m. and it was not 2.00 a.m. A lockout would not have assisted in that situation.

So let us not pretend that there is a single solution to this issue across the State. I have said repeatedly to the New South Wales Commissioner of Police that he should apply to individual areas the requirements that are needed there. I have said—and this goes to what happened this week near Circular Quay—that a lockout that comes into effect at midnight or 1.00 a.m. will not help in those areas where licensed premises close before that time and yet violence and antisocial behaviour, especially involving young men, is still an issue. It is not simply about alcohol; it is about alcohol and drugs, and it is about culture. As the police commissioner has said, people

are going out for the night prefuelled. What does that mean? People are drinking at home before they go out so they are well on the way to being intoxicated—if not well past the point of intoxication—by the time they get to public places.

There is a drinking culture in this society—not just in New South Wales but across the country—that, frankly, is unacceptable. It is different from when I was growing up, and I do not pretend to be perfect. But we continue to hear the sorts of lies being peddled by the member for Toongabbie and those opposite that there is a single solution for this problem and that it might involve lockouts across the State. That is wrong. In Newcastle lockouts apply to a dozen hotels. They were applied because of the particular circumstances around those hotels. It comes back to my points about my request to the police commissioner and about our efforts in Kings Cross. We will apply policy prescriptions to areas as required. As we have seen in Kings Cross, it has led to a reduction in this sort of antisocial behaviour.

SYNTHETIC DRUGS ACTION

Mr ROB STOKES: My question is addressed to the Minister for Fair Trading. What action is the Government taking to respond to the dangers of synthetic drugs?

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I thank the member for Pittwater for his question and commend him for his ongoing interest in this important community safety issue. Synthetic drugs are a scourge on our society. The Premier described earlier the alcohol and drug fuelled violence that we see almost every night in Sydney. Synthetic drugs are a scourge with high health and social costs to our community. They are a scourge that has impacted some of our major regional communities. I have previously advised the House of the problem with synthetic drugs in Newcastle and Tamworth, amongst other communities. The Liberal-Nationals Government was never going to just sit on its hands as these dangerous substances harmed our young people, and in some instances led to their deaths. Today I am pleased to inform the House that the Liberal-Nationals Government is introducing into this Parliament what we believe to be the toughest synthetic drug laws in the Federation of Australia. We are backing the police.

The manufacture, supply and advertising of synthetic drugs will be outlawed. The new laws will ban all psychoactive substances, even those not yet developed, to ensure that none slip through the net. These tough new laws are in response to a report of the Legislative Assembly Legal Affairs Committee, which began its work on this issue in February 2012. I have previously commended the member for Castle Hill as well as his fellow committee members—including members representing the electorates of Campbelltown, Myall Lakes, Cessnock and Wallsend—for their detailed work on this issue. The report, which made 13 recommendations, was clear on the action that the Government needed to take to address this important issue, and the Government has responded. On 9 June this year, one week after the release of the report, I implemented an interim product safety ban and urged the Federal Government to do the same. I am pleased to say that the O'Farrell-Stoner Government's ban has worked.

Preliminary health data shows that emergency department presentations linked to synthetic drugs have dropped, from an average of 75 between March and June to only 39 in July. Newcastle police reported an average of 26 incidents each month attributed to synthetic drugs in the first half of this year. Since the interim ban, this has fallen to just two incidents per month. The product safety ban was an interim measure to ensure that synthetic drugs were taken off the streets while changes were made to the State's main drug enforcement frameworks. Today those changes were introduced into this House. Under the O'Farrell-Stoner Government's new laws, manufacturers and sellers of psychoactive substances face up to two years in jail. Anyone found in possession of a prohibited substance could face jail time or fines. Importantly, as new substances emerge in the marketplace, they will be covered immediately by the legislative framework. No longer will suppliers be in a position to make ever more dangerous chemical compounds through minor amendments in order to flout the law. The new arrangements and the Government's tough action in this area are supported by the community. Father Chris Riley, Chief Executive Officer and founder of Youth Off The Streets, has stated:

We've noticed a dramatic decrease in the use of synthetic drugs, and not only that, the amount of talking and bragging about the use of them has also decreased.

Gerard Byrne, the Clinical Director of the Salvation Army Recovery Services, also supports the Government's action. He said:

Since the introduction of the ban on the sale of synthetic cannabis and hallucinogens, Salvation Army drug and alcohol services have seen a reduction in the reporting of the use of these substances by our clients.

The Salvation Army supports the NSW Government's ban on these substances, the longer term harms of which are still largely unknown.

The Government is making a difference where it matters. The legislative package introduced today will help protect our community from existing synthetic drugs and from those that are yet to emerge. I expect every member of this House, including those opposite, and members in the other place to support this fantastic and ground-breaking legislation. Without such laws, the safety of our community will remain at risk from the scourge of synthetic drugs. I am proud to be part of the O'Farrell-Stoner reformist Government. We are proud to lead the way in the fight against the synthetic drugs that are destroying our community.

SYDNEY SECOND AIRPORT SITE

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON: My question is directed to the Premier. Does the Premier support Warren Truss's statement today backing a second airport at Badgerys Creek?

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL: My comments about the second airport could not be clearer. Any money I have will go into State infrastructure such as roads, train lines, hospitals, schools and any other infrastructure that those opposite failed to deliver for 16 long years. It is clear that any money I have will go to fund State infrastructure. What has been clear, and what I have said repeatedly since my election, is that aviation is a Federal Government responsibility. It is for the Federal Government's to decide whether to build a second airport and it is its responsibility to fund it. So this is a matter for the Federal Government.

LOWER HUNTER HEALTH SERVICES

Mr CRAIG BAUMANN: My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research. How is the Government improving health services in Maitland and the Lower Hunter?

Mrs JILLIAN SKINNER: I thank the member for Port Stephens for the question and commend him for taking a great interest in the recent announcement, which I was happy to make, about the site for the new Maitland Hospital. I remind the House that before the last election I had the pleasure of standing with my colleagues, including the now Premier and the member for Maitland when she was a candidate, and promising \$20 million to find and purchase a site and get on with the job of planning the new hospital. I am pleased to say that on 30 August I stood on the new hospital site and the local paper said, "Parker delivers on her election pledge." Well done, Robyn. This is a great news story not only for the people of Maitland but also for the people of Port Stephens, because the chosen site at Metford is along the road to Raymond Terrace. The people in that area who previously had to rely upon John Hunter Hospital and the Calvary Mater Hospital will now be able to access acute care at Metford. The new hospital will be a wonderful piece of infrastructure for local people. I note that the shadow Minister for Health endorses the site.

Dr Andrew McDonald: I don't quite remember doing that.

Mrs JILLIAN SKINNER: The member says he does not quite remember that. I welcome the comments made by the shadow Minister for Health on 9 November 2011, which are still on the Labor website. Under the heading "Parker set to break Maitland hospital promise," he called on the Minister for Health and the member for Maitland to come out that day and confirm once and for all that the \$20-million hospital redevelopment would take place in Maitland.

Dr Andrew McDonald: That was 20 months ago.

Mrs JILLIAN SKINNER: That article was printed from the Labor website today. The interesting thing is that the member for Macquarie Fields told *Maitland Mercury* journalist Belinda-Jane Davis that we should have investigated sites in places such as Greta and Braxton—which are not in Maitland.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Macquarie Fields will cease interjecting and come to order.

Mrs JILLIAN SKINNER: The reality is that he cannot have it both ways. The hospital will be in Maitland. The new site is six times larger than the existing Maitland Hospital site and will have the space to accommodate a helipad and provide a buffer zone for local residents. The location is not flood prone like the existing hospital site and is near roads and the railway station. I was happy to visit this beautiful site with the member to make this announcement. The site was selected following an exhaustive process during which the expert panel examined more than 40 sites in the area. This site ticks every box. As I said, it is six times larger than the current hospital site and it will enable us to offer more complex care and services than are currently

provided. I hasten to add that, as I said at the time, this does not mean we will close Cessnock, Kurri Kurri or any other hospitals—contrary to the scurrilous rumours spread by Opposition members. Those hospitals will provide complementary services.

Mr John Robertson: We never said that.

Mrs JILLIAN SKINNER: The Leader of the Opposition should listen to his backbench; he does not even know what his members are saying publicly. Additional services anticipated at the new hospital include all services provided at the existing hospital but with an upgraded intensive care unit and an emergency short-stay unit for patients requiring observation and monitoring. We will provide additional cancer services and additional beds and treatment spaces, and have the capacity to care for more patients than ever before. The Coalition has delivered on this election promise on time. In fact, we said that we would do this in our first four years in government and we are only halfway through our term. Our actions are contrary to those of the Opposition in government: Labor talked about the need for a new hospital but never did a thing about it.

NATIONAL EDUCATION REFORM AGREEMENT

Ms CARMEL TEBBUTT: My question is directed to the Minister for Education. Given the Minister's statements in support of the ramped-up funding in years five and six of the National Education Reform Agreement, what action is the Minister taking to ensure that the incoming Abbot Government will honour the agreement he signed and provide the full six years of funding for New South Wales schools?

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: It is great that we have had a change of government and now a sensible, mature and methodical Government in Canberra has joined like governments in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. I was pleased to see the then Opposition essentially sign up to four years of Gonski, because, as we have said many times, a needs-based funding model such as Gonski is the right way to fund schools. This Government was proud to be the first State to sign up to Gonski. Yes, it is a four-year commitment and I am sure there will soon be many discussions about the future of Commonwealth school funding. Now that the election is out of the way I will say that the Gonski review was a good idea. I certainly have high praise for Mr Gonski and the members of the panel who closely examined State and Commonwealth school funding and came up with a better way forward. But I have nothing but criticism for the way in which the previous Labor Government handled the Gonski review. It received the report more than 18 months ago and sat on it.

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

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: Members of the former Federal Labor Government promised constantly that there would be an outcome in two weeks. Former Prime Minister Gillard gave a press club presentation and an announcement was expected, but none was made. The former Labor Government left it to the last minute during the heat of an election campaign to go State by State. New South Wales signed up, but the former Federal Government could not have handled it worse. Funding for schools—to which a non-partisan approach should have been taken as it is such an important issue for all our constituents—was turned into a partisan political campaign by the previous Federal Labor Government. That is part of the reason that not all States signed up prior to the commencement of the caretaker period.

New South Wales signed up and was pleased to do so because the conditions for funding had been satisfied already by reforms this Government had introduced. We were happy to tick that off for New South Wales. The Premier made it clear that the question was whether New South Wales was able to afford the commitment over six years. We signed an agreement with the Commonwealth Government over six years. The new Federal Government has said it will commit to four years and, as I have said, we will have conversations about that. But the previous Federal Labor Government, like so many other things it did, could not have handled this process worse.

Ms Carmel Tebbutt: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129, relevance. The question was very clear: It is about the incoming Abbott Government. The Minister for Education may want to talk about the previous Federal Labor Government, but that was not the question. We are not interested in his views about the previous Labor Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is being relevant to the question asked. There is no point of order.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: I answered the question by saying that I am sure there will be discussions. When the new Federal Cabinet is announced next week and there is a new Federal education Minister, we will have many discussions about Gonski and what will happen with funding. Let us be honest: The Commonwealth Government has an issue next year about what is essentially the fifth year. As part of next year's budget, the Commonwealth Government will have to consider the fifth year. As the New South Wales Minister for Education, I will be arguing that the Commonwealth Government contribute more funds to education. I am sure that the Minister for Tourism will be arguing for more funds for tourism, and I am sure the Minister for Roads and Ports will be arguing for more funds for roads. Every State Minister will be arguing for increased funding from the Commonwealth Government.

Mr Barry O'Farrell: Take him out to dinner; share a few shandies.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: I may well invite Christopher Pyne, if he becomes the Minister for education, out to dinner. I will invite him to Griffith and to La Scala. I will do so because every Minister in New South Wales will be doing what they have always done, irrespective of which political party is in government federally, and that is arguing for what is in the best interests of New South Wales. Every single Minister will be doing precisely the same thing. But the difference from last week to this week is that this week we have people in Canberra who will listen to us and who have the best interests of Australia and its most populous State at heart, as do all Coalition members in this State. [*Time expired.*]

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

Mrs ROZA SAGE: My question is addressed to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing, and Minister for the Arts. How is the Government performing in attracting international tourists to New South Wales?

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

Mr GEORGE SOURIS: I thank the member for Blue Mountains for her question and commend her for her strong support of the tourism industry.

Mr Barry O'Farrell: What have you got?

Mr GEORGE SOURIS: What have we got? I have some very good news. At the end of the June 2013 financial year New South Wales experienced significant increases in international visitor numbers in nights and expenditure to remain as Australia's number one State for international tourism. The latest results from the International Visitor Survey show that New South Wales welcomed almost three million visitors, who stayed more than 69.6 million nights resulting in an economic impact of \$6.53 billion, which is an increase of 6.6 per cent. New South Wales visitor expenditure growth drove the overall increase in expenditure for Australia to 6 per cent.

As I detailed in the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan, the New South Wales Government's focus on Asia resulted in strong expenditure growth from some of our Asian markets, resulting in an 11.5 per cent growth in holiday expenditure. China is now New South Wales' leading tourism market, claiming the top spot and overtaking visitation from New Zealand for the very first time. According to the International Visitor Survey, there were 396,000 visitors to New South Wales from China compared with 386,000 visitors from New Zealand. Chinese visitors contributed more than \$1.3 billion to the New South Wales economy. The survey also showed an 18 per cent increase in the number of Chinese visitors to New South Wales and positioned New South Wales as Australia's number one State for Chinese tourism, attracting 61.2 per cent of all Chinese tourists to Australia.

Tourism plays a major role in the State's economy by providing 152,000 jobs directly and 105,000 indirectly. Those figures are proof that the New South Wales Government's strategy to increase visitations from China is working. Our strategy focuses on eight key areas by which to deliver growth, including undertaking marketing activities in four major source markets in China, improving the quality and range of visitor experiences, targeting high-performing consumer segments, and supporting aviation and route development. Indeed, in May China Southern Airlines announced that from October one of its daily flights will upgrade from an Airbus 330 to an Airbus 380, adding 162,000 seats to the Guangzhou-Sydney route annually. The New South Wales Government and Qantas also announced a \$30 million partnership to promote Sydney and regional New South Wales to the world, including the key Chinese market.

Other international tourism increases in New South Wales expenditure came from Malaysia, which increased by 29.5 per cent; India, which increased by 18.1 per cent; Taiwan, which increased by 16.9 per cent; Singapore, which increased by 15.4 per cent; and Japan—welcome back—which increased by 15.2 per cent. The good news keeps coming, with the June quarter also delivering significant growth for New South Wales and the number of visitors from the United Kingdom increasing by 24.2 per cent. That increase was due to the surge in visitor arrivals related to the British and Irish Lions rugby test matches and the Manchester United match—major sporting events that were secured by this Government.

Because New South Wales' growth in visitor expenditure was so strong, our State contributed a healthy 6.6 per cent increase to the overall increase in expenditure for Australia. With the State's tourism hotspots and major events continuing to feature strongly on visitors' agendas and with our Sydney in Winter campaign gaining good exposure, visitor nights in the harbour city increased by 6.9 per cent and visitor expenditure grew 7.8 per cent, which contributed an additional \$425 million to the New South Wales economy. The Government's commitment to growing tourism has been lauded by the Chief Executive Officer of the Tourism and Transport Forum, Ken Morrison, who said:

The success of recent events across Sydney has pumped real money into the visitor economy and ... the NSW Government should be congratulated on their work in building this exciting events calendar.

They are not my words, but his words. While this growth is great for our State, we will not become complacent. We will continue to invest in airline partnerships, strategic marketing programs, and international sporting and cultural events.

Question time concluded at 3.17 p.m.

BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY WARNING

Ministerial Statement

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL (Ku-ring-gai—Premier, and Minister for Western Sydney) [3.18 p.m.]: I wish to update the House in relation to bushfires. I am advised that an emergency warning is in place for a grassfire burning around the area of Grange Avenue at Marsden Park and that it has crossed Garling Road. An emergency warning is also in place for fires burning near Hawkesbury Road, Winmalee. There is one confirmed report of the loss of a house in Hawkesbury Road, Winmalee, and unconfirmed reports of two injured firefighters at the same location. Winmalee High School has been evacuated. Emergency alert telephone warnings have been sent to phones in the area. This is an ongoing emergency. The Rural Fire Service and others have it under control. I will endeavour to ensure that members are kept informed.

OMBUDSMAN

Reports

Mr Greg Smith tabled the following reports:

- (1) "Report under Section 242 (3) of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 for the period ending 28 May 2013, Covert Search Warrants", dated August 2013
- (2) "Review of Division 4, Part 3 of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002: Face Coverings and Identification", dated August 2013

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

Membership

Motion by Mr BRAD HAZZARD agreed to:

That:

- (1) Christopher David Holstein be appointed to the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety in place of Stewart Lawrence Ayres, discharged.
- (2) Pursuant to section 66 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, Dominic Francis Perrottet be appointed to serve on the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption in place of Mark Raymond Speakman.

- (3) Pursuant to the resolution of 15 August 2013, Melanie Rhonda Gibbons is nominated as a member of the Joint Select Committee on Sentencing of Child Sexual Assault Offenders in place of Gabrielle Cecilia Upton.
- (4) A message be sent informing the Legislative Council of the Legislative Assembly members appointed to the committees.
- (5) Mark Joseph Coure be appointed to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Economic Development in place of Stewart Lawrence Ayres, discharged.
- (6) Christopher Edward Spence be appointed to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety in place of Jai Travers Rowell, discharged.
- (7) Jai Travers Rowell be appointed to the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee in place of Stewart Lawrence Ayres, discharged.
- (8) Adam John Marshall be appointed to the State and Regional Development Committee in place of Christopher Edward Spence, discharged.

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

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Order of Business

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Infrastructure NSW) [3.21 p.m.]: I move that standing and sessional orders be suspended to:

- (1) Permit, on Wednesday 11 September 2013 at the conclusion of the motion accorded priority and prior to the commencement of government business, consideration of the petition on the development of a radiation treatment centre in Dubbo, presented by the member for Barwon.
- (2) Provide for the following routine of business Thursday 12 September 2013 at 4.30 pm, or at the conclusion of government business if earlier:
 - (a) Community Recognition Statements;
 - (b) Private Members' Statements; and
 - (c) Adjournment.

Members would be aware that it is the practice of the House to deal with 10,000 signature petitions on Thursday afternoons. We normally deal with one such petition on a Thursday, although on occasions that procedure has been varied. The Minister for Mental Health, the member for Barwon, wishes to speak to this matter. As he has ministerial duties to attend to on Thursday, it is proposed that discussion of the petition take place on Wednesday during Government business.

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

Motion agreed to.

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Report

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to section 78 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, of a report entitled, "Investigation into the conduct of Ian Macdonald, John Maitland and others", dated August 2013.

Ordered to be printed.

POLICE INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Report

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to section 103 (1) of the Police Integrity Commission Act 1996, of a report entitled "Operation Barmouth", dated September 2013.

Ordered to be printed.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 12A of the Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984, of the report of the Audit Office of New South Wales for the year ended 30 June 2013, received out of session and authorised to be printed on 3 September 2013.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report

Mr Stephen Bromhead, as Chair, tabled the report entitled, "Legislation Review Digest No. 43/55", dated 10 September 2013, together with the minutes of the committee meeting regarding Legislation Review Digest No. 43/55, dated 27 August 2013.

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

PETITIONS

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

Sydney Electorate Public High School

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

Oxford Street Traffic Arrangements

Petition requesting the removal of the clearway and introduction of a 40 kilometre per hour speed limit in Oxford Street, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Walsh Bay Precinct Public Transport

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

Pig-dog Hunting Ban

Petition requesting the banning of pig-dog hunting in New South Wales, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Duck Hunting

Petition requesting retention of the longstanding ban on duck hunting, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Banning of Plastic Bags

Petition calling on the Government to introduce legislation for the purpose of banning single-use lightweight plastic bags at retail points of sale in New South Wales, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Low-cost Housing and Homelessness

Petition requesting increased funding for low-cost housing and homelessness services, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Inner-city Social Housing

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

Pet Bans in Accommodation By-laws and Tenancy Agreements

Petition requesting the prohibition of blanket pet bans in accommodation by-laws and rules and tenancy agreements, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

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

Container Deposit Levy

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

The Clerk announced that the following Minister had lodged a response to a petition signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Adrian Piccoli—Mortlake Public School security fence—lodged 13 August 2013 (Mr John Sidoti)

CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO BE ACCORDED PRIORITY

Federal Coalition Government Policies

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Camden has limited time to speak. I remind members not to interject.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) [3.26 p.m.]: My motion should be accorded priority to enable this House, following the lowest Labor primary vote in a century, to acknowledge the new Federal Coalition Government and welcome the opportunities it will provide for New South Wales now that Australia is open for business. The Australian people were fed up with an incompetent, self-serving Federal government led by Rudd or Gillard and their cronies. Since 2007, under that mob, it was a circus. Businesses within the country had no confidence in their leadership and shut up shop.

The nation gave the outgoing Government a kick where it belonged, with Labor recording its lowest vote in 100 years. The people said, "Get out of here and get out quickly." Australia needs and wants a hardworking government that works for the people, not for itself, and that is what it has in Tony Abbott and his team. That is why this motion should be accorded priority. Russell Matheson, my local Federal member, achieved an 8.5 per cent swing because he is an extremely hardworking member. The people of the Macarthur electorate said, "We have had enough of the circus. We want business to thrive in this country." Even under the hardship of Federal Labor, for the past two years New South Wales has thrived because we are open for business. New South Wales accounts for 31 per cent of Australia's gross domestic product [GDP]. That is greater than the gross domestic product of Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

This State is preferred by blue chip companies, with over 600 multinational headquarters based in Sydney. Nearly 50 per cent of the top 500 Australian companies base their headquarters in New South Wales. We are providing the infrastructure: the North West Rail Link; the South West Rail Link; hospitals, including \$139 million for health in my electorate; the WestConnex motorway; the M4 extension to the airport, the widening of the M5 and M2 motorways; the Barangaroo development; and the International Convention Centre. We have done all this under the chains of a Federal Labor Government. With Tony Abbott and his team in Government, we will build a five-pillar economy on manufacturing innovation, agricultural exports, services, education and research, and mining exports. In New South Wales that will equate to more jobs, higher wages, better living standards, a reduced cost of living, and the unleashing of our economic potential. The carbon tax is gone and we are cutting green tape. By according this motion priority, the House will be able to hear about the \$53 million for the Narellan Road upgrade in my electorate.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. It is a convention of the House that members do not interject during this debate. If the interjections continue I will extend the speaking time of the member for Wollongong. The member for Camden was heard in silence. The member for Wollongong will be shown the same courtesy.

Illawarra Health Services

Ms NOREEN HAY (Wollongong) [3.29 p.m.]: My motion states:

That this House:

- (1) Notes the extreme pressure nurses, doctors and allied health workers across the Illawarra are under due to the Government's \$3 billion funding cut to the New South Wales Health budget.
- (2) Recognises patients in the Illawarra are now facing major delays in surgery and medical care because of these funding cuts.
- (3) Calls on all members of Parliament to fight for the full reinstatement of funding to the New South Wales Health budget.

Recently, the Leader of the Opposition, John Robertson, joined me as part of his visit to hospitals to hear firsthand the kinds of problems and pressures health service workers face. Whether we were talking about Bulli or Wollongong hospitals where we met with nurses and health service workers, including cleaners—

Mr Gareth Ward: You didn't come to Shoalhaven or Kiama.

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

Ms NOREEN HAY: You were busy in other electorates. Perhaps you ought to go to Kiama. While the Minister for Health is busy fudging bed numbers, patients and staff are paying the price on the front line.

Mrs Jillian Skinner: That's rubbish.

Ms NOREEN HAY: The Minister would be right talking about rubbish after misleading the upper House committee regarding bed numbers. One patient in my electorate told me her surgery had been cancelled on the scheduled day for the third consecutive time. Members opposite might find that funny, including the member for Kiama, but that patient has been waiting for her surgery only to have it cancelled three times in a row. She has been prepped and taken to the theatre only to find no intensive care unit bed and be turned away. That patient told me about the repeated cost of getting to the hospital, fasting and going through the stress and trauma only to have her surgery cancelled. An elderly woman cannot get her dialysis treatment because the health service will not deliver it in the method her cardiologist says she must receive it. I have ample examples of patients coming to my office telling me about failing to receive treatment from a hospital or health service due to budget cuts. It is all very well for Government members to talk about cranes, but those cranes are not helping patients waiting for the delivery of health services. The former Labor Government funded those cranes with its \$83 million pledge to Wollongong Hospital.

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

The House divided.

Ayes, 60

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

Noes, 22

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

Pair

Mr Cornwell

Ms Watson

Question resolved in the affirmative.**FEDERAL COALITION GOVERNMENT POLICIES****Motion Accorded Priority****Mr CHRIS PATTERSON** (Camden) [3.41 p.m.]: I move:

That this House, after the lowest Labor primary vote in a century, welcomes a new Coalition Federal Government and the opportunities it provides for New South Wales now that Australia is open for business.

There are two parts to this motion. Labor received the lowest primary vote in 100 years. The Coalition in the Federal sphere has moved on, just as the Coalition in this State has moved on and taken ownership. What will the Federal Coalition Government, led by Abbott and Truss, do to open up the economy, engender confidence within the economy and support the States, and thus the people of New South Wales?

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: Labor left this Government with a record debt. The Federal Coalition Government will build a five-pillar economy, which will help New South Wales. It will improve manufacturing innovation, agricultural exports, services, education and research, and mining exports. That will mean more jobs, higher wages and better living standards. The bad stuff will go as well. Those on the other side supported the carbon tax. The Coalition will get rid of the carbon tax, which added an average \$550 to every family budget. That money will now be spent in New South Wales to kickstart our economy.

The Federal Coalition Government is committed to WestConnex, allocating \$1.5 billion to match our \$1.8 billion contribution. This 33-kilometre WestConnex tollway will link Sydney's west to the airport and the Port Botany precinct. It will include the M4 extension and the M5 East duplication from King Georges Road. The WestConnex motorway was a key recommendation of Infrastructure NSW. The Federal Coalition Government will spend billions of dollars on our roads in rural and regional areas as well as in the cities because it understands that improving our roads will help the New South Wales economy.

On the Monday before the election, Joe Hockey, then shadow Federal Treasurer and soon-to-be Federal Treasurer, stood with Stuart Ayres, Parliamentary Secretary and member for Penrith, and Russell Matheson, Federal member for Macarthur, on Narellan Road and said that the Coalition, if elected to government, would help the State Government fix this road. He said that the Coalition, if elected to government, would give the State \$53 million, adding to our \$70 million contribution, to fast-track this project. It is all about fast-tracking. The Federal Coalition Government will not try to chain and shackle us, as the self-serving former Federal Labor Government did. It will work for New South Wales, and the \$53 million for this project will help the long-suffering commuters of my electorate. Russell Matheson, the Federal member for Macarthur, had an 8.5 per cent swing—I think the biggest swing in New South Wales.

Mr Nathan Rees: Fowler had 9 per cent.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: The postal votes are not in yet. The people of Macarthur said, "We want change. We want to get rid of that defunct mob which does nothing and holds us back." On election night Russell Matheson said to me, "Patto, this is a team." He told me that the member for Wollondilly had been outstanding and that the member for Campbelltown had also assisted. He could not have done it without his office staff, whom he mentioned by name: Belinda Rowell, whom I have dealt with on many occasions, did an outstanding job leading the charge. His team also included Michael Shaw, Janet Gray, Scott Percival, Carla Upfill and Michelle Fenech. That is what happens under a Coalition government: we work together. The Federal Coalition Government has said it is time to move forward. It will help New South Wales and every other State. The Coalition will get on with the job, just as Tony Abbott did at 4.00 a.m. when he got on his bike the day after the election. We are moving forward.

Mr NATHAN REES (Toongabbie) [3.46 p.m.]: On behalf of the Opposition, I lead the charge against this dross masquerading as a motion about last weekend's election. The member for Camden started his remarks by accurately noting the 34 per cent Labor primary vote in New South Wales. No doubt this low primary vote derived from a term of government riven by internal dissent. Yet the best they could do was see seats such as Fowler in Western Sydney have a swing of 9 per cent towards them. The best they could do was see seats such as Blaxland, Parramatta and Richmond be retained by the Labor Party.

Mrs Leslie Williams: What about the swings?

Mr NATHAN REES: The swings in Lindsay and Reid were less than the national average. It was a very narrow win for the Coalition in Dobell, Robertson, Banks, Reid and Lindsay off the lowest Labor primary vote in nearly 100 years. Labor got a primary vote of 34 per cent, and the Coalition failed miserably to convert that to a swag of seats.

Mr Kevin Anderson: Failed miserably?

Mr NATHAN REES: Failed miserably. I will get to the Taliban shortly, my friend.

Mr Chris Patterson: Point of order: I ask that the member for Toongabbie not give his best Antony Green impersonation and speak to the motion before the House.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! It is a wideranging debate. The member for Toongabbie has the call.

Mr NATHAN REES: On Friday night I had the good fortune to run into a well-regarded Liberal insider who confidently predicted a 25-seat gain in the Federal Parliament. Instead, it was about half that.

Mr Ryan Park: A member of the Taliban?

Mr NATHAN REES: No, as it happens. We saw a campaign, which should have been beer and skittles for the Coalition, torn asunder by the Taliban. Instead of retreating to the Tora Bora caves, they have gone to the lairs of David Clarke, with Swampy on the Central Coast, licking their wounds as they think about what could have been. I can tell members opposite what will be at the next State election. Let us run through them: Oatley, 0.5 per cent; East Hills, 0.6 per cent; Swansea, 1.1 per cent; Monaro, 2 per cent; Newcastle, 2.4 per cent; Wyong, 2.5 per cent; Granville, 2.6 per cent; Rockdale, 3.5 per cent; Smithfield, 4.8 per cent; and 5 per cent in the Blue Mountains.

Here is an early election promise: We are coming after each and every one of those seats. Those electorates require a swing less than the swing that was gained by the Coalition at the weekend and we are happy to add the member for Myall Lakes to the list. The priorities are the non-performers—East Hills and Oatley—who sit on a margin of less than 1 per cent on these figures. They will be trounced because your State director, your outfit, and your machine are an absolute joke. Anyone who was presented with this opportunity—these key ingredients of a 34 per cent primary vote and more money than you can spend—should not fail, but you failed miserably to capitalise on that in Western Sydney.

That brings me to Greenway and the political night parrot, Jaymes Diaz, second time around. What a stroke of genius. Give the Prime Minister a wrap on this. There is an early indication of the political judgment of the new Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, in resisting the installation of this bloke. It was his second time around. He failed to make an inroad the first time around. This time around I thought we would get there but I did not in

my wildest dreams think we would know the result on the night. Instead, there was a 3 per cent swing to Michelle Rowland after this political joke, the political night parrot of Western Sydney, was not seen throughout the campaign and was unable to campaign. He was a political embarrassment of such proportion that the Premier had to send his own director of communications out there to stop the damage. Well, it did not quite work because your party machine has failed you all miserably.

I concede that we have had the benefit of a 34 per cent primary vote; we were in that territory on occasion. But I tell you what, we won all those seats by installing good local candidates, not party hacks, not people who were not prepared to run a campaign and not people who were not prepared to turn up to debate. The Liberal candidates are simply people that have been installed by the "Taliban". Those of you in the moderate group of the Liberal Party need to take the Taliban to task on this because they are the ones who will cost the member for East Hills his seat. They are the ones who will cost the member for Oatley his seat. They are the ones who will cost the member for Swansea his seat. They are the ones who will cost the member for Monaro his seat. You cannot allow this inadequate machine to determine your fate. We are coming after each and every one of you.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) [3.51 p.m.]: When members talk about machines in action, when they talk about political machines on the rise, political machines standing up and punching well about their weight and about machines that are making a difference and having a major role to play in the Federal election, they should try the National Party. Members opposite should try these numbers on for size. Check out these little puppy dogs. In Richmond there was a 4.1 per cent swing to Matthew Fraser.

Mr Stephen Bromhead: Hear, hear!

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Thank you. In Page there was a 6.85 per cent swing to Kevin Hogan. Lyne has been won by Dr David Gillespie—welcome, David, to the Federal Parliament. Check this one: In the seat of New England, Barnaby Joyce now enjoys a 71 per cent two party preferred vote. Out of the five safest seats in Australia the National Party holds four. The biggest are Parkes, Riverina and New England. The member for Cessnock talks about the Hunter but the biggest swing to the Coalition in the State was in the Hunter—8.5 per cent. The member for Toongabbie talks about his party coming after us. Look out, my friend. Michael Johnson did an outstanding job. Saturday 7 September heralded a new era of economic management. We heralded a new era of cooperative federalism. We are looking forward to a constructive Council of Australian Governments process. We have unity of representation across New South Wales led by the National Party and the Liberal Party.

On Saturday 7 September we triumphed with unity, focus and discipline. It was started here in New South Wales with those three key factors and it spread nationally. That is why we now have a Federal Government that will drive this nation forward. It will build an infrastructure-led recovery, led by Tony Abbott in the Liberal Party and by Mr Warren Truss in the National Party. I say to members that the National Party is on the rise. We are a power to be reckoned with and can I say to those new members in the three seats that we won, Kevin Hogan, David Gillespie and the inimitable Barnaby Joyce, look out baby, we are coming. Now Australia has a stable, economically sensible Government that will certainly drive this nation forward and it will be an infrastructure-led recovery. At 34 per cent Labor's primary vote was the lowest in a century. We welcome the new Coalition Federal Government, and it is clear to see. [*Time expired.*]

Mr RICHARD AMERY (Mount Druitt) [3.54 p.m.]: We oppose this self-serving, misinformed motion. The motion talks about Labor getting the lowest primary vote in a century but that does not reflect the fact that a hundred years ago we had far fewer parties than we have now. However, we say congratulations to an incoming Government in Canberra and we wish them well. I am looking forward to hearing how their policies will be implemented and how they will affect this country. For example, I am really looking forward to finding out what are the Coalition's six points to turn back the boats. I know the Liberal Party candidate for Greenway was unable to say what the six points are to turn back the boats, but as a member of the Opposition here in New South Wales I and my colleagues are looking forward to the implementation of those six points, if anybody knows what they are. No doubt the public are doing the same.

Secondly, the mover of the motion talked about WestConnex and infrastructure proposed by the new Government. Sure, I am interested to see what is going to happen to WestConnex, the continuation of the M4. People in Western Sydney have been told that the M4 is being clogged up by refugee boats and refugees. We want to know how WestConnex is actually going to clear that roadway. I was nearly run off the M4 the other day by a Chinese junk or an Indonesian tugboat and I am really interested to see how the new Government will

stop these refugees and these Indonesian tugboats from driving people off the M4 in Western Sydney. If WestConnex is the way to resolve that problem, well and good; we welcome it. How the Abbott Government proposes to stop those refugees clogging up the M4 is one of its great challenges.

Of course, the 34 per cent Labor vote could have been lower. The Government's majority could have been higher had people in Western Sydney not seen the Liberal Party operating at a local level and a State level. People in the Blacktown area, where Ed Husic and of course Michelle Rowland were returned with thumping majorities, saw Blacktown City Council close the local swimming pool, increase rates for pensioners in their own homes and talk about knocking down people's houses to build parkland and then sell the existing parkland to property developers. People in Blacktown and the electorates of Greenway and Chifley have seen the State Government introduce workers compensation reforms. People are coming into my office saying they are losing their benefits. We have seen the Liberal Party close the cardiac ward at Mt Druitt Hospital. So why was the Coalition's majority not greater? They could have had a bigger majority had the Liberal Party performed a little better at other levels. [*Time expired.*]

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) [3.57 p.m.], in reply: The common thread of the contributions from the members for Toongabbie and Mount Druitt was, "We did not do badly", and then in the next breath, "It was not that bad at all. We got 34 per cent and we were outstanding in electorates here, here and there." Clearly the standards for electoral success of those opposite are low. I enjoyed it when the member for Toongabbie said the previous Federal Government was, and I quote, "The most internally divisive, dysfunctional Federal Government we have seen." There is nothing like sticking the knife in or kicking a dog when it is down. The member for Toongabbie said, "We are coming after you, each and every one of you." Finally we see some ticker from those opposite. Finally he has come out of the shadows. What we hear about from level 10 is a leadership challenge. It is true. We all thought we would be waiting another 12 or 18 months for that. We have heard the whispers, and I live on level 10. Finally the member for Toongabbie has come out and said it, and I thank him for doing so.

This is a serious motion. We have moved on from the past 100 years and the 16 years of inadequacy under the former Labor State Government. This motion is about the new Federal Coalition Government working with every State in Australia, but I want to concentrate on New South Wales. With the new Federal Government, the Treasurer and all the Ministers in New South Wales—including the education Minister and the transport Minister—will finally have access to Federal Ministers. The Minister for Finance in New South Wales, that great Minister Andrew Constance, will be able to pick up the phone and talk to his new Federal counterpart without facing the prospect of getting nowhere and without facing the negativity of the former Federal Labor Government.

I had the Treasurer come out to a local Chamber of Commerce breakfast in my electorate recently. It is amazing to think that New South Wales has done so well despite having to deal with such a negative and backward Federal Labor Government. We will now be able to move forward. In the last two years New South Wales has become number one again. Working together with the new Federal Coalition Government, we will deliver more for the people of NSW. The fact is that many people across this country voted on Saturday for the new Coalition Federal Government. They were saying, "Enough is enough" of the former Federal Labor Government circus.

Pursuant to sessional order business interrupted and motion lapsed.

DRUGS AND POISONS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (NEW PSYCHOACTIVE AND OTHER SUBSTANCES) BILL 2013

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Anthony Roberts, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Fair Trading) [4.00 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Drugs and Poisons Legislation Amendment (New Psychoactive and Other Substances) Bill 2013. This bill will prohibit the supply, manufacture and advertising of synthetic drugs or psychoactive substances in New South Wales. It will also make it an offence to manufacture, supply or

possess a substance listed on schedule 9 of the Commonwealth Poisons Standard list. The Liberals and Nationals Government laws represent a major shift in the approach to drug enforcement legislation in Australia. It will help to put our police on the front foot and stop them having to play catch-up with criminals over the legality of newly emerging drugs on our streets. In the past, specific drugs were banned as a reaction to their emergence, and only after they had been identified and tested. This bill will instead place a total ban on all psychoactive substances, subject to appropriate exemptions which I will explain in more detail shortly.

New South Wales will move to a multi-layered response to psychoactive substances and none should fall through the net. Firstly, the groundbreaking new laws will ban all psychoactive substances as well as those that are yet to be developed. Secondly, the bill will introduce an offence for the supply, manufacture and possession of schedule 9 prohibited substances on the Commonwealth Poisons Standard list. Finally, by retaining the existing laws which already prohibit specific drugs based on their chemical compound, it also allows the Government response to emerging drugs to be escalated once the specific psychoactive substances are identified and their associated harms and criminality assessed. These identified and assessed substances can then be added to schedule 1 of the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 as a "prohibited drug" with significantly higher penalties attached to them based on the quantity of the drug involved.

This bill was developed by an interdepartmental committee formed after the tabling of a parliamentary committee inquiry report into synthetic drugs. The committee was chaired by NSW Fair Trading and included representatives from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Ministry of Health, the NSW Forensic and Analytical Science Service, the NSW Police Force, the Ministry for Police and Emergency Services, and the Department of Attorney General and Justice. I was pleased to be tasked by the Premier with heading up this committee as we built the platform for this whole-of-government approach. I acknowledge the member for Castle Hill, the member for Campbelltown and the member for Cessnock. These outstanding members of this House worked very hard in putting this legislation together. In February 2012, the New South Wales Legislative Assembly Legal Affairs Committee commenced an inquiry into issues concerning synthetic drugs and psychoactive substances. On 30 May 2013 this year, following extensive consultation, the committee tabled its report, "Law Reform Issues Regarding Synthetic Drugs".

The report made 13 recommendations to the New South Wales Government, which highlighted the need to reform the law to more effectively prohibit these new psychoactive substances. Just 10 days later, on 9 June, as the Minister for Fair Trading I imposed an interim 60-day product safety ban under the Australian Consumer Law section 109. The ban prohibited the sale, supply or possession in "trade and commerce" of 19 named synthetic drug products. The ban covered equivalent goods and anything represented as an equivalent and included measures to prevent suppliers changing product names. The Liberals and Nationals Government then requested the Federal Government impose a permanent national ban on these damaging drugs. Nine days later, on 18 June, the Federal Government instead announced a national interim product safety ban for 60 days, publicly stating that the ban could be extended for up to 120 days. The Federal ban applied to the same 19 named products and their equivalents as identified in New South Wales as well as the list of "prohibited substances" in schedule 9 of the Commonwealth Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons.

On 11 June, in support of the interim ban, New South Wales Fair Trading commenced its largest ever compliance program. Fair Trading inspectors visited over 1,000 retailers identified as places where synthetic drugs might be sold and provided these retailers with information on the ban, and their responsibilities. Sixty-five retailers admitted to selling or having possession of drugs which were subject to the ban. Since the commencement of the ban, the retail sale of synthetic drugs has dried up. NSW Fair Trading has found only four retailers continuing to sell the banned products and is currently determining what action to take against them. Newcastle police reported between January and June this year an average of 26 incidents each month of severe behavioural disturbances attributed to synthetic drugs. But, following the interim ban, this has dropped to an average of just two incidents per month.

Preliminary Ministry of Health data shows emergency department presentations linked to synthetic drugs have dropped, with an average of 75 presentations per month between March and June this year compared to only 39 in July this year. It is clear from these initial statistics that these interim product safety bans have worked. Synthetic drugs are no longer easy to buy in New South Wales and there is now significantly more public awareness of their dangers. However interim bans cannot be used to permanently prohibit these dangerous drugs. Even the parliamentary committee recommended that they be used as an interim measure only until a drug could be identified and appropriately banned. In the absence of a permanent national product safety

ban, the New South Wales Government has decided to act by introducing the most wide-reaching synthetic drug laws in Australia. I now turn to the detail of the Drugs and Poisons Legislation Amendment (New Psychoactive and Other Substances) Bill 2013.

Schedule 1 [4] to the bill creates new offences of manufacturing, supplying, or possessing schedule 9 substances. Schedule 9 of the Commonwealth Poisons Standard contains a list of prohibited substances which may only be used for research purposes. Most of the substances listed in schedule 9 have already been prohibited in New South Wales as specific entries in schedule 1 of the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985. However, the new offences will ensure that where a substance is listed by the Commonwealth in schedule 9 but its risks and appropriate quantities have not sufficiently been evaluated to allow prescription under schedule 1 of the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 it can still be controlled in New South Wales. The supply or manufacture of a schedule 9 substance will carry penalties of 20 penalty units, two years imprisonment, or both. Possession will carry the same monetary penalty and the possibility of up to 12 months imprisonment.

Schedule 1 [5] to the bill creates a new part 2C dealing with psychoactive substances. "Psychoactive substance" is defined as any substance which, when consumed by a person, has a psychoactive effect. Both "consumption" and "psychoactive effect" are defined in the Act and the definitions are very broad to ensure that there are no gaps or ways around this ban. "Consumption" includes ingestion, injection, inhalation, smoking, and any other means of introducing a psychoactive substance into any part of the human body. "Psychoactive effect" means the stimulation or depression of the central nervous system of the person, resulting in hallucinations or a significant disturbance in, or significant change to, motor function, thinking, behaviour, perception, awareness or mood, or causing a state of dependence, including physical or psychological addiction. As I said, this definition is intentionally broad and is intended to capture products that affect the central nervous system. It requires that psychoactive effect, however, to have some significance. This means it does not capture a product that may make a person feel good when they eat it but that does not have a significant effect on their central nervous system.

The bill creates a new offence under the proposed section 36ZF of manufacturing or supplying a psychoactive substance, knowing or being reckless as to whether it is being supplied or acquired for human consumption. The offences carry maximum penalties of 20 penalty units, two years imprisonment, or both. The element of "knowledge or recklessness as to whether the substance will be consumed by a person" is important, as there are substances which have lawful uses but can have psychoactive effects when misused. These instances will turn on their facts. In determining whether a person knew or was reckless as to whether a substance was being acquired or supplied for human consumption, the bill provides in the proposed subsection 36ZF (4) that a court may have regard to any advertising matter published or displayed by the person. It also provides for a court to have regard to any usage instruction concerning the substance by the person which indicates that the substance has a psychoactive effect or is similar in some way to a prohibited drug.

This provision will have a wide application as "publish" is defined in the bill to include distribute, disseminate, circulate, exhibit and cause or permit to be published. It includes publication over the internet. The provision also extends to any advertising displayed by the person and representations made by the person prior to the commencement of the new offence. This ensures that people cannot circumvent these laws by ceasing advertising activities and feigning ignorance as to the purpose for which the substance was being bought. The bill also creates a new offence under proposed section 36ZG of publishing, or displaying in any way, an advertisement, knowing or being reckless as to whether the advertisement promotes the consumption, sale, or supply of a substance for its psychoactive effects, and providing information on where the substance may be acquired. This offence also carries a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units, two years imprisonment, or both. This offence does not require evidence that the advertised good has a psychoactive effect; it simply requires evidence that it was put forward as having that effect.

Schedule 1 [6] to the bill also provides that where a substance which is not psychoactive is represented as being a psychoactive substance it will be taken to be a psychoactive substance for the purposes of the Act and regulations. This is consistent with existing provisions in the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985, under which a person who sells a substance representing it as a prohibited drug can be prosecuted as if the substance were that prohibited drug, regardless of the actual identity of the substance. The above offences represent a significant shift in drug enforcement. They seek to prohibit the sale of all psychoactive substances, both those existing and those yet to be developed, rather than prohibiting specific substances by prescription. Combined with the broad definitions, this means that exemptions from the offences are required to ensure that legitimate psychoactive substances are not inadvertently prohibited. It also exempts substances that, whilst illegitimate, are more appropriately dealt with elsewhere.

First, the bill exempts drugs which are already prohibited. It exempts drugs listed under schedule 1 of the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985, as well as precursor chemicals prescribed in the regulation to that Act. This is to ensure there is no confusion as to which provision offenders ought to be prosecuted under. Similarly, the bill exempts poisons, restricted substances and drugs of addiction regulated under the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966, and controlled drugs, precursors, and plants under Commonwealth legislation. As a large range of pharmaceuticals have psychoactive effects, the bill exempts therapeutic goods which are required to be listed on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods, or therapeutic goods which are specifically exempt from being listed on that register under the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Act 1989. The bill also exempts substances provided by health practitioners in the course of providing a health service. This will not mean that health practitioners will have a blank cheque to give out psychoactive substances, because if they were to provide such a substance for a non-therapeutic purpose they could no longer be said to be providing a health service under the Act.

The bill also creates exemptions for "food" within the meaning of the Food Act 2003. Substances such as caffeine are psychoactive, and even sugar can sometimes lead to a physical or psychological state of dependence. Food is, as we all know, something that people consume as nourishment, and the Food Act has an inclusive definition to make sure that Act has wide coverage and regulates most things people eat and drink. This exemption will mean that things such as food additives will not be inadvertently captured. It is not the intention of the legislation to capture low-risk substances that do not have significant psychoactive effects. As I have already noted, this is reflected in the definition of "psychoactive effect", which requires a significant change to a person's perception, mood and thoughts.

The bill also exempts psychoactive substances which have a long-established status as legal products, whether for all consumers or just adults such as alcohol, tobacco, and herbal products. While the adverse health impacts of alcohol and tobacco are widely documented, the legislation acknowledges that their use is widely accepted by society and they are specifically excluded from the operation of the new offences. In relation to herbal products, a market has existed for some years for 100 per cent natural herbal products, which are not prohibited under existing legislation and might be marketed as relaxing teas or sleeping aids. While some herbal products may or may not have mild psychoactive effects, it is not intended to prohibit such products, particularly as the very same herbs are often sold as herbal remedies in health food stores and supermarkets. If any concerns arise over the potential harms of such products, they can be listed in schedule 1 of the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 as a prohibited drug.

These exemptions come with a proviso. It states that the exemptions will not apply if prohibited psychoactive substances have been added to a substance which would otherwise be exempt. This will ensure that sellers cannot circumvent the prohibitions, for example, by adding a synthetic cannabinoid to a natural herbal product, regardless of the quantities involved. Any addition will mean the exempt product will become a prohibited product. The breadth of the prohibition on psychoactive substances may give rise to concerns that, despite the numerous targeted exemptions, benign products could be captured. For example, a cosmetic product which claims to improve one's mood could be construed as a representation that the product has a psychoactive effect. As I have already said, however, the definition of "psychoactive effect" requires a significant change to a person's mood or perception, and it is not intended to capture such marketing claims.

Ultimately, the NSW Police Force will have discretion on how the new offences will be enforced. Should any substances be inadvertently captured, the bill also includes a regulation-making power which allows additional substances to be exempted. Schedule 1 [8] to the bill amends the analogue provision contained in schedule 1 of the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985. Under the analogue provision, where a substance that is not a prohibited drug has psychotropic properties and is structurally similar to a prohibited drug in specified ways, it is treated as a prohibited drug for the purpose of the Act. The report by this Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee, "Law reform issues regarding synthetic drugs", recommended the removal of the requirement that the substance has psychotropic properties to simplify the requirements, due to the difficulties faced by law enforcements officers and the technical and subjective nature of the provisions. The bill adopts the committee's recommendation to reduce any difficulties in the prosecution of offences under the analogue provisions. Schedule 2 to the bill will amend the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966.

Schedule 2 [3] adopts schedule 9 of the Poisons Standard into the New South Wales Act, which is then picked up in the new offence in the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 that I have already outlined. Schedule 2 [5] to the bill provides that the Director General of the Department of Health may authorise a person or class of persons to manufacture, possess, use or supply a schedule 9 substance for medical or scientific research, analysis, teaching or training purposes, or for industrial or commercial purposes. It will be a defence to

the possession, manufacture and supply offences for schedule 9 substances under the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 that there was such an authorisation in place. This bill is a vital tool to ensure that synthetic drugs, or psychoactive substances, are illegal, cannot be sold in New South Wales and cannot be advertised in any way. The New South Wales Government has so far successfully removed those products from retail shelves using product safety bans but wants to make sure that these dangerous substances, which are marketed as legal highs, cannot return to our shelves and are outlawed across our community. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr Bryan Doyle: Great work, Minister.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I thank the member for Campbelltown.

Debate adjourned on motion by Ms Tania Mihailuk and set down as an order of the day for a future day.

CRIMES AMENDMENT (TERRORISM) BILL 2013

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 29 August 2013.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) [4.22 p.m.]: I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013 and indicate at the outset that the Opposition does not oppose the bill. The object of the bill is to amend the Crimes Act to extend the date until which membership of a terrorist organisation is an offence under the Act in relation to part 6B of the Crimes Act from 13 September 2013 to 13 September 2016. There is only one substantial provision in the bill and it replaces the date 13 September 2013 with the date 13 September 2016. The extension of the sunset clause provision by three years in effect maintains the status quo. Covert search warrants are authorised under part 3 of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. That Act defines a terrorist act as including being a member of a terrorist organisation in breach of section 301J of the Crimes Act, which is the criminal offence that is subject to the sunset clause being extended by the bill before the House. It was originally proposed that there would be a national covert search warrant scheme, but that has not happened. That is clearly the basis for the need to extend the sunset clause.

A similar justification was proposed in 2010 by the then Government when legislation was moved to extend the sunset clause, which was then due to expire in September 2010. That legislation extended the sunset clause to September 2013 and this Parliament is now in the same position as in 2010 and is again extending the sunset clause by three years—in this case until 2016. While this bill merely continues the status quo, it is appropriate to note significant opposition to the regime of covert search warrants. In the last sitting week in this place the Attorney General tabled a review by his department of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act, which is the legislation containing the New South Wales scheme for covert search warrants. That review records the strenuous opposition of the Law Society to the concept of covert search warrants. It notes there has been no use of covert search warrants by the NSW Police Force since 2006 and there was not much use prior to that, thus raising a question about the need for the regime.

Of course, there have been challenges to other aspects of the counterterrorism legislation. The Ombudsman pointed out that the preventative detention powers in the New South Wales legislation have never been used and that the New South Wales police doubt their utility. There were also comments that are critical of the legislation from the Privacy Commission, and at a Federal level there have been comments from the Council of Australian Governments review of counterterrorism laws and in the annual report of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor. I mention those items to highlight what seems to be a state of flux about the counterterrorism architecture of which the present legislation is a piece. No doubt that will be a debate for the future, and this bill is not the vehicle for that debate although it is worth noting the existence of those issues. The Opposition does not oppose the bill.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.24 p.m.]: The Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013 will extend the operation of the sunset clause that currently applies to part 6B of the Crimes Act 1900, which contains the offence of being a member of a terrorist organisation in section 310L. This extension by the bill is to ensure that the New South Wales covert search warrant regime can be utilised to investigate terrorist organisations for a further three years. In 2002 the States and Territories referred to the

Commonwealth their powers to legislate with respect to terrorism in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States of America. This was done to ensure that Australia had a strong and consistent approach to counterterrorism initiatives.

The Commonwealth terrorism offences are found in part 5.3 of the Commonwealth Criminal Code. They cover a broad range of terrorist activities and, importantly, they criminalise preparatory or support activity, such as financing a terrorist organisation or providing terrorist training that may be conducted over a long time before an actual terrorist attack and that may be committed in countries different from those where any attack ultimately occurs and by persons who do not ultimately play any other role. It was said that due to constitutional and other constraints the Commonwealth could not enact the additional measures that were required as part of this response to terrorism. Covert search warrants were one such measure. New South Wales therefore introduced the offence of being a member of a terrorist organisation to ensure that the New South Wales covert search warrant regime could be utilised to investigate terrorism offences. The offence appears in section 310J in part 6B of the Crimes Act, which states:

- (1) A person commits an offence if:
 - (a) the person intentionally is a member of a terrorist organisation, and
 - (b) the organisation is a terrorist organisation, and
 - (c) the person knows the organisation is a terrorist organisation.

There is a defence in the same section, which states:

- (2) Subsection (1) does not apply if the person proves that he or she took all reasonable steps to cease to be a member of the organisation as soon as practicable after the person knew that the organisation was a terrorist organisation.

The offence of membership of a terrorist organisation addresses situations in which a person is a member of such an organisation but does nothing more in preparation for a terrorist act. The offence is in the same terms as the membership offence under the Commonwealth legislation. Section 310L of the Crimes Act contains a sunset provision, which is that part 6B of the Crimes Act will expire on 13 September 2013. The offence in section 310J and the corresponding sunset provision in section 310L were included to underpin New South Wales powers until the Commonwealth enacted a national covert search warrant scheme. But the Commonwealth has not yet enacted a national covert search warrant scheme, so the New South Wales terrorist membership offence is still required to ensure the validity of covert search warrants obtained under the New South Wales legislative regime.

If part 6B is allowed to lapse, it would risk the validity of any covert search warrant issued to investigate terrorist organisations. Although the sunset provision was extended previously, a further extension is needed so that law enforcement agencies can avoid risking the loss of their powers to properly investigate terrorist organisations. The substantive amendment in this bill is to omit 13 September 2013 as the date on which part 6B will be repealed and provide instead that it will be repealed on 13 September 2016. New South Wales and other States previously have indicated their preference for a national regime for covert search warrants, particularly given the reference of powers to the Commonwealth, but the Commonwealth is still yet to implement a national regime. As to implementing a national regime, two significant reviews of Commonwealth terrorism legislation were completed recently. One was by the Council of Australian Governments and the other is by the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor. Both reviews made a significant number of recommendations for reform in relation to Commonwealth terrorism legislation.

Prior to the Federal election, there had been no response from the Commonwealth. Following the Federal election, the Government now intends to raise with the Commonwealth the issue of implementing a national covert search warrant regime. The New South Wales Government will seek to resolve this issue with the Commonwealth before September 2016, when the proposed sunset provision will expire. The State's covert search warrant regime is found in the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. That Act provides for extraordinary powers that can be exercised by police in certain limited circumstances. Part 3 of that Act provides for the issue and execution of covert search warrants. The granting of a covert search warrant entitles police to execute the warrant without the knowledge of the occupier of the relevant premises.

The covert aspect of the warrants is unusual but it is necessary to prevent the occupier from informing his or her associates. These warrants also prevent leads or evidence being lost that could prevent a terrorist attack or lead to the arrest of those responsible. Because of their extraordinary nature, the powers are confined to

a limited set of circumstances and they contain significant safeguards. For example, first, to apply for a covert search warrant a police officer must have the authorisation of the Commissioner of Police, the Crime Commissioner or a proper delegate. Secondly, a warrant may be issued only by an eligible judge of the Supreme Court and only if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting or believing a terrorist act is likely to occur or has occurred. Thirdly, the judge must be satisfied that the warrant will substantially assist in responding to or preventing the act, and that it is necessary to conduct the entry and search without the knowledge of the occupier of the premises.

Fourthly, the judge must consider a range of matters, including the reliability of the information on which the application is based, the strength of the connection between the terrorist act and the things proposed to be searched for, and the nature and gravity of the terrorist act. Fifthly, there are other protections contained in the Act, such as measures to moderate the power during its exercise and proper monitoring. Sixthly, a covert search warrant does not give the officer unlimited power. The warrant has to describe the kinds of things that may be searched for, seized, substituted, copied, photographed, operated or tested. Finally, the officer must provide the judge with a written report on the execution of the search warrant within 10 days detailing, among other things, whether it assisted in preventing or responding to the terrorist act and, if so, how it assisted.

The Attorney General's department has just completed a statutory review of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. That review found the policy objectives of the Act remain valid. The review indicated support for certain recommendations made by the Ombudsman in relation to covert search warrants, including amendments to the form of the application and the warrant document. The review noted that a number of the Ombudsman's recommendations have been implemented. In light of the review's findings that the policy objectives of the 2002 Act remain valid, it is necessary that the membership offence in the Crimes Act be retained to support the availability of the powers that the 2002 Act provides. This bill will ensure that those extraordinary enforcement powers continue to be available to police in the event that a terrorist incident is imminent or has occurred. The extension will provide the police with the powers they need to protect the people of New South Wales from a terrorist attack. The continued safety and security of the people of New South Wales is paramount. Terrorism remains a threat to the people of New South Wales and is of concern to our society.

The recent statutory review of the 2002 Act noted, "It is clear that the threat of terrorism remains an ongoing concern for Government and law enforcement agencies around Australia." Since the last extension of the sunset clause, we have seen three Victorian men convicted of offences related to the planning of a terrorist act on Holsworthy army barracks in New South Wales. More recently, on the international scene, we have seen the terrorist attack at the Boston Marathon. We will never know how many lives have been saved because terrorist attacks have been avoided as a result of counterterrorism laws and the necessary powers that the police have, but these provisions are part of the armoury that the police need to continue to combat terrorism and to protect the people of New South Wales from terrorist attacks—some of which we will never know about because they were avoided due to these sorts of provisions. The extension of the sunset period that I have referred to is necessary because the Commonwealth has yet to enact and we need to keep this regime in place for at least another three years. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) [4.33 p.m.]: I make a brief contribution to debate on the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013. The key object of this bill is to amend the Crimes Act 1900 to extend the date until which membership of a terrorist organisation is an offence under the Act from 13 September 2013 to 13 September 2016. The proposed amendments to increase the duration of the sunset clause of this bill are required to ensure that the hardworking men and women of our NSW Police Force retain the powers they need, should they be required to investigate any suspected terrorist organisation. We all know the harsh impacts that terrorism may have on our great country. We need to ensure that our police are well equipped with the powers and means to investigate and stop potential terrorist activities and organisations from carrying out any of their diabolical plans.

The reason that this bill will be extended for the second time and the reason it has been given a sunset clause is due to the much-anticipated national covert search warrant scheme. As this scheme has yet to be implemented, the proposed sunset clause, which would extend the bill by a further three years, is warranted and will ensure that our police have the powers they need until the national scheme is fully implemented. Should we fail to extend the sunset clause, it would risk the validity of any covert warrants issued to investigate any terrorist organisation. The proposed changes are very straightforward and, in essence, aim only to extend the sunset clause from September 2013 to September 2016.

It is great to see bipartisan support for legislation that has been set in place in order to better protect and serve the people of New South Wales, ensuring that we have adequate measures in place to help investigate and prevent terrorist activity. Given the successful thwarting of terrorist activity in our home country with individuals planning attacks on our own soil, I believe that legislation empowering our law enforcement personnel is a necessary step to secure the safety of our residents and keep our nation and great State out of harm's way. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JOHN FLOWERS (Rockdale) [4.36 p.m.]: I make a contribution to debate on the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013. The object of the bill is to amend the Crimes Act 1900 to extend the date until which membership of a terrorist organisation is an offence under the Act from 13 September 2013 to 13 September 2016. The bill seeks to extend the sunset date for the offence of being a member of a terrorist organisation, which is punishable by a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment. The offence was originally inserted into the Crimes Act 1900 by schedule 4 to the Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Warrants) Act 2005. This amendment Act amended the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 to enable specially authorised police officers or staff of the New South Wales Crime Commission to covertly enter and search premises under the authority of a covert search warrant to respond to or prevent terrorist acts, including obtaining evidence of this new offence of being a member of a terrorist organisation.

In providing for the issue of covert search warrants under New South Wales law relating to membership of a terrorist organisation, the Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Warrants) Act 2005 anticipated the Commonwealth Parliament enacting a national covert search warrant scheme. However, a national covert search warrant scheme has not yet been enacted. Accordingly, the bill seeks an additional three years before the repeal of the offence of being a member of a terrorist organisation to ensure that covert search warrants relating to the offence can continue to be granted until a national scheme is adopted. The New South Wales Government now intends to raise the issue of implementing a national covert warrant regime with the Commonwealth Government.

In 2002 the States and Territories referred their powers to legislate with respect to terrorism to the Commonwealth in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. This was done to ensure that Australia had a strong and consistent approach to counterterrorism initiatives. Constitutional and other constraints meant that the Commonwealth could not enact the additional measures that were required as part of this response to terrorism. Covert search warrants were one such measure. As part of the Council of Australian Governments' response to the London bombings on 7 July 2005, the covert search warrant regime was introduced in New South Wales. The covert search warrant scheme remains a strong and effective counterterrorism measure. In 2004 the offence of being a member of a terrorist organisation was introduced to support the operation of covert search warrant powers for terrorism investigations under the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. The offence of membership of a terrorist organisation will address situations where a person is a member of such an organisation but does nothing more in preparation for a terrorist act.

The Commonwealth terrorism offences cover a broad range of terrorist activities. Importantly, they criminalise preparatory or support activities, such as financing a terrorist organisation or providing terrorist training, which may be conducted well before an actual terrorist attack and may be committed in countries different from where any attack ultimately occurs and by persons who do not ultimately play any other role. However, the Commonwealth has yet to implement a national regime. New South Wales will renew efforts to resolve this issue with the Commonwealth over the next three years. It is important for the continuation of the covert search warrant regime that the sunset clause, which applies to the terrorism membership offence, is extended for a further period. This extension will provide the police with the powers they need to protect the people of New South Wales from a terrorist attack.

The continued safety and security of the people of New South Wales is paramount. The Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013 extends the operation of a terrorism offence in the Crimes Act 1900 to ensure that the New South Wales covert search warrant regime can be utilised to investigate terrorist organisations for that further three-year period. Part 3 of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 provides for the execution of covert search warrants. The granting of a covert search warrant entitles police to execute the warrant without the knowledge of the occupier of the relevant premises. The covert aspect of the warrants is unusual but necessary to prevent the occupier from informing his or her associates. These warrants also prevent leads or evidence being lost that could prevent a terrorist attack or lead to the arrest of those responsible.

To reflect their extraordinary nature, the powers are confined to a limited set of circumstances and contain substantial protections. The Department of Attorney General and Justice has completed a statutory

review of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 and found that the policy objectives of the Act remain valid. The review considered and indicated support for certain recommendations of the Ombudsman to covert search warrants, including amendments to the form of the application and the warrant document. To apply for a covert search warrant, a police officer must have the authorisation of the Commissioner of Police, the Crime Commissioner or a proper delegate. A warrant may be issued only by an eligible judge of the Supreme Court and only if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting or believing a terrorist act is likely to occur or has occurred.

The judge must be satisfied that the warrant will substantially assist in responding to or preventing the act and is necessary to conduct the entry and search without the knowledge of the occupier of the premises. The judge must consider a range of matters, including the reliability of the information on which the application is based, the strength of the connection between the terrorist act and the things it is proposed to search for, and the nature and gravity of the terrorist act. The requirement that the judge be satisfied of reasonable grounds to issue the warrant provides significant protection. The Act contains further protections that include measures to moderate the power during its exercise and proper monitoring. A covert search warrant does not give the officer unlimited power. The warrant must describe the kinds of things that may be searched for, seized, substituted, copied, photographed, operated or tested.

The officer must provide the judge with a written report on the execution of the search warrant within 10 days detailing, amongst other things, whether it assisted in preventing or responding to the terrorist act and, if so, how it assisted. This reporting requirement serves as further protection to ensure that the warrants are executed properly and for that limited purpose. Terrorism remains a threat to the people of New South Wales. It is crucial to extend the application of the covert search warrant regime to terrorism offences in New South Wales to ensure that the people of New South Wales remain protected from a terrorist attack. The protections currently in place will remain part of the New South Wales covert search warrant regime when extended to protect civil rights. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) [4.45 p.m.]: The Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013 seeks to extend the applicability of a provision in the Crimes Act 1900 that makes it an offence for an individual to have membership of a terrorist organisation. The provision when introduced was given a sunset date of 13 September 2013—this coming Friday. The application is to extend the provision to 13 September 2016. This bill is common-sense legislation. It allows for part 6B of the Crimes Act to have continued operation. Part 6B is entitled "Terrorism" and the substantive provision is embodied in section 310J, "Membership of a terrorist organisation." It deems a person to have breached the provision in part 6B as follows:

- (1) A person commits an offence if:
 - (a) the person intentionally is a member of a terrorist organisation,
 - (b) the organisation is a terrorist organisation, and
 - (c) the person knows the organisation is a terrorist organisation.

The provisions of section 6B of the Crimes Act are clear. However, section 6B also has a practical application. It facilitates the operation of covert search warrant powers for terrorism investigations. The power to implement covert search warrant powers was first provided to police in 2002 under the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act. According to the 2006 review of that Act, it confers special powers on police officers to deal with imminent threats of terrorist acts and to respond to terrorist acts. The nature and scope of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act was explained in the second reading delivered by then Premier the Hon. Bob Carr. Mr Carr stated:

The new powers are not intended for general use. In ordinary circumstances we rely on standard police investigations and the cooperation of Australian and international law enforcement and intelligence agencies. However, when an attack is imminent, all resources must be able to be mobilised with maximum efficiency. Similarly, when an attack has just occurred, there is an increased chance of catching the terrorists, and this chance must be seized.

This quote also identified the objectives behind the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act "to confer special powers on police to deal with imminent threats of terrorist activity and to ensure the effective response to such activities". The continued operation of section 6B is relevant for those purposes. It helps to ensure the safety of the community as a whole. I also note the ongoing dialogue to create a national covert search warrant scheme. The advantage and practicality of having a national approach to terrorism is self-evident. I support the bill.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) [4.48 p.m.]: I support the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013. The purpose of this bill is to extend the sunset clause in section 310L of the Crimes Act 1900 from

13 September 2013 to 13 September 2016. Given the ongoing threat of terrorism in Australia, it is essential that the necessary measures are in place to protect the public from terrorist attacks. The continued safety of the people of New South Wales is paramount, hence the amendment to allow for the continuation of covert search warrants in terrorism investigations. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11 in 2001, the 2002 Bali bombings and the 2005 London bombings, State and Territory governments in Australia rallied to develop a strong and, importantly, consistent response. That is why the States and Territories referred their powers to legislate terrorism to the Commonwealth. It has been an effective response, which is reflected by the fact that no domestic terrorist event has occurred in Australia since greater measures were introduced—in fact, not since the 1978 Hilton bombing in Sydney.

The provision of covert search warrants was introduced in New South Wales following the London bombings as part of a response by the Council of Australian Governments. Part 6B of the Crimes Act 1900 contains an offence for members of terrorist organisations, which is in line with Commonwealth legislation. However, due to constitutional constraints, the Commonwealth could not enact some measures such as covert search warrants. Therefore, it became necessary for New South Wales to legislate part 6B in order for law enforcement agencies to rely upon covert search warrants until such time as the Commonwealth enacts covert search warrant powers. As the Commonwealth is yet to do so, this amendment simply extends the sunset period to 13 September 2016, effectively allowing covert search warrants to remain a valid aspect of our strong response to the threat of terrorism.

The provision of covert search warrants is outlined in part 3 of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. The Act outlines that a covert search warrant enables police to seek and execute a warrant without the occupier of the relevant premises so the occupier cannot warn his or her associates, thereby preventing the potential loss of leads or evidence. In this context, the loss of important leads or evidence could mean a terrorist attack is not prevented and takes place with potential tragic consequences. There is a limited set of circumstances in which a covert search warrant is appropriate and, thus, the covert aspect is unusual. This is to ensure that substantial protections remain where possible. These protections are evident in the very strict set of circumstances required for a covert search warrant to be granted. In order to apply for this type of warrant, police officers must receive written authorisation from the Commissioner of Police, the Crime Commissioner or an appropriate delegate.

The warrant may be issued only by an eligible Supreme Court judge who is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a terrorist attack will occur or if a terrorist attack has occurred. The judge must also see that the warrant will provide substantial assistance in responding to or preventing the attack and that it is a necessity for the search to be conducted without the knowledge of the occupier. The judge will also consider the reliability of the information and the strength of connection to the terrorist attack and what it is proposed the officer will search for. This type of warrant does not give officers unlimited powers. It is required that the warrant outline specifically what officers search for, seize, photograph and copy. The officer will also provide a written report to the judge within 10 days, detailing the success of the covert search warrant in preventing or responding to a terrorist attack. This step is necessary to ensure that these warrants are utilised only for their intended purposes and are executed properly.

The protections I have outlined that are currently in place will remain. Therefore, it will only be in the most extreme circumstances that these search warrants are applied for and executed. However, it is necessary that they are available to New South Wales law enforcement agencies should a set of circumstances arise in which these steps are required to prevent a terrorist attack. It is necessary that the sunset clause is extended for another three years. A recent statutory review of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 stated that it is clear that the threat of terrorism remains an ongoing concern for government and law enforcement agencies around Australia. Although it is preferable that the Federal Government implements a national covert search warrant regime, the current scheme is a necessary and effective counterterrorism measure. It gives our police and law enforcement agencies the necessary powers to protect the people of New South Wales from terrorism attacks.

I understand that the New South Wales Government will be renewing efforts to resolve this issue with the Federal Government over the next three years, with the hope of putting this regime in its proper place within the Federal jurisdiction. In the absence of such Commonwealth action, it is the responsibility of States and Territories to ensure that the people of New South Wales are protected as best as possible through this scheme, which allows law enforcement agencies to take the necessary steps to prevent and respond to potential terrorist acts. In 2002 we awoke in the morning to the horrors of the Bali bombings. No electorate was more affected than my electorate of Coogee. I am sure that my constituents want to see the continuation of these important powers, which are necessary to ensure that events such as the Bali bombings do not occur on Australian soil. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) [4.55 p.m.]: I make a brief contribution to debate on the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013. As the member for Liverpool and shadow Attorney General informed the House, the Opposition does not oppose the bill. The member for Coogee said that safety is paramount and that no event has occurred as a result of these powers. The Twin Towers tragedy that occurred in New York and the more personal tragedy of the 2002 Bali bombings have rightfully brought the concern of terrorism to the attention of the world. The fact is that no law that this Parliament passes can directly or indirectly prevent terrorism attacks occurring in Bali or Indonesia or New York city or any other part of the United States. However, the tragedies have focused the world's attention on terrorism.

I can assure the House that terrorism in this State and in this country is alive and well and that the security services and a variety of law enforcement agencies continue to monitor a variety of people as a preventative measure. The originating bill which requires a three-year extension has not prevented terrorism offences, as the member for Coogee asserts. However, there is a huge disparity within the nation's security and law enforcement services that is causing some difficulty in bringing people to justice or collecting the necessary evidence to bring people to justice. The security services of this country are brilliant at conducting surveillance and gathering intelligence. However, they are not a prosecution arm or an investigative arm and their ability to collect admissible evidence is somewhat hampered, and the prosecution and law enforcement agencies do not necessarily have the expertise to gather or access the same level of intelligence. The services in this country, whether they are intelligence or law enforcement services, have some work to do but, as a result of their work, plans have been disrupted or, alternatively, people are being monitored. That is precisely their function.

Parliament must be concerned about over-reacting by creating laws that are not required and do not have sunset clauses. As individuals in a free country and democracy, we are entitled to a variety of very important protections and safeguards, such as freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of religion, freedom to go about our lawful affairs without being watched, and freedom to have private telephone conversations without being listened to. In the zeal to have intelligence and law enforcement agencies protect us, governments and legislators sometimes forget about the appropriate balance. In our reaction to the tragedies in New York and Bali or the outrageous misdeeds of people in public office or the commission of serious crimes we can lose sight of the proper balance and forget about the principles that have well served not just this country but also the United Kingdom for hundreds of years.

I refer, for example, to the doctrine of separation of powers, the presumption of innocence, and that guilt must be proved beyond reasonable doubt on evidence properly admissible and collected properly and lawfully by law enforcement agencies. I note that in respect of the bill before the House. I imagine that the shadow Attorney-General has informed the House that despite the Opposition's support of the bill, a contrary view has been expressed that the provisions are unnecessary. A recent review of terrorism laws, which was undertaken by the Attorney General's department and tabled in Parliament by the Attorney General, noted that the Law Society strenuously opposed covert search warrants and that such powers had not been used since 2006 and were unnecessary. The Ombudsman suggested that consideration be given to repealing the preventative detention laws. Similar issues have been ventilated in the Council of Australian Government's Review of Counter Terrorism Laws and the annual report of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor.

Despite those views, as was pointed out by the Attorney General in his second reading speech, the plan for national legislation has not yet been enacted to enable the Commonwealth to apply a national and consistent law throughout Australia. The provision of covert search warrants being available to law enforcement agencies in this State may cease without the Commonwealth law being in operation. Consequently, there is a need to maintain this law. I am concerned not only about preventative detention but also about definitions in the bill, such as "eligible" judges which states that only eligible Supreme Court judges may be reasonably trusted to exercise these powers. It has been said that security and intelligence services seem to be performing exceptionally well because there have not been terrorist attacks anywhere in this country. However, the paranoia of terrorism and the need to protect people can create an over-reaction. For example, in relation to terrorism charges that were laid in New South Wales and ultimately heard at Parramatta, the public defenders who were briefed in the matter had to undergo security checks prior to their being able to appear in a trial.

As a statutory appointment and a member of the Bar, I refused to undergo any type of security check. If my honesty and integrity were not sufficient to enable me to appear and have access to information, then I was going to play no part in it. Over the years, even as defence counsel and despite the protestation of law enforcement agencies, I have been trusted with the provision of sensitive material and other matters of that nature on my undertaking that I will not disclose the contents. As counsel assisting in various inquiries, I have

had access to confidential information. Nevertheless; I believe there can be an over-reaction by the State, and I draw to the House's attention the need to be cautious. Many thousands of people have paid the ultimate sacrifice so that these provisions that have been enshrined in our laws for hundreds of years remain.

Mr BRYAN DOYLE (Campbelltown) [5.05 p.m.]: I support the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013, which will extend the operation of the offence under the Crimes Act 1900 of being a member of a terrorist organisation. The extension of these provisions will ensure the continuing validity of the New South Wales covert search warrant regime for a further three years. The covert search warrant regime, which was introduced in 2005, was part of the Council of Australian Government's response to the overseas London bombings in the same year. Following the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11 in 2001, all Australian States and Territories referred their powers to legislate terrorist response powers to the Commonwealth Government as a means of introducing a uniform response. These powers were deemed necessary in response to the unique threat posed by terrorist organisations to Australia and her citizens.

The covert search warrant scheme remains a strong and effective means of countering terrorism across the State. I note that the previous Commonwealth Government had not yet implemented the national regime for covert search warrants, and the New South Wales Government will renew its efforts in this regard with the incoming Commonwealth Government over the next three years. Acts of individual and mass terror continue to remain an ever-present threat to the people of New South Wales. The recent statutory review of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act noted that it is clear that the threat of terrorism remains an ongoing concern for government and law enforcement agencies around Australia. As such, it is critical that the covert search warrant regime in New South Wales, which applies to a member of a terrorist organisation, be extended for a further period. In so doing, this will provide police with the powers they need to protect the people of New South Wales from a terrorist attack and help to guarantee the safety and security of our community.

The bill extends the operation of a terrorism offence under the Crimes Act, which will maintain the capability of New South Wales and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies to conduct covert search warrants to investigate terrorist organisations. Covert search warrants, by their nature, are few and far between and they require some skill to carry out. Part 3 of the Act provides for the issue and execution of covert search warrants and grants police the ability to execute them without the knowledge of the occupier of the targeted premises. As I have said, that takes a degree of skill and technical expertise. While the covert aspect of these warrants is unusual, it remains necessary to prevent the home occupant from informing other members of the terrorist cell of the ongoing police investigation. The judicious use of these powers also prevents the loss of leads or evidence that could prevent a direct attack or lead to the arrest of those responsible. To reflect the extraordinary nature of these powers, they are confined to a limited set of circumstances.

For example, when applying for a covert search warrant police officers must have the authorisation of the Commissioner of Police, the Crime Commissioner or a proper delegate. A warrant may only be issued by an eligible Supreme Court judge and only if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting or believing an act of terrorism is likely to or has occurred. The eligible judge must be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to issue such a warrant and the provision of significant protection. When considering the approval of such a warrant, the eligible justice must consider the reliability of the information upon which the application is based along with the strength of the connection between the act and the items it is proposed to search for, and the nature or gravity of the attack must be taken into account. Some high benchmarks have been set.

It is important to note that these covert search warrants do not give the officer an unlimited power. The warrant must describe in detail the items to be searched for and seized, substituted, copied, photographed, operated or tested as part of an ongoing investigation. Further, the applying officer must provide the judge with a written report within 10 days detailing a number of things, including whether or not it assisted in preventing or responding to an act of terror and, if so, how it assisted. This is the system for all search warrants: where officers take out a search warrant and exercise those special powers they must report back to the judicial officer who issued the warrant as to the outcome of that warrant. The implementation of these covert search warrants remains an excellent tool for New South Wales police officers to respond to terrorist-related threats. The extension will assist the police in their ability to protect the people of New South Wales.

People may think that terrorism only exists overseas, but Operation Pendennis, which was a successful operation involving New South Wales police and other agencies, indicated that there is a real risk of terrorist activities in this country. This legislation gives police a specific tool to address some of those issues. We are very fortunate that we live in a country that has the rule of law. As I have said before in this House, there is no need for anybody to live in fear—this is the land of the free. I served 27 years in the NSW Police Force and the

Police Commissioner is quite clear in this regard: the police and the community work together to reduce crime, violence and fear. I always instructed officers under my command that this meant that policing was best done for and with the community rather than to and against them.

In this regard, we all have a role to play in assisting our police. If we as a community know something, see something or hear something that relates to terrorism, then we as citizens should bring that information to the attention of the police, either through our local police or through Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000. There is no need to live in fear—no-one has the right to threaten you or to keep you silent. Those who choose to live in fear lead terrible lives. This is a free country. All of us have a family history of someone who came to this country in search of a better life for themselves, their children, their grandchildren and their great-grandchildren; and we are the holders of that legacy. That is one of the reasons why Australia is one of the best places in the world to live, and in particular New South Wales and my home electorate of Campbelltown, that great opal of the south-west and the mighty Macarthur. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) [5.13 p.m.]: I speak to the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013.

Mr John Williams: This legislation will affect you blokes, The Greens—it is about terrorists.

Mr JAMIE PARKER: I have not even said anything and I have already been accused of being a terrorist. Obviously we terrorise The Nationals with facts, which often disturbs its members. Terrorism is something about which we all are concerned and oppose. Around the world we have seen terrorism impact upon many innocent people over generations. We should oppose it and fight against it at all times. The Greens oppose the iteration of the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013. I suspect we are the only members who will do so, and I will take a few minutes to explain. The previous speaker described Australia as the land of the free. It is the land of the free—unless you live next door to someone who the police believe might be a terrorist. In that case, the police are able to break into your house and use disguise and subterfuge in order to gain access to a target property or an adjacent property in the course of carrying out a search. An innocent person could be caught up in that. Is that how it should be in the land of the free?

The Greens are concerned about civil liberties, individual rights and property rights. We believe that there needs to be a proper balance between seeking out terrorists or suspected terrorists and the protection of individual rights. Around the world individual civil liberties have been eclipsed by the introduction of dramatic legislation—as we have seen in the Federal Parliament—that was supposed to be emergency legislation. Terrorism and security legislation presents a threat to civil liberties. The powers granted to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation [ASIO] federally were said to be extraordinary and short term when they were introduced in 2003. It was said that they were needed to deal with terrorism. They had a sunset clause specifying the end of these powers in 2006, but in 2006 the powers were extended for a further 10 years.

These extraordinary powers, which were first introduced to subvert civil liberties in order to supposedly deal with terrorism suspects, were supposed to be extraordinary and short term. Yet they are becoming embedded in our legal system. These approaches, which risk civil liberties, are becoming embedded in our system and that is a matter of concern to us. We have been consistent on this issue. When the legislation was first introduced, we opposed the covert search warrant regime—in particular the Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Warrants) Act 2005 and the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act amendments—because the search warrant regime allowed people to break into and use adjacent properties in the course of carrying out covert searches. It allows subterfuge and disguise to be used to gain access to the target property or adjacent properties in the course of conducting a search. We believed that innocent people would be caught up in those searches. Of course, we support the efforts of the police and the Commonwealth—and this probably should be put in the Commonwealth sphere—to deal with terrorism. But we should always be conscious of the balance between civil liberties and terrorism.

It is our view that the covert search warrants are a step too far. We believe there is significant opportunity for police officers, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation and others to deal with these matters. As I said, it is really the remit of the Federal Government to address these issues. Whilst we will not be supporting this legislation, we fully support law enforcement efforts under existing legislation. The existing legislation is significant and allows for a whole range of activities to take place to make sure that suspected terrorists can be monitored and brought to justice. Finally, we need evidence that these powers are working. There is an absence of that evidence. Because of the need to balance this legislation against individual rights and the lack of evidence that these powers are working, we believe that prolonging these powers should not be supported and the extensions contained in this bill should not proceed.

[Business interrupted.]

BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY WARNING**Ministerial Statement**

Mr BARRY O'FARRELL (Ku-ring-gai—Premier, and Minister for Western Sydney) [5.18 p.m.], by leave: I wish to make a ministerial statement in relation to the bushfires in New South Wales, in accordance with the commitment I gave at the end of question time. The fire emergency continues. I am advised that there are 63 bush and grass fires, 31 uncontained bush and grass fires and three section 44 declarations. Of these fires, four remain at emergency warning status and five at watch and act status. More than 999 firefighters and 350 fire appliances from the Rural Fire Service were involved in operations this afternoon. They were supported by Fire and Rescue NSW and the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Crews have been supported by 14 aircraft which have been tasked or will remain on standby this evening.

As to the major fire updates, an emergency warning remains in place for a fire that has crossed Hawkesbury Road in the Blue Mountains Local Government Area and is burning intensely under strong northerly winds. It is one of the section 44 emergencies. More than 100 firefighters from the Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW are working to contain the fire and protect properties in the area. One property has been destroyed by fire. Five firefighters have been treated for smoke inhalation and one firefighter has been conveyed to hospital with superficial burn injuries. An emergency warning remains in place for the Tickner Road fire burning in the area of Castlereagh and Londonderry in the Penrith Local Government Area. Another section 44 emergency has been declared. The bushfire is burning in an easterly direction in the Londonderry area and earlier burned through the Devlin Road and Nutt Road area. The fire has been affecting rural properties located along Nutt Road, Smeaton Road and Boscobel Road. The fire is burning on both sides of Devlin Road between Fire Trail Road and Nutt Road.

An emergency warning remains in place for a grassfire burning in the area of Richmond Road and Bennett Road at Windsor in the Hawkesbury Local Government Area. Again, a section 44 emergency has been declared. The fire is burning on both sides of George Street, South Windsor, and both sides of Richmond Road. It is burning under strong northerly winds and there is potential for the fire to affect properties around George Street and the area of Bligh Park. The fire has crossed Richmond Road and is now burning in the Windsor Downs Nature Reserve. More than 95 firefighters are working to contain the fire and protect properties in the area. Staff and students at the University of Western Sydney Hawkesbury campus were evacuated earlier this afternoon. An emergency warning remains in place for a 120-hectare grassfire burning in the area of Grange Avenue at Marsden Park in the Blacktown Local Government Area. The fire has crossed Garfield Road and more than 30 fire crews are currently working to contain the fire. A northbound lane of the M1 Pacific Motorway was expected to be closed a short while ago to allow firefighters to extinguish a fire burning alongside the roadway. I ask motorists to exercise patience as the emergency workers seek to deal with this fire crisis.

Endeavour Energy is reporting intermittent electricity outages in the Hawkesbury area, which I again hope householders will forgive given the circumstances. Evacuation centres have been established at Faulconbridge Public School and the Penrith White Water Rafting Centre. Schoolchildren have been evacuated to both centres but it is hoped that the centres will wind down as parents collect their children. It is clear that there is a serious fire risk in western parts and on the outskirts of our city. Volunteer and paid firefighters are out there working hard and I commend them for their efforts. Again, I hope that the public, motorists, householders and others who are affected either by power outages or traffic delays are patient as our professional and volunteer services do what they do best, which is to protect us at these times. We certainly hope that the change comes through, the winds die down and our firefighters are soon provided with some relief.

CRIMES AMENDMENT (TERRORISM) BILL 2013**Second Reading**

[Business resumed.]

Mr ANDREW ROHAN (Smithfield) [5.23 p.m.]: I support the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013. As New South Wales Assistant Commissioner of Police Peter Dein has acknowledged, the threat of terrorism is still very real and requires rigorous preventative measures in response to it. It does not take much to see the current reality of terrorist activities. Examples include the Boston bombings and the public slaughtering of a young man in broad daylight in London earlier this year. At home, it was only in July that an explosive device was found at Campsie police station.

The rise of homegrown terrorism has threatened the peace and welfare of not only New South Wales but also Australia. Like our American friends, Australia is gifted with a highly multicultural population. However, being a multicultural hotspot has also spawned a large variety of thinking, lifestyle and belief systems. Truth be told, some of these include fringe ideologies or what the media classifies as extremism or radicalism. Such ideologies remain a threat to Western liberal democracies such as New South Wales. While a sensitisation approach should be adopted where society at large is edified and engaged with cultures which are susceptible to developing extremist thinking, preventative measures should also be taken. We must account for those out there, or those who may be there in the future, who are undeniably opposed to the modern and secular nature of society.

The bill extends the operation of the sunset clause under part 4B, section 310L for another three years from the current expiry date of 13 September 2013. The part provides for the offence of being in membership with a terrorist organisation as per section 310J. This offence was introduced in 2005 to give effect to the covert search warrant powers used for terrorism investigations under the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. Offences stemming from terrorist activities are not solely the end activities which usually result in mass casualties, death and widespread health and emotional consequences. The 2005 amendments stipulated that membership of a terrorist organisation is an offence and includes merely being a member and nothing more, while the Commonwealth provides for a broad range of activities.

The illegal activities include preparatory or support activity, including financing those organisations or providing training which may be conducted much earlier than the final terrorist act and may be committed in countries different from where the ultimate act occurs. Part 4B was enacted to give effect to preventative measures until the Commonwealth enacted a national covert search warrant scheme. The Commonwealth has yet to enact such a regime. Therefore the extension is required to mitigate the risk of invalidating any covert search warrant issued to investigate terrorist organisations.

It is further required following confirmation in the statutory review by the Department of Attorney General and Justice that the policy objectives of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 remain valid. Multiple reviews of Commonwealth terrorist legislation by the Council of Australian Governments and the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor will now be responded to by the newly elected Coalition Federal Government. The new Commonwealth Government has stated it intends to raise the issue of implementing a national covert search warrant regime. This is promising news and I commend the Attorney General's office for its recent statutory review.

The Government is determined in its efforts to dismantle terrorist organisations. It must start at home, it must be systematic and it must continue until the end. The people of this great democratic nation demand their right to freedom, peace and welfare. I am sure that with measures like the one undertaken in this bill our battle against terrorism will end. It must end. New South Wales citizens must not fall into a state of complacency. We must actively take measures to prevent current and future threats, but these measures must not disrupt society. Our community must carry on and events which have become part of Sydney's identity and culture such as the City2Surf, or cultural events with mass public congregation in suburban areas such as Smithfield, must never be given up. To do so would mean giving up our multicultural identity and emboldening potential terrorists. The measures in the bill give effect to covert operations with minimal disruption to society. It is vital in our fight against terrorist activities and for that reason I commend the bill to the House.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) [5.29 p.m.]: I support the Crimes Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2013. Terrorism always has existed and unfortunately always will. There are always those who choose to air their perceived grievances, or make their point, or seek revenge in such a way. It is a heinous crime by which unfortunately many Australians and many people worldwide have been affected. There are always those out to challenge and ruin the safe way in which we live our lives. There are also those who always will defend our right to live our lives free from terrorism, and that is the role of governments. I am sure every one of us remembers where we were and what we were doing when the September 11 attacks occurred in the United States of America in 2001. That day and the 2002 and 2005 Bali bombings are some of the darkest moments created by mankind that I will remember as having occurred during my lifetime.

Those terrorist attacks brought terrorism to a generation of young people that had never been affected by or had never seen terrorist attacks of that scale or so close to home. Families were suddenly affected in a way that families had not been affected since times of war. Terrorism became a very real threat to Australians, and even one victim is one victim too many that has been claimed by those gutless and senseless acts. In 2002 Australia's States and Territories, in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks, referred their powers to

legislate with respect to terrorism to the Commonwealth. In 2005, as part of the Council of Australian Governments' response to the 2005 London bombings, the covert search warrant regime was introduced in New South Wales. The Commonwealth could not enact covert search warrants as part of the response, due to constitutional and other constraints.

New South Wales therefore introduced the offence of being a member of a terrorist organisation to support the operation of covert search warrant powers for terrorism investigations under the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. The exact wording of the amendment, and that the wording is the same as under the Commonwealth legislation for the offence, was stated by the Attorney General on the introduction of this bill to the House so I will not repeat it. New South Wales and other States made it known that they preferred a national covert search warrant regime and included a sunset provision in the 2005 amendment so that New South Wales powers were underpinned until the Commonwealth enacted a national scheme. The Commonwealth is yet to do that. This bill will remove 13 September of this year from part 6B of the Crimes Act 1900 and replace it with 13 September 2016 to ensure that any covert search warrant issued to police or any other law enforcement agency to investigate terrorist organisations is valid.

I acknowledge the importance of the validity of a covert search warrant in ensuring the safety of the people of New South Wales by being a strong and effective counterterrorism measure and that it must not be allowed to lapse, particularly since the statutory review of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 recently found that terrorism remains a threat to the people of New South Wales. Under this bill the people of New South Wales will continue to be protected from an act of terrorism. In ensuring that terrorist organisations can be investigated, extraordinary powers are provided to police. Appropriate safeguards in relation to these powers are in place and some of them are that a police officer must have permission from the Commissioner of Police, the Crime Commissioner or a proper delegate to apply for a covert search warrant. A warrant may only then be issued by an eligible judge of the Supreme Court and only if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a terrorist act is likely to occur, or has occurred.

The judge must consider a range of matters including the reliability of the information on which the application is based, the strength of the connection between the terrorist act and the things it is proposed to search for, and the nature and gravity of the terrorist act. Proper monitoring of the power exercised must be undertaken and the warrant must describe the kinds of things that may be searched for, seized, substituted, copied, photographed, operated or tested. A report must also be provided to the judge by the police within 10 days of the warrant being issued. It must detail whether the warrant assisted in preventing or responding to the terrorist act and, if so, how it assisted. I commend the New South Wales Government for its commitment to the implementation of a national covert search warrant scheme by raising it with the Commonwealth to ensure a national approach to the protection of Australians from terrorism. I thank and commend the Attorney General for the introduction of this legislation. I also thank the Attorney General, who visited my electorate last Friday and who was received in outstanding fashion by the local Law Society.

Mr Ryan Park: What do you want?

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: For the information of the member for Keira, the Attorney General is not a member of any preselection panel I shall be interviewed by in the future. I offer wholehearted congratulations to the Attorney General for the outstanding response his visit to my electorate evoked from more than 50 lawyers and associated practitioners. I thank the Attorney General for his efforts and for the time he spends in my electorate of Camden as well as for his efforts in relation to this bill. I commend this bill to the House.

Mr GREG SMITH (Epping—Attorney General, and Minister for Justice) [5.37 p.m.], in reply: After that introduction, what can I say? I thank the members representing the electorates of Liverpool, Cronulla, Cabramatta, Rockdale, Fairfield, Coogee, Heffron, Campbelltown, Balmain, Smithfield and Camden for their contributions to the debate. Terrorism is a most cowardly crime that bases success on the number of deaths or injuries caused to innocent citizens and the disruption caused to a community. It is fundamentally important that we fight it with all our energy and ingenuity. This bill will ensure that the NSW Police Force will continue to have the full range of law enforcement tools available to it to effectively combat the threat of terrorism. 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 Greg Smith 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.

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS

Financial Year 2013-14

Debate resumed from 29 August 2013.

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) [5.39 p.m.]: As the member of Parliament for the electorate of Albury, I would like to speak to the Budget Estimates and Related Papers 2013-14 from the perspective of the Albury region. Albury is a highway city and several of my electorate's major urban centres sit strategically along or near highways. Whether it is the Riverina Highway heading east or the Hume Freeway from the border to Holbrook and north to end in Sydney, roads are our arteries and they sustain my electorate's economy and social interaction. It is one thing to have these important roads and highways but, from my perspective, timely maintenance and improvement are just as vital.

This year, work continued on the duplication of the Hume Freeway, with the final Federal allocation of \$24 million provided to complete the Holbrook Bypass. This bypass—the last on the Hume Freeway—was opened by the then Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, and the New South Wales Minister for Roads and Ports, Duncan Gay, on Sunday 23 June. It also marked the final stage of the Hume Highway duplication between Sydney and Melbourne. But this is only part of the roads story for us. The budget papers show that \$14.17 million has been set aside for State roads and \$9.49 million for local road projects in the Albury electorate. In addition, \$8.44 million will go towards road restoration following natural disaster damage. Councils will receive \$4 million by way of grants for regional roads.

I take this opportunity to thank the Hon. Duncan Gay, the Minister for Roads and Ports, for his efforts in seeing that such a significant sum of money for road construction and maintenance has made it to Albury. In July, following my representations to the Minister, \$150,000 was allocated as seed funding to investigate improvement works for the controversial section of the Riverina Highway near Lake Hume Village and on to Bethanga Bridge. This winding stretch of narrow road has long been a concern in my electorate. New funding will facilitate action by Roads and Maritime Services staff to survey a number of road alignment options and undertake the necessary geotechnical investigation. I look forward to reading the report of this research and discussing with my community the best way to improve this stretch of highway so as to increase safety while retaining the best features of its scenic path to the Hume Weir.

Government buildings can be left on the sidelines when there are so many competing priorities, but I am pleased that \$3.3 million has been allocated to refurbish a long-established government office building in Albury. At Tumbarumba the courthouse is due for minor workplace health and safety compliance work and improvements to disability access. An amount of \$130,000 has been allocated for this work at Tumbarumba. Another \$1 million will go towards development of group home projects in Albury, with \$250,000 provided for construction of a five-bed villa model and \$750,000 for construction of two five-bed villa model group homes in the electorate.

Albury remains the centre out of which the Murray-Darling Basin Metering Project is managed for the State. State Water and the Office of Water will receive \$221 million over the five-year life of this project, which covers a number of inland valleys and the project teams in the south of the State. Albury is the logical home for management of the Murray-Darling Basin and is a centre for vital research on this water supply. Health remains one of the most topical and important areas of State Government influence and funding for all those within the electorate of Albury. This is the campaign that will never end, where the needs of individuals will never be fully satisfied. It is a matter which is emotionally charged and filled with personal meaning for all of us. As a result, I dedicate much of my time to making representations for funding and capital works to improve and maintain healthcare facilities and standards in the Albury region. I am pleased to say that in Albury we are looking forward to completion of a new ambulance station next year.

Mr Troy Grant: Outstanding.

Mr GREG APLIN: This is a project which sat on Albury's wish list for 18 years after the first promise to renew the station. I hear the Parliamentary Secretary say, "Outstanding", and I am sure that my constituents would agree with him. As the member for Dubbo, he would well understand the needs of regional areas and the battle we have fought for so long to achieve those capital construction facilities. I began my campaign for this project when elected in 2003. It will be delivered in 2014. Land has been obtained and cleared, a development application has been prepared and is now lodged with council, and in fact tenders have been called and I believe that work may well commence next month. An amount of \$2 million has been allocated in this budget for the new Albury ambulance station out of the total planned expenditure of \$4.035 million. It will be one of the finest ambulance stations in regional New South Wales when completed. I thank the Premier and the Minister for Health for their roles in accelerating this development. Completion is scheduled for mid-2014.

As an aside, though a relevant one, those living in the northern part of the Albury electorate will also benefit from the replacement of the hospital in Wagga Wagga. This will be a \$270 million facility. For too long the pressing need to do something about this ageing hospital was left on the backburner, impacting on the lives of not just the residents on the Wagga Wagga side of an electoral boundary but also on many within the Albury electorate. It is fantastic to see that this is not just a patch-up job but a generational improvement of an important regional hospital, which will dramatically improve health services available to a large section of my electorate. From a staffing perspective it is good to see that funding has been provided for two additional palliative care nurses to work with the Murrumbidgee Local Health District, which manages State health services for much of the Albury electorate.

Last year the Minister for Sport and Tourism visited Albury to experience and support the Albury Gold Cup Racing Carnival. This carnival is a major regional drawcard, growing year by year and increasing in prominence not just in this State but with influence extending well into Victoria. The impact on the local tourism industry is immense. It is therefore most appropriate and welcome that the budget will provide assistance with the Albury Gold Cup Racing Carnival in 2014 as part of a provision of \$365,000 through Destination NSW for 10 events. A program to substantially upgrade the facilities at Albury TAFE has been underway this year and will press on through 2014. To this end I note the budget provides \$4.243 million to continue work on the new connected learning facilities at Albury TAFE.

Following on from the budget, there was more good news for the people of the Albury electorate. Disabled access will be provided at Albury Public and Albury North Public schools. There will be a new trade training centre for Tumbarumba High School and a science laboratory upgrade for Corowa High School. Other improvements will be made to Albury High School, Glenroy Public School, Table Top Public School, Corowa High School, Hume Public School and Thurgoona Public School. These works will help keep our government schools at the forefront of the provision of high-quality education in the Albury electorate, and I expect additional good news over the next 12 months with additional spending on school maintenance and improvements for our local schools.

There is much in this budget to celebrate on a statewide basis. An amount of \$51 million has been provided in the budget for the Arts Funding Program. This program will deliver funding to support a range of arts and cultural activities, which are an integral part of our expectations for imaginative and creative communities across the State. An amount of \$192 million in recurrent funding over four years will be used to boost police numbers. This is an ongoing theme for this Government and one which has strong resonance in the Albury electorate. In fact since we came to government in March 2011 an additional 24 probationary constables have been allocated to the Albury Local Area Command, providing increasing strength to that command such that it now has 96 per cent effective operating strength, which is above the statewide target, and has delivered the results on the ground that we expected when it returns to that operating efficiency level. The Government has made a commitment to increase the authorised strength of the State's police force to 16,665 officers by August 2013, representing an increase of 489 officers now on the beat throughout New South Wales.

Mr Troy Grant: Great local area commander in Albury.

Mr GREG APLIN: Absolutely, a great area commander, as the Parliamentary Secretary has said, and I meet with her on a regular basis to discuss the affairs of state, as it were, in the local area command. I am pleased that I was able to bring mental health service providers together with the local duty officer, who had attended a course at the Goulburn academy only last week, and in that way a greater understanding of the police activities in the area will be afforded to the providers of mental health service programs.

Mr Troy Grant: Because you were working at under 95 per cent operational capacity—well done.

Mr GREG APLIN: Absolutely. An amount of \$53.5 million over five years will go towards replacing operational communications equipment used by the State Emergency Service. When a tornado rampaged through the Murray River town of Mulwala in March this year there was much praise for local emergency services and the speed with which they launched operations. Steps to improve operations communications are most welcome in regional areas, where distance and time must be overcome rapidly when disaster strikes. The First Home Owner Grant Scheme introduced last year, which gives \$15,000 to a first home owner purchasing a new home valued up to \$650,000 or \$5,000 for a non-first home buyer acquiring a new home to the same amount, will roll on for another 12 months. Comment at the time was that this change in support for first home buyers would be unsuccessful. Therefore, it is pleasing to note that New South Wales now has the highest number of new home approvals over a 12-month period since October 2005. The construction industry is a major employer in my electorate. One sees new homes being built on a vast scale. This policy is doing good work across the State.

I am pleased to see a raft of programs that will improve working life, and quality of life, for those of us in regional New South Wales. I commend the Government for the Bridges for the Bush program and its allocation of \$165 million over the next four years to improve the productivity of the road freight industry; the commencement in New South Wales of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which has been embraced by this Government and which we all hope will make a significant ongoing contribution to the lives of residents in regional areas of the State, particularly those who have found their horizons limited by distance and the provision of facilities and options; and the allocation of \$35 million for the Rural Fire Service to continue reducing fire hazards—again welcome in regional areas of New South Wales, particularly today as fires threaten parts of Western Sydney and 990 Rural Fire Service volunteers are hard at work protecting the interests of home owners and public property under threat in the Hawkesbury and Penrith areas.

Under the changes announced in the budget, the payroll tax threshold for business was raised from \$689,000 to \$750,000 on 1 July. As the Treasurer explained, this will keep around 1,300 businesses that would otherwise be paying this tax out of the payroll tax system. The good news extends to those businesses above the threshold, each of which will make a payroll tax saving of \$3,000. While this measure will cost \$96 million over the three years to 2015-16, I understand that it will become revenue positive in 2016-17. In other reform of this difficult tax, the payroll tax rebate for businesses that employ an additional worker in a new job will increase by 25 per cent, from \$4,000 to \$5,000. These are positive moves for families and businesses in my electorate. I am pleased that the Treasurer has identified the barrier that payroll tax becomes to small businesses, particularly businesses considering whether to increase employee numbers. I congratulate the Treasurer on his work on this reform.

In conclusion, I once again thank the Premier and Treasurer for overseeing a budget that delivers for Albury, as it does for the entire State. This budget invests almost \$60 billion in infrastructure across New South Wales. We are looking at a budget position that will see State debt reduced by \$9 billion, and where New South Wales leads job growth for Australia. The Treasurer aims, quite rightly, to get the great State of New South Wales back into budgetary surplus for 2014-15. I thank him for his achievements in closing the gap so far in such a short time and encourage him in his substantial task of returning New South Wales to its leadership position in the nation.

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

The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): Order! It being before 7.00 p.m., private members' statements will now be proceeded with.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

REGIONAL ACADEMIES OF SPORT PARLIAMENTARY RECEPTION

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) [5.54 p.m.]: This afternoon I had the great pleasure of attending the Regional Academies of Sport 2013 Parliamentary Reception. I welcomed to the Parliament the Chairman of the Northern Inland Academy of Sport, Mr Matt Patterson; Executive Officer, Di Hallam; and three outstanding athletes from the Northern Inland Academy of Sport. Holly Clarke, aged 20, is a very talented

netballer. In 2011 she co-captained the Northern Inland Academy of Sport Netball Squad, in 2010 was a Liverpool representative and in 2009 was a member of the Academy Games State Merit Squad. Kyle Eichorn, aged 21, is an incredibly talented hockey player. The Northern Tablelands and the northern inland region are very lucky to have some exceptional hockey players.

This year Kyle was in the under-21 New South Wales hockey team and the New South Wales Open men's representative team. Brittany Parker, who hails from my home town of Armidale, is also a very talented hockey player. In 2013, aged 18, she is a trainee coach with the Northern Inland Academy of Sport as well as being a New South Wales under-18 representative. Last year she was the academy's Female Athlete of the Year. It was great to see all the academies represented today at Parliament House. I welcomed the northern inland academy representatives, together with my colleague the member for Tamworth, Kevin Anderson. It was great also to see representatives from the Western Region Academy of Sport.

Mr Troy Grant: Hear, hear!

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: The Parliamentary Secretary interjects enthusiastically because some great athletes were acknowledged today. I can list them if he likes.

Mr Troy Grant: Yes please.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: I acknowledge also the other 11 academies throughout New South Wales because they do a magnificent job taking our young, talented athletes and linking them with athlete coaches who show them a pathway to success.

Mr Troy Grant: Making good athletes better.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: Yes, they make good athletes better, as the Parliamentary Secretary said. The young athletes gain a pathway to State, national and, hopefully, international sport, as we heard today from boxer Josh English from the Central Coast Academy of Sport.

Mr Chris Holstein: Hear, hear!

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: The member for Gosford acknowledges Josh's outstanding achievements in the sport of boxing. He recently competed in the world titles in Kazakhstan and is doing particularly well. I pay tribute to Mr Martin Bullock, who is the Chairperson of the Regional Academies of Sport, representing academies throughout New South Wales. Anne Fitzgerald, Executive Manager for Membership and Marketing, was also present today. I acknowledge also the support that ClubsNSW gives to the Regional Academies of Sport. Without the support of ClubsNSW and the New South Wales clubs industry there would be no sport and we would not have such strong sports academies. It was great to see all the academies and athletes from the Northern Inland Academy of Sport at Parliament House. Congratulations to them all.

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.58 p.m.]: I thank the member for Northern Tablelands for rightly acknowledging the outstanding sports men and women in regional New South Wales who attend those 11 wonderful academies. They strive for sporting success and make each of our communities proud. Recognition was given to ClubsNSW for its outstanding contribution not only across the community but also to the regional academies' goals and aspirations. The member for Northern Tablelands also acknowledged the significant support provided by the New South Wales Government. It was great to join the member for Northern Tablelands and my other western New South Wales colleagues, the member for Orange and the member for Bathurst, at this wonderful gathering. The Minister for Western New South Wales is extraordinarily supportive, as am I, of the Western Region Academy of Sport. The member for Gosford and the member for Penrith were present also, along with many others. Clearly, all members in the New South Wales Government support our sporting academies. We wish our athletes well in their future endeavours.

KURRI KURRI COMMUNITY EVENTS

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) [5.59 p.m.]: Kurri Kurri is a significant town in the electorate of Cessnock, and the home of the Giant Kookaburra.

Mr Troy Grant: And the Bulldogs.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: And the Kurri Kurri Bulldogs. I will get to them. September is Mural Month in Kurri Kurri. When people think about projects that attract visitors and tourists to our area murals are probably not at the top of the list, but they have been a windfall for Kurri Kurri. More than 50 murals are painted on the walls of various buildings, shops and premises in Kurri Kurri. Every day up to a dozen buses carry 50 people at a time around the town to see the murals. The murals are designed to capture the history, heritage and culture of our area. One of the most notable and significant murals is painted on the Chelmsford Hotel at the top of the hill and, unfortunately, it looks like Mr Potato Head.

Mr Troy Grant: Did you pose for that one?

ACTING-SPEAKER (Mr Gareth Ward): Order! While I could ask the member for Dubbo to withdraw his remark, I will not do so as I want it to be recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: I kept quiet because I did not want it in *Hansard*. Of course it depicts mining. Another mural depicts Rover Motors Coaches. It is a great family industry that has been in the area for more than 100 years. There is also a magnificent World War I tribute on the side of the workers club. Art in the Park is the theme of this year's Mural Month in Kurri Kurri. On 14 September at Rotary Park families and children can take part in different activities to help celebrate Mural Month. There will be art workshops, craft activities, a blackboard snake where kids can produce their own chalk masterpieces, as well as community markets where local crafts and fresh produce will be on sale. There will free entertainment and a host of other activities.

The most recent mural to be unveiled is located on the corner of Lang and Merthyr streets and is a collaboration between Cessnock artist Sandii Walker and the children of Kurri Kurri Preschool. Sandii acknowledges that she sketched the outline of the work, but says very graciously that it was the children who did most of the painting. We thank Sandii for her work. Although September is Mural Month in Kurri Kurri, we should not overlook the fact that the Billy Cart Derby will be held in Kurri Kurri on 26 October. The inaugural Billy Cart Derby was held last year. In the match race between the State member of Parliament and the Mayor of Cessnock the winner was of course the State member of Parliament.

Mr Troy Grant: Mr Potato Head.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: Mr Potato Head himself. I am looking forward to the rematch. When given the opportunity to build my own billy cart, I was keen and all gung-ho and looking forward to the derby. But after being made aware of the rule that the billy cart had to have brakes, I immediately withdrew my support for the event. However, I will be available to drive a cart on the day. The Billy Cart Derby is another sign of a community that has an outstanding feel for civic responsibility, bringing people together and mixing generations to build a sense of pride in who we are and what the community has to offer.

The Billy Cart Derby will be the highlight of the Kurri Community Festival on 26 October. The carts will race down Hamden Street, reaching speeds of up to 600 kilometres, 500 kilometres, 50 kilometres or even five kilometres an hour. Hamden Street will be closed for five hours for the race. Last year there were only 29 competitors in the inaugural event, but this year we are hoping to triple that number. Immediately after the Billy Cart Derby the festivities will continue at the Kurri Kurri sportsground, where there will be other events, music and stalls, including the ABBA tribute act. I pay tribute to the Kurri Kurri Bulldogs. Two weeks ago they knocked the Cessnock Goannas out from the real National Rugby League, which was a sad and unfortunate day. But it is onwards and upwards for the Kurri Bulldogs. They won their match last weekend and this weekend will play against the dirty, stinking South Newcastle team for a chance to go to the grand final and play dirty, stinking West Newcastle.

Mr Troy Grant: Go the Rosellas!

Mr CLAYTON BARR: Go the Bulldogs and go Kurri Kurri—a great community.

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.04 p.m.]: I thank the member for Cessnock for bringing Mural Month in Kurri Kurri to the attention of the House. As a police officer I was stationed at Kurri Kurri for some time and it is a wonderful community. It is great to see people involved in the mural initiative that highlights the town's spirit. The speeding lunatics I chased down Hamden Street were not competing in the Billy Cart Derby, but I am glad the member for Cessnock is participating in that wonderful event. As the member for Cessnock said, the murals have enhanced the community's capacity to attract visitors to the area. We have had a similar experience in the town of Eugowra in the Dubbo electorate, where there are

many murals depicting the area's rich and wonderful bushranger heritage. Tourist numbers are increasing significantly. I thank the member for bringing these events to the attention of the House, and the New South Wales Government wishes the Kurri Kurri community all the best for its future activities.

COAL SEAM GAS

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) [6.05 p.m.]: On 1 September I attended a forum in St Ives in my electorate of Davidson about coal seam gas. It was addressed by several speakers, including radio broadcaster Alan Jones. Coal seam gas is clearly a difficult and controversial topic, which attracts concerns from people across the political spectrum. In considering potential access to a valuable energy resource for our New South Wales community, it must be acknowledged that risks do exist and they need to be addressed properly. However, even The Greens member Jeremy Buckingham, MLC, recently acknowledged that billions of investment dollars are contingent on the affordable supply of gas to New South Wales and that jobs, royalty benefits and economic investment will be lost if the State's gas reserves are left untapped. We need to get the balance right.

When the Liberal-Nationals came to office there was little regulation of coal seam gas activity in New South Wales, but many new exploration licences had recently been issued by Labor. The industry is now subject to stringent requirements that were not in place under the former Government. Labor showed no real concern for the community or the environment when it was granting coal seam gas exploration licences across much of New South Wales, without consulting properly or introducing a regulatory framework. The recent Independent Commission Against Corruption inquiry into coal licences granted under the former Labor Government has contributed further to community doubts. While any government can always do better, this Government has been listening to community concerns and has put in place the toughest coal seam gas regulations in the country. We now have policies in place to protect prime agricultural land, water catchments, local communities and the environment.

The New South Wales Government continues to take a cautious approach as it tries to ensure that we get the balance right. Actions taken by the Government include making the Environment Protection Authority the lead regulator of environmental and health impacts of coal seam gas activities in New South Wales, with responsibility for compliance and enforcement; introducing two-kilometre exclusion zones for residential areas; excluding coal seam gas activity around the Hunter Valley's viticulture and equine industries; banning the use of BTEX chemicals; increasing fines for coal seam gas companies that breach exploration and mining laws; introducing the Aquifer Interference Policy against which all projects and developments will be assessed and which complements the strategic land use policy; and requesting the New South Wales Chief Scientist and Engineer to conduct a full independent review of all coal seam gas activities in the State, including a focus on the impact on water catchments.

Understandably, the debate over coal seam gas carries with it a degree of emotion. We need to separate fear from fact. While I said I would communicate to Parliament and to the Minister the concerns of those who spoke at the St Ives forum—and I have done that—it is clear that more scientific work needs to be undertaken, including the collection of data through monitoring and baseline studies. We also need clearer scientific answers to various outstanding questions, and in this respect the initial independent report in July from the New South Wales Chief Scientist and Engineer, Professor Mary O'Kane, was a very positive step. We need to continue in that direction while recognising the valuable resource that is available to the people of New South Wales.

Mr CRAIG BAUMANN (Port Stephens—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.10 p.m.]: I thank the member for Davidson for bringing the issue of coal seam gas to the attention of the House. As the only engineer in this House and somebody with a reasonably scientific mind, I am horrified by the scare campaign that has been waged against coal seam gas. It is based completely on illegitimate and unfounded claims. I have my own problems in Port Stephens with the Fullerton Cove Residents Action Group. They are very intelligent people but they are passionately and very afraid of the effects of coal seam gas. I trust Professor Mary O'Kane, the Chief Scientist and Engineer, to get to the bottom of this issue. At the end of the day, if we do not have access to adequate gas supplies then prices will rise, gas will have to be imported, industries will close and people will be unable to heat their houses. It is an important issue and we should not play politics with it in this House.

INGHAM INSTITUTE CLINICAL SKILLS AND SIMULATION CENTRE

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) [6.11 p.m.]: On the 11 June 2013 together with the Federal Member for Fowler, Chris Hayes, the former Federal Minister for Health, Tanya Plibersek, and the member for

Macquarie Fields and shadow Minister for Health, Dr Andrew McDonald, I attended the opening of the Ingham Institute Clinical Skills and Simulation Centre at the Liverpool Hospital. This new state-of-the-art medical facility in Western Sydney will meet the training and educational needs of students and medical professionals and help them to build their skills and careers in health care and medical research. I thank the former Federal Labor Government for investing \$9.4 million and providing this facility with world-class equipment and technology, such as a high-fidelity human patient simulator called SimMan. SimMan can breathe, talk and perform other human functions such as generating bowel sounds that will allow trainees to test their decision-making skills on a lifelike patient in a realistic emergency scenario.

In addition to SimMan, SimMum and her baby, SimNewB, will train doctors and nurses by creating an interactive birthing simulator. It will also teach them how to deal with different situations during birth, such as complicated deliveries. The youngest member of the Sim family is the Sim baby, which is designed to train doctors and nurses who may be exposed to neonatal problems, such as resuscitating a newborn and providing treatment and care to babies born prematurely. Like SimMan and SimMum, the Sim baby is able to perform human functions such as breathing and crying and is also fitted with a range of features such as an umbilical cord, spontaneous chest rise and needle decompression. These technologies and other equipment will ensure that those who aspire to careers in the healthcare and medical sectors get an idea of what it is like in the real world. In addition to the world-class technology, this centre also has some new facilities. For example, the new, purpose-built, fully integrated simulated operating theatre will be used to train medical students and nurses in the skills they will need to perform medical procedures. It also contains anaesthetic and scrubs bays in which trainees will learn how to prepare for a surgical environment.

I am pleased that Dr Scott MacKenzie, who is a senior lecturer in surgery at the University of Western Sydney, will provide the surgical training at the facilities. The Ingham Institute Clinical Skills and Simulation Centre is another great achievement of the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research. The Ingham institute is now home to 200 researchers who help to discover cures to diseases that affect the local community. The institute works in partnership with the South Western Sydney Local Health District, the University of Western Sydney and the University of New South Wales, and I acknowledge those institutions for their support in advancing medical research. I congratulate the institute on the opening of the Clinical Skills and Simulation Centre. I am positive that this centre will provide the necessary training to those who seek to become world leaders in the medical and healthcare sectors.

Mr CRAIG BAUMANN (Port Stephens—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.16 p.m.]: I thank the member for Cabramatta for informing the House of the interesting and obviously successful Ingham institute. I know the Labor Party uses cemeteries to increase the size of the electoral roll; I assume it will do the same with Sims. I note that the member for Macquarie Fields has entered the Chamber. When my son learnt cardiopulmonary resuscitation at medical school he was told that the correct pace for compressions is to the song *Another One Bites the Dust*—the trick is not to say it out loud, just think it.

MONARO PANTHERS FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro) [6.17 p.m.]: Harry Kewell, Tim Cahill, Carl Valeri and Lucas Neil are all names synonymous with football in Australia. But there is a new group of young footballers whose names are now etched on the football world stage. It was my privilege again to accompany a group of 15 young lads from the Monaro Panthers Football Club on their recent trip to compete in the 2013 Korean Youth Football Association under-12s football tournament held in Gyeongju, South Korea. Twenty teams from 12 countries played alongside football giants such as Sporting Lisbon of Portugal, Deportivo of Spain and the Los Angeles Football Academy as well as teams from Brazil, Korea, China and Japan—just to name a few. The football experience is second to none; boys were pitched against some of the best age players in the world. It was an experience that will be forever embedded in those boys' childhood memories.

The results were two wins, two draws and two losses—the highlight being the nil-nil draw with Hwarang of Korea. Oliver Efkarpidi played the game his life, keeping us in the contest with some of the best saves of the tournament. We almost pinched it late in the game with a great set move from outside the box. Many will not understand the significance of this result, but last year we lost six-nil to the same team so we are now matching it with the best in the world. The ball is certainly round. But the team's excellent performance can be further highlighted through comparison with the other countries' selection process. For example, the two South Korean teams were selected from a tournament involving 3,000 players, the Los Angeles Academy team are the Dallas Cup Champions and the Sporting Lisbon team were the winners of their age group competition in Portugal. In comparison, the Monaro Panthers team was selected from 30 players from Queanbeyan. Great

American footballer Vince Lombardi once said, "The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack of will". Our boys showed that they had the will to compete.

ACTING-SPEAKER (Mr Gareth Ward): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. If members do not remain silent I will extend the speaking time of the member for Monaro.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Apart from the excellent soccer experience that the tournament provided to the team, the boys also experienced Korean culture during visits to local temples and sites. Following the success of the tournament, the Monaro Panthers squad travelled to Shingok Elementary Public School in Ujunbul, where they trained with the school soccer team, participated in school classes and were billeted with local families. The Shingok community was most gracious and accommodating in offering their hospitality, and all the boys enjoyed the cultural experience they gained. Over the past seven years the Monaro Panthers Football Club has had a unique and special relationship with Shingok Public School. During that period the club hosted many children from South Korea for the annual Kanga Cup tournament, held in Canberra. This experience has allowed Korean children to share with us not only their football experience, but also their culture. In return, they get to experience the Australian way of life.

This trip is the fourth the club has organised, with the first trip being in 2008. It is a relationship and an opportunity that is highly valued by the club, Shingok and the wider football community. The Monaro Panthers Football Club will continue to offer this cultural experience to many more children because it is an important bridge to understanding the diverse cultures in our region and a great learning and developmental experience for young Australians in the Monaro. Many know that I have had a long and strong relationship with the Monaro Panthers Football Club, of which I am very proud. To each and every boy, I say thank you for allowing me to share this experience; you are all wonderful ambassadors of the game, your club and your community. I am proud to know that we have so many young men who are keen to broaden their experiences, which in turn can only bring positive outcomes to our community.

This trip undertaken by a club from a small regional community is significant and remarkable, and every member is worthy of being named in *Hansard*. The squad includes the following players and officials: Dylan Colbertaldo, Lachlan Camm, Jordan Cachia, Oliver Efkarpidis, Joey Krinas, Luka Notaras, Tim Noack, Andrew Noack, Patrick Mitchell, Nicolas Felizzi, Nikolas Blaskovic, Ryan De Vries, Miguel da Silva, Luis da Silva and little super sub Elijah Notaras. Our officials were Frank Cachia, Manuel Notaras, Danny Colbertaldo and Andy Kim. I also note that Lachlan Camm received the Players' Player Award and Patrick Mitchell the Most Valuable Player [MVP] Award for the tour. I make special mention not only of the coaching staff, Manuel and Danny, but also and most importantly coach Frank Cachia for their commitment, leadership and effort in preparing these kids for this wonderful opportunity and tournament. Their patience and persistence has been rewarded by the results and the experience, friendships and memories that we will all have forever.

I also thank the dynamic duo of Nadia Colbertaldo and Amelia Efkarpidis for the enormous task they undertook in organising the team for this trip, rolling up their sleeves and doing the hard work. I extend a special thankyou to my good friend Andy Kim, who always volunteers his time to act as our Korean liaison person and interpreter during these visits and who has been part of this journey for a very long time. He has a young family and a small business, and we appreciate his sacrifice. I extend a further thankyou to the parents who support this grand initiative. Go the Panthers! To each of the boys I say, quoting National Football League quarterback Roger Staubach, "Confidence doesn't come out of nowhere. It's a result of something: hours and days and weeks and years of hard work and dedication."

MATER DEI SCHOOL CAMDEN

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) [6.22 p.m.]: Mater Dei Camden is a wonderful school in my electorate. My wife, Vicki, and I attended their foundation ball last Saturday, which is the major annual fundraising event for the school. Mater Dei is a coeducational school for students from kindergarten to year 12 who have been assessed with mild to moderate cognitive disabilities as their primary disability. It is within the Wollongong Catholic diocese under the auspices of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan. The Sisters have always made sure that each individual student is offered a holistic education in a safe, non-threatening environment. Mater Dei was established as an orphanage by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan order in 1910. In 1957, the Bishop of Wollongong approached the Sisters to establish a school for girls with intellectual disabilities. Of course, things have changed and the school has expanded dramatically. The Sisters still have a role in Mater Dei today.

Mater Dei Camden is a special school providing a community-based organisation for early intervention therapy services, education and residential programs for babies, children and young people with an intellectual disability or developmental delay. Mater Dei has always promoted inclusion for all, and that is exactly what the students, parents, carers and teachers have achieved for many years. Mater Dei has a reputation throughout Camden and the wider Macarthur district as a school that provides dignity and uniqueness in education to each student. The aim with all the students is to one day give them an opportunity to live as independently as possible in the least restrictive and most stimulating environment in the wider community. I cannot speak highly enough of principal Tony Fitzgerald and his team for the outstanding job they do at Mater Dei.

Part of the program for the older students is to place them in a workplace environment, which gives the students work experience to enable them to gain confidence. My office assists in this program, and one of their students is attending at the moment. Peter is learning computer work. He is a very engaging young man who is able to relate any score in any rugby league game. A one-off payment of \$38,000 was presented to the school at the ball by the New South Wales Government. This will assist in renovations of their swimming pool. The pool is an integral part of the therapy for the children. I thank the former Minister for Disability Services the Hon. Andrew Constance for his support of Mater Dei and the current Minister John Ajaka for his ongoing support. Principal Tony Fitzgerald asked me to pass on his heartfelt thanks for the support the school and its community receive.

Mater Dei is a community organisation and I thank the generous sponsors of the school's events held each year. Those sponsors are: Campbelltown Catholic Club; Clintons Toyota; Macarthur Automotive; Paul and Margaret Wakeling; Fine Cut Joinery; the Catholic Development Fund, Wollongong; the Mary Kearney estate; the Davcor Group; Darrell Lea Chocolate Shops; Tony Wolf and Son Quality Printers; the Rotary Club of Narellan; the Perich Group; Blooms the Chemist; the Commonwealth Bank; Dr Peter Hammill; the O&G Practice; Karen Hexton; Macarthur Credit Union; Marsdens Law Group; Noni B; Kevin Lawler; Regans Accountants; Impress Colour; radio station C91.3; Camden Hire; Ingleburn RSL Club; Collegians Rugby League Football Club; Illawarra Mutual Building Society, Wollongong; Inghams Enterprises; Macarthur Nissan; Allianz; Bradcorp Holding; Dave Hazlett; Kevin and Julie O'Keefe; Steve Beattie; Martin Cascarino; David Gale; Mark Scarce; Hayters Timbers; Judius; JMC Academy; the Knapp Group; KPMG, Wollongong; MJ Davis Valuations; PSK Financial Services; Right Way Mortgage Solutions; Sunblest Cleaning; Tri-City Trucks; Camden Police; the Fruit Barn; Macarthur Mercedes; Max and Nola Tegel; Rydges Campbelltown; Scott Hogan; Sean Underwood; Southern Tyres; St Johns Park Bowling Club; and Steve Edge. Steve emceed the dinner on Saturday night and has done so since its inception 13 years ago.

Mater Dei attracts huge support within our community. Of course, a school of this calibre would never function without a board of dedicated men and women. They are Rob Burns, John Adam, Kevin Lawler, Joanne Hewitt, Paul Rodney, Professor Patricia O'Brien and Mark Scarce. I thank them for their commitment to and overseeing the ongoing running of this wonderful school. The ball on Saturday night was a great success, raising approximately \$250,000. These funds will be used to purchase diagnostic assessment kits, interactive whiteboards and a giant chessboard for the playground. I thank the committee who worked so hard to make this annual event another success. The committee chairman is Jim Marsden, a great mate of mine, supported by John Adam, another great mate of mine, Martin Cascarino, Kevin O'Keefe, principal Tony Fitzgerald and Debbie Gates. I wish Mater Dei continued success and all the best for the future.

Private members' statements concluded.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Matter of Public Importance

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) [6.27 p.m.]: I ask the House to note as a matter of public importance the issue of suicide prevention. This is a matter that is very close to my heart. I want to begin by talking about a young constituent of mine named Laura who last year committed suicide. She was only 18 years old and had just graduated from one of the local high schools in my electorate. She was vibrant and intelligent and loved by her family and friends—and I know that they loved her. The tragedy is that Laura's story is not a unique one. This year alone over 2,500 Australians will take their own lives, and scores more will attempt to. Statistics show that 65,000 Australians will attempt to take their own life this year alone. In fact suicide is the leading cause of death for males under 44 years of age and females under 34 years of age. Every day six Australians die from suicide. If six Australians died at our beaches every day of the week there would be a national outcry. It is a national disgrace that this happens and it is time that something is done.

Two years ago during my maiden speech in this House I called for the O'Farrell Government to spend as much money on suicide prevention and awareness campaigns as we currently do on road safety campaigns. This year alone more people will die through suicide than will die on our roads. The reason that is the case is that we as a community and governments of all persuasions have over the years worked together to reduce the devastatingly high number of deaths that occur on our roads. When we turn on the television we cannot help but be struck by messages about safe driving—the importance of slowing down, wearing a seatbelt and not drinking and driving. I am sure that everybody in this House would remember the "pinky finger" road safety campaign—no doubt the member for Port Stephens would be all too aware of it. Those campaigns have helped raise awareness about the importance of safe driving and what not to do on the roads. We should be running the same sort of campaigns in the area of mental health awareness and suicide prevention.

Suicide is preventable. It is something that we all have a stake in; we can all contribute to reducing the number of suicides in this country. Today marks World Suicide Prevention Day, which provides an opportunity for people to talk more openly about suicide and raise awareness that suicide can and must be prevented. All the evidence suggests that access to crisis support, intervention and education can have a major impact on reducing the rate of suicide and, indeed, preventing it. We pay a high price for allowing suicide to be shrouded in shame and silence. By that I mean that if people are not aware of the help that is available, if people are not aware of who to turn to in a time of crisis and if people are not aware of the signs to look for in their friends and family, then we are unable to take the step of preventing suicide. Despite the fact that suicide is the major killer of Australians in the prime of their life—claiming one Australian every three to four hours—most people are unaware that it is our most preventable public health and social issue. People are not aware of what help is available and how to access it. That needs to change.

The theme of World Suicide Prevention Day this year is "Stigma: A Major Barrier to Suicide Prevention". The aim is to lift the cloud of stigma that prevents people who are in trouble and their loved ones from seeking help. Tonight I repeat my call that we must spend as much money on suicide prevention and mental health awareness campaigns as we spend on comparable campaigns such as those aimed at improving road safety. Suicide is preventable, but we all have a role to play. It is not only the role of governments and mental health advocates; it is the responsibility of us all. We can play our part simply by having a conversation. This Thursday is R U OK? Day. This initiative encourages people to have a conversation with their friends, neighbours and relatives, and ask them whether they are okay. The simple action of starting a conversation can make people aware that someone is in trouble and needs to be put in touch with help. That step alone may help to save a life. The R U OK? Day conversations will go a long way to preventing suicide, and we need to do that now more than ever.

Mrs BARBARA PERRY (Auburn) [6.32 p.m.]: I thank the member for Hornsby for raising suicide prevention as the matter of public importance on World Suicide Prevention Day. I also note his active involvement in and advocacy for suicide prevention and his campaign that governments must do more on this issue. The member for Hornsby is right when he says that more people die through suicide than from car accidents. In Australia around 2,500 people take their lives every year. As the member said, suicide is the leading cause of death in men under the age of 44 and women under the age of 34. Every year 550 people in New South Wales commit suicide. The latest research also shows that the suicide rate in Indigenous communities may be 40 per cent higher than the non-Indigenous rate.

While all suicide is tragic, the prevalence of youth suicide is extremely concerning. Suicide rates among 15- to 24-year-old males have trebled since 1960. The rate for young males in remote rural Australia is nearly twice that of those living in capital cities. The New South Wales Child Death Review Team found that 16 teenagers committed suicide in New South Wales last year. Aged between 14 and 17, they were far too young. Twelve of them were boys. We now know a lot about suicide and its causes but we are not making inroads in its prevention. I note for the edification of the House that in my local community suicide rates are increasing amongst young people from emerging communities, particularly the Sudanese. A few months ago I attended the funeral of a young Sudanese woman who tragically committed suicide.

Professor Ian Hickey from the Brain and Mind Research Institute at the University of Sydney is right to point out that governments need to put mental health on an equal standing with other health conditions such as transmittable diseases. We know that people who commit suicide have a history of mental health problems and often a history of self-harming behaviour or previous suicide attempts. The New South Wales Ombudsman found that three-quarters of the young people who committed suicide last year in New South Wales had mental health issues. Common risk factors for youth suicide include suffering from conflicts with family and peers, and school-related difficulties. We also know that most young people who commit suicide inform others of their intention to do so.

We need to provide quick responses to people who have talked about suicide. Most of all, we need to focus on the prevention of suicide. Some risk factors for youth suicide are obvious from early childhood and need to be dealt with immediately. For example, antisocial behaviour, poor family cohesion or parental mental health issues are clear indicators of the need to look at intervention and prevention in people's early years. Other risk factors show up later, in early adolescence, and include academic failure, dropping out of school, depressive symptoms and substance abuse. There are then stressful events that are linked and need to be dealt with quickly. Some of the best people working in suicide prevention have been touched by mental illness or tragedy in their lives.

R U OK? Day is a great initiative and is coming up in two days time. The event was started by Gavin Larkin, who wanted to create a world without suicide after experiencing the suicide death of his father, Barry Larkin, in 1995. The R U OK? initiative recognises it is vital that people are involved in each other's lives. Communities matter and governments need to foster communities and families, not undermine them. People with strong relationships are less likely to consider suicide as an option when struggling with life. Regular face-to-face conversations can help us build and maintain strong relationships with friends and family. Sometimes these conversations are tough and sometimes they are uncomfortable, but they may be the conversations that save someone's life. The National Coalition for Suicide Prevention has launched a plan to halve Australia's suicide rate over the next 10 years. I commend the members of that coalition for their work. I and other members of this House look forward to supporting them in achieving their goal.

However, I also note the incredible New South Wales non-government organisations who work on the ground every day with people in distress. Examples include Lifeline and the Association of the Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill [ARAFMI]. The volunteers at these organisations are often the only ones who people experiencing suicidal thoughts can talk to. The international theme of this year's World Suicide Prevention Day is "Stigma: A Major Barrier to Suicide Prevention". Our work in Australia to promote the need to have conversations is extremely important, but it is only the start. We need to take the conversation to a higher level. I agree that governments need to act by running a campaign to bring suicide prevention and intervention into the open.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Menai) [6.37 p.m.]: It is important on World Suicide Prevention Day that the New South Wales Government affirms its commitment to suicide prevention and to helping those in our community who have been touched by suicide. I thank the member for Hornsby for once again bringing this matter to the House. The member for Hornsby and I have experienced this issue far too closely. It is important to both of us, and, I am sure, to the member for Auburn. Since coming to government the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals have made significant progress in helping people and communities address the issue of suicide. We have worked to improve mental health services and to support New South Wales communities to build resilience and develop responses based on their unique needs.

In 2012 the Minister for Mental Health established the first New South Wales Ministerial Advisory Committee on Suicide Prevention. This reflects the Government's commitment to prevention and early intervention for people at risk and to protect and support our communities and ultimately reduce the number of suicides and attempted suicides in New South Wales. One of the committee's first actions was to visit communities across the State. The committee engaged and consulted with communities to discover their issues and identify how locally based responses could be better supported to prevent self-harm and suicide as well as deal with the impacts when a tragedy occurred. The community support for the forums was overwhelming. I believe in Albury alone more than 80 people turned out. The participants were not just local service providers; they included families who have experienced the issue firsthand. It showed that people want to do something to help their communities, and we must give them the tools to do so. It reinforced the important message that governments cannot do this alone.

Communities want to and need to play their part to address this issue. They want to work together as networks to support each other and people touched by suicide or attempted suicide so that they have a voice to help others through their stories. As a direct result of one of the forums, the New South Wales Mental Health Commission is developing a range of resources such as the small town toolkit to better support communities affected by suicide and help prevent acts of self-harm and suicide as well as deal with the impacts when they occur. In addition, later this year the New South Wales Government will launch a world-first set of community guidelines called "Conversations Matter" to support people across our communities to have a safe and beneficial conversation about suicide, which is something we often shy away from because we are uncertain of the right approach to take.

I wish that was around when I was in high school so I had one of those extremely important conversations with a friend of mine. He told me he was fine but then committed suicide a short time later. If

I had had the support kit, I might have felt a little more confident in having that conversation and might have known the right thing to do. I have known too many people who have attempted suicide or who have committed suicide. While their problems seemed big at the time, it is my hope that with support, treatment, somewhere and someone to turn to, greater public awareness and more conversations about this taboo subject, we can help to prevent the loss of more lives.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) [6.40 p.m.], in reply: I acknowledge the contributions to this matter of public importance by the member for Menai and, in particular, the member for Auburn who has shown a long-term and demonstrated commitment to tackling this issue. I wish to thank her publicly in the House tonight. I also acknowledge the efforts of the Minister for Mental Health, Kevin Humphries, who is doing an outstanding job. I note that the member for Menai touched on some of the initiatives that the Minister has undertaken to put this squarely on the Government's agenda and on the agenda of the people of New South Wales. I thank him for his commitment to my community in Hornsby. Recently in Hornsby we were very fortunate to open, with the support of the Minister for Mental Health, a new adult and adolescent mental health facility to provide adolescent acute care beds. They are desperately needed in northern Sydney and have now been delivered. I am very grateful for the Minister's support and commitment to that project. It will make a tremendous difference to the issue we have been speaking about in this matter of public importance—the prevention of suicide and supporting people who are in need of help.

Three things are needed in this area, which I call on the Government to address. First, there is a need for the Government to fund an awareness campaign around suicide prevention and mental health awareness and, as I have referred previously, to de-stigmatise mental illness in our community. That is a critical step. Two additional things are needed that I call on the Government to address and I will be fighting for during the remainder of my term in Parliament. Secondly, a new governance model and accountability structure for suicide prevention must be established in New South Wales and indeed across the Commonwealth of Australia. We need a national suicide prevention strategy that will develop and engage a wide coalition of stakeholders who are committed to preventing suicide. Those responsibilities may be best managed through a number of strategically aligned organisations, a new national coordination body, a peak advocacy body, a national suicide prevention council and resource centre, and a national foundation. That is the first area where New South Wales needs to lead the nation.

The third thing I call on our Government to lead the country in is investment of the necessary money and resources to enable the independent and transparent capture of data to inform decision-makers and the general community about our progress in addressing this issue. The problem is that we are not capturing the data, so we cannot get a baseline indication of what is going on. We can research 1980s road toll results but we cannot research statistics related to suicide prevention. That is critically important to enabling us to work out whether the initiatives we are introducing to tackle the problem are actually working, whether or not we are having an impact and, if so, where that impact is being felt. The three things I highlight are: firstly, more money for education and awareness; secondly, a national accountability structure and framework that New South Wales should lead and drive; and, thirdly, solid investment in the independent and transparent capture of data so that we can obtain a proper reading of how we are tracking when it comes to suicide. Suicide is too important an issue to ignore.

Discussion concluded.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 6.43 p.m. until
Wednesday 11 September 2013 at 10.00 a.m.**
