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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 10 November 2015

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.

Pursuant to sessional orders private members' statements proceeded with.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NSW POLICE FORCE RYDE LOCAL AREA COMMAND AWARDS

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) [12.13 p.m.]: Last week I was proud to attend the Ryde Local Area Command police awards as a guest of Superintendent John Duncan, who is one of the outstanding local area commanders serving the residents of my electorate. In recent weeks our police have faced some challenging times. Prior to the awards, I wrote to Superintendent Duncan to express my gratitude and support for the local police in my electorate. It is important that we recognise the great work they do and the unprecedented threats to public safety that they are now dealing with. The awards ceremony recognised some of the area's finest officers. Sergeant Mark Formston has served as a police officer for almost 30 years and prior to that was a non-commissioned officer in the Royal Australian Navy. He has dedicated his life to serving his country and his community. On this occasion he was awarded the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal, which he received for the assistance he gave on deployment to New Zealand in the wake of the 2011 Christchurch earthquake.

Constable Yimin Hu was recognised also at the award ceremonies. He received the commissioner's commendation for courage for the exceptional bravery he showed in the line of duty when he assisted in subduing an individual who was threatening harm to himself and to other officers who had attended a domestic violence incident. The offender was armed with a meat cleaver and his advance was not slowed by the use of either a taser or oleoresin capsicum spray. Constable Hu, an immigrant from China, is the first member of his family to join a police force. He related to me that when he advised his family in China that he was joining the police force they were somewhat askance but he assured them that the police force in Australia is not the same as that in China. His parents are enormously proud that their son is a police officer in Australia; it is a matter of significant accomplishment for him and his family. I was proud to witness his award ceremony.

Police officers work in a highly stressful environment and risk and danger are part of their day-to-day lives. They often make life-and-death decisions in a split second and risk their own safety in order to protect the community. Their work involves long hours and shift work and they are the frontline body who deal with dangerous and violent offenders. Their work entails an exceptional strength of character and is often a thankless job. It is said that to be in politics one must have a thick skin. But what we deal with in this House and through the media is nothing compared to what our police officers are exposed to in the line of duty. I am truly alarmed and shocked at the irresponsible comments of Senator David Leyonhjelm, who recently said in a press conference that "All cops are bastards. The cops have

earned that label; they have to unearn it." What a disgraceful statement. It is totally unacceptable for an elected representative of this country to openly and deliberately undermine and devalue the vital work of our police force.

Our police, who deal with the worst of society, have to be tough but they are not bastards. They deserve better treatment. Elected representatives should be setting an example of respect and appreciation for those who serve, not inciting disrespect for brave officers. It would seem that Senator Leyonhjelm must now unearn his reputation as someone who takes service and self-sacrifice for granted. He is completely out of step with the wider community. We are all protected beneficiaries of the work of police officers; they regularly put themselves in danger for the sake of our safety and security. It is truly shameful that Senator Leyonhjelm has publicly disrespected them. All police are heroes. At last week's ceremony I witnessed what our police officers stand for: dedication, bravery, sacrifice and service to the community. I am extremely proud of the men and women of the NSW Police Force and they have my full support.

DEATH OF PETER JOHN KNOTT, FORMER FEDERAL MEMBER FOR GILMORE

Ms NOREEN HAY (Wollongong) [12.18 p.m.]: It is with sadness that I inform the House that last weekend I attended the funeral of Peter Knott, a former Labor Federal member for Gilmore. Peter, who passed away on 29 October 2015, was the loved son of Bill—a former member of this Chamber and now deceased—and Marie. He was a proud and devoted father to Joe and Sam and husband to former wife, Nina. Peter was a real-life character. He was a passionate and colourful political figure who had strong views. Before entering Parliament he was a librarian and teacher. He spent several years serving on Kiama council before winning the seat of Gilmore in 1993. Together with many others, I was involved in the campaign that supported Peter being elected as the Federal member for Gilmore.

People are referred to as colourful characters when they are not afraid to speak their mind or to make their views known. Sometimes, based on the fact that they are a colourful character, their opinions, commitment and dedication are undervalued. I can inform the House that Peter Knott was an intelligent, dedicated and committed member of Parliament and he was a committed father and community member. Yes, he was a colourful character, but he made a valuable contribution. Peter won the seat of Gilmore in 1993 and lost it in 1996. As can happen in Parliament, he won his seat just before a change of government when a whole host of seats were lost. As members know, the government changed in 1996, unfortunately.

The SPEAKER: We may disagree on that.

Ms NOREEN HAY: We may. The incumbent Australian Labor Party—which was in government for five terms, a total of 13 years—led by Bob Hawke and Paul Keating, was defeated and Labor was left with only 49 seats. Politics was in Peter's blood. His father, Bill Knott, represented Kiama and Wollondilly in the New South Wales Parliament. A former staffer told the story of Peter doorknocking his entire electorate, on horseback when necessary, in the six months before his 1993 electoral triumph. At one house he came across a German shepherd, which followed him into the living room of the home he was visiting and proceeded to take over the couch. Eventually, Peter asked the constituents if they were going to discipline their dog. "Our dog?" the couple said. "We thought it was your dog."

Peter is quoted as saying, "In this world you have to have a big mouth to get heard" and "If you do not fight for what you believe in you get walked on". After politics, he remained passionate about his two sons, his friends and folk music and was regularly seen around town with his guitar. He was instrumental in helping others through charity such as organising a benefit concert for those affected by the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria. Peter is remembered by friends as a working-class hero and champion of the underdog. He was 59 years old when he died. Once Peter was your friend he was always your friend. Over the years, Peter paid a number of visits to me in Wollongong and we would have a coffee and a catch-up.

He had much to say about the community and the issues at hand, and he always talked about his family and his sons. His funeral in Kiama yesterday was well attended. Former Federal members Colin Hollis and John Faulkner were in attendance, along with former State and current Federal member Daryl Melham. I also attended. Peter will be sadly missed by all those who knew him. The loss of colourful characters in Parliament is sad; we need a few more. I extend my deepest sympathies to Peter's sons, Sam and Joe; his mother, Marie; his brother, Michael; and his extended family. I am glad to have known him.

SLIM DUSTY COUNTRY MUSIC MEMORIES FESTIVAL 2015

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) [12.23 p.m.]: The twelfth annual Slim Dusty Country Music Memories Festival was held last week in Kempsey. As many would know, David Gordon Kirkpatrick was born on 13 June 1927 at Nulla Nulla Creek near Kempsey, New South Wales, the son of a cattle producer. He adopted the stage name Slim Dusty in 1938, at just 11 years of age. The original homestead that Slim lived in is heritage listed. "Homestead" sounds rather grand. It is actually a small timber home located in a forest west of Kempsey. I encourage everyone to visit it.

In a career that spanned six decades, Slim Dusty received an unrivalled 37 Golden Guitar and two ARIA awards and was inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame and the Country Music Roll of Renown. He was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire and an Officer of the Order of Australia for services to entertainment. Slim Dusty was undoubtedly Australia's best music artist. He was the first Australian to receive a gold record and to have an international hit record, with *A Pub With No Beer*, and the first artist broadcast from space. Astronauts played his rendition of *Waltzing Matilda* from Space Shuttle *Columbia* as it passed over Australia on its maiden flight in 1981. He achieved more gold record and platinum record awards than any other Australian artist. At the time of his death—too early at the age of 76—Slim had been working on his 106th album for EMI Records. In 2007 his record sales in Australia passed seven million.

Last week the Kempsey community and many hundreds of visitors celebrated the life of Slim Dusty and the country music that he so loved. With more than 300 caravans, campers and four-wheel drives packing into Kempsey Showground and a stage set for six days of entertainment, the festival was an occasion to be witnessed. One of the highlights of the week was the five coach loads of people who made the pilgrimage into the Macleay hinterland to Nulla Nulla and Slim's boyhood home. Daily entertainment was supplied by both young and old. There were buskers and bands and no doubt a few beers. There were ukulele workshops and tribute shows. The highlight was a performance by major performing artists Tania Kernaghan and Amos Morris. Amos is another Golden Guitar award-winning Kempsey local and a fabulous young man. His mother teaches at the Dalaigur Aboriginal preschool. Amos is loved by the Kempsey community and it was fantastic that he took part in the week of entertainment.

This year's event was always going to be bigger and better than ever, as it preceded the opening of the Slim Dusty Centre to the public. I look forward to next week, when the centre will be officially opened. I am proud to be able to participate in the official opening celebrations next Thursday in Kempsey. It will be a remarkable day. The Slim Dusty Centre has been years in the making. I was fortunate to walk through the centre a few weeks ago with its chief executive, the indefatigable Kathryn Yarnold, and Slim's daughter, Ann Kirkpatrick, and wife, Joy McKean. It is a truly wonderful and moving experience and it will be a major cultural tourism attraction. It has had its detractors but when people walk through the centre they will see the benefits of the centre as a cultural icon and a boost to Kempsey. The centre is a wonderful place that celebrates the life of Slim Dusty, AO, MBE.

The Slim Dusty Centre, which is just off the Pacific Highway on the southern approach to Kempsey, features objects and images from the Kirkpatrick family's extensive archive, including the original caravan and car in which they travelled through western New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria

and South Australia. It also features contributions from fans and friends from all over the world. As we walked through the centre the other week, Slim's daughter, Ann, spoke from the heart when she said how much her father loved Kempsey and the First Australians. He had a genuine connection with people wherever he went, no matter who they were and no matter the colour of their skin. His lyrics and music speak to the many good and decent people throughout this country. The other day I met an Irishman who was my age—

Dr Geoff Lee: Is that 21?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: No, he was 46 or so. He told me that he listened to Slim Dusty. I said, "I thought you grew up in Ireland." He said, "I did." Every Sunday his family would drive around Ireland with Slim Dusty music playing on the car's tape deck. Slim connected with not only Australians but people from Ireland and elsewhere. I understand that he also had a huge following in the United States of America. It is a great time for Kempsey with the opening of the centre. The Slim Dusty Centre is important to the electorate of Oxley and to the people of Australia.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) [12.28 p.m.]: Tomorrow marks the passing of 97 years since one of the most significant days in the history of this nation. Remembrance Day, which marks the cessation of gunfire on the Western Front at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month and the end of the Great War, is a time for us to reflect. Remembrance Day provides the opportunity to reflect upon the sacrifices made by the men and women who fought to protect the values of this great nation, some of whom paid the ultimate price. We in this place owe those Australians a great debt for we are able to freely debate ideas as elected representatives of our respective communities and constituencies. We owe them so much and for so many things that it would take me too long to recount them all. All members should be grateful but tomorrow, more than any other day, we should take the opportunity to reflect.

It was a great honour recently for me to be able to commemorate Remembrance Day with residents of the Australian Unity Retirement Living Village at Constitution Hill in the Seven Hills electorate. Amongst the group assembled were veterans who presumably know only too well the pain that never subsides from losing a mate at war. The ceremony, which was a sombre occasion, reflected the professionalism of staff and the importance that they place on thanking those who died as a result of war. I could tell that this meant a great deal to a number of people in the audience, many of whom no doubt tragically lost family members and friends to wars. I am humbled by the opportunity I have been given tomorrow on behalf of the Seven Hills electorate to pay my respects at the Toongabbie RSL cenotaph.

I am pleased to announce that the Australian Unity Retirement Living Village at Constitution Hill, which is a fantastic facility, has also been awarded a prestigious Owl under the NRMA's new rating system for retirement living facilities. Like so many of the retirement living facilities in my electorate, Australian Unity at Constitution Hill offers residents great activities and opportunities for social interaction. This, of course, raises morale while also ensuring that residents remain active contributors to the community—something from which we all benefit. I thank Australian Unity for its hospitality and I look forward to another visit soon.

Yesterday I had the great privilege of visiting Hopscotch Kindergarten in Old Toongabbie with the Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education, the Hon. Leslie Williams, to announce \$12,450 of new funding for the programs that are run at the centre. Hopscotch Kindergarten was founded by Gae and Rob de Gooyer in 2001 as an independent community childcare provider. It has since expanded to operate across two centres in Western Sydney and I am glad to have one of the centres in my electorate of Seven Hills.

The additional funding for Hopscotch is a key part of this Government's commitment to quality early childhood education, which we know can make a huge difference to a child's success in his or her early years of schooling. That is why schools in Seven Hills will receive funding as part of the \$45.5 million support program for community preschools to help meet increasing costs and to help prevent large fee rises for parents. This is an enormous win for entrepreneurs and providers like Gae and Rob but, more importantly, it is a win for working families in the Seven Hills electorate. Preschools are important to the New South Wales economy and especially to working families in the Seven Hills electorate who want assurances that their children not only are attended to throughout the day but also are learning the fundamentals that they need for primary school and higher education. This package successfully targets children from disadvantaged families and those of Aboriginal descent to ensure that they have the best start to their schooling lives.

This is part of a broader package of funding to support community preschools, in addition to the preschool funding model introduced last year, which has meant that 95 per cent of community preschools are seeing an increase in their base funding rate, with the highest increases directed to children who can benefit the most from a preschool education. As Minister Williams recently announced, this Government has committed to another \$13 million over four years to increase base funding rates by 2.5 per cent; \$11 million in bonus payments to reward services that enrol more four-year-olds and five-year-olds for 15 hours per week; and \$4 million over two years to provide business advice and support to preschools. I am excited by the difference that this will make for families in my electorate and the lives of the kids growing up in the great electorate of Seven Hills.

CENTRAL COAST AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) [12.33 p.m.]: Today I will talk about the issue of affordable housing in the Central Coast region of New South Wales and in my electorate of The Entrance. While the region's population continues to grow at an astounding rate, the supply of affordable housing in our area has sadly not kept up with this continued growth—particularly with the demand for low-cost rental housing in the Central Coast region. Secure housing is a fundamental need for any person wishing to participate fully in our society. Without secure and decent housing it is impossible for people to take part and participate in the economic life of a community.

Each week my office receives a number of representations and a number of visits—up to three a week—from people in my local area who are under housing stress. These people are facing eviction and unaffordable rent increases and they are looking for a home but have insufficient ready cash to pay the high bonds and high rents being demanded in advance in a sellers' market—it is not a buyers' market at the moment. The free market has not provided for all the people in my community. When the market fails it is up to the Government to deliver affordable housing to the community and to provide people who, for whatever reason, cannot participate in the increasingly expensive rental market, with the means to live and work in society without the constant pressure of insecure housing.

At its broadest definition "affordable housing" is any private rental housing for low- to middle-income residents, where rents are at a level that allows tenants to meet basic living costs. Usually, 25 per cent of income is the figure used to define what is affordable. Many people who come to my office are paying a much greater proportion of their income to cover the cost of housing. In this context, affordable housing on the Central Coast is needed for a large number of members of my community who are ineligible for public housing but who cannot participate fully in the current private rental market. This type of housing should be managed through government intervention. Currently, most affordable housing is managed and built by not-for-profit community charities. In New South Wales alone, over 212 non-government bodies are helping members of our community to access stable housing.

Community housing providers play an important and often undervalued role in managing and providing affordable housing right across New South Wales, managing more than 26,000 community

housing properties. The sector has more than doubled in the past decade, which has come off the back of the community housing strategy released in March 2007, as well as funding channelled through the National Rental Affordability Scheme. Much of this expansion was achieved through the transfer of public housing to the community sector. However, as acknowledged recently by the New South Wales Auditor-General, the Department of Family and Community Services has not had a strategy for community housing since 2013. Without a clear direction for the sector there is a risk that providers will not deliver the outcomes that governments want. Governments should be working with the community housing sector to combat the growing demand for affordable housing and to provide more housing stock and support for the people of New South Wales.

I also highlight the work done by tenant advice services in New South Wales. There are more than 19 tenant advice and advocacy services across New South Wales. Their work is funded by the Government, in part through the interest from the bonds lodged with the Rental Bond Board by people renting property. At the moment, 8 per cent of the interest on rental bonds goes towards providing money for tenant advice and advocacy services. They also receive funding from the grants from the property services statutory interest account, which holds the interest made by money held in real estate agents' trust accounts.

The Tenants Union's "Bang for your Bond" campaign is calling for more of this pool of money to be dedicated to tenant advice and advocacy services. I fully support this campaign and invite all members of this Parliament to come on board. There is much to be done to improve affordable housing and there is much that we can do to improve the availability of affordable housing in our community. We could look at the inclusion in housing rezoning provisions that a new development must include a certain number of affordable dwellings and that there must be direct government investment to improve capital stock. We must improve the rights of tenants through supporting tenant advocacy and advice services and by reviewing the Residential Tenancies Act. The swagman may be part of our past but he should not be part of our future.

ORANGE WINE FESTIVAL

Mr ANDREW GEE (Orange—Parliamentary Secretary) [12.38 p.m.]: I draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Orange Wine Festival has now concluded for another year. The festival showcases Orange's world-class wines. As part of the festival, the fourteenth Orange Wine Show was held recently, with judges tasting over 290 wines from across the region. The record number of entries reflects the confidence Orange winemakers have in the wines produced from recent excellent vintages. One of my responsibilities as a local member was to attend the public tasting so that I could report to the House on the excellent quality of Orange regional wines.

It goes without saying that it is a responsibility that I took very seriously. The 2015 judges were Gary Baldwin, the chief judge; Nick O'Leary; Kate McIntyre and Nadja Wallington. I thank all the judges. The wine show committee consisted of Philip Shaw, Julie Dolle and Matt Attalah. The chief steward was Lucy Maddox and the stewards were David Richards, Loretta Svenson, Barbie Johnson, Justine Bryne, Bob Colton, Peter Hedberg, Chris Derrez, Hakan and Virginia Holm, Steve Mobbs, Lee Bell, David Hoskins, Sue McGrade, Sarah Squires, Brad Ashton, Alison Karbowiak, Bill and Jane Shrapnel, Caz O'Neill and Duncan Cook.

I mention also the many local exhibitors at the 2015 Orange Wine Show. They included Angullong Wines whose wines can be purchased in the parliamentary dining room, which is run by the famous Crossing family that does wonderful work for the region; Borrodell Vineyard, Borry Gartrell, Gaye Stuart-Nairne and Luisa Machielse; Brangayne of Orange, David Hoskins; Canobolas Smith Wines, Murray Smith; Cargo Road Wines, James Sweetapple, a wonderful winemaker who makes superb-quality wines; Charles Sturt University Winery, my old friend Justin Byrne; Colmar Estate, Bill Shrapnel; Cumulus Wines, Steven Mobbs; De Salis Wines, Loretta Svenson; Dindima Wines, a wonderful vineyard near Nashdale, James and Lee Bell; Hedberg Hill, Peter Hedberg; Heifer Station, Philip and Michelle Stevens;

and Highland Heritage Estate, David Crawley; Jarretts Wines, Pip Jarrett—the Jarretts are a highly respected winemaking family.

Other exhibitors included Mortimers Wines, Peter Mortimer, of the famous footballing family; Orange Mountain Wines, Terry Dolle; Panther's Patch, Hakan Holm; Patina Wines, Gerald Naef; Philip Shaw Wines, Philip Shaw and Daniel Shaw; Printhe Wines run by the Swift family whose wines can also be purchased at Parliament House, Drew Tuckwell; Roaring Fork Wine Company, Craig and Julie Maddison; Ross Hill Wines, Phil Kerney; Sassy Wines, Rob Coles; Slow Wine Company, Terrey Johnson; Stockman's Ridge Wines, Jonathan Harrbrook; Swinging Bridge Estate, Tom Ward; and Zinga Family Wines, David Zinga.

I turn now to the winners. Best wine of show and best white wine of show were awarded to the 2014 Carillion The Crystals Chardonnay. Best red wine of show went to the 2013 Brangayne Cabernet Sauvignon. The judges' encouragement award went to the 2015 Carillion Rogue Series Funky Ferment Verduzzo. Best sauvignon blanc went to the 2015 Printhe Mountain Range Sauvignon Blanc. Best chardonnay 2014 and 2015 went to the 2014 Carillion The Crystals Chardonnay. The Union Bank Wine Bar best chardonnay 2013 and older went to the 2013 Patina Reserve Chardonnay. D'Aquino best wine in classes 1, 2, 5 and 6 went to the 2015 Colmar Estate Riesling. Best shiraz-shiraz dominant wine went to the 2014 Cook's Lot Allotment 8 Handpicked Shiraz. Best cabernet-cabernet sauvignon dominant wine went to the 2013 Brangayne Cabernet Sauvignon.

Best Merlot went to the 2014 Gartelmann Joey Merlot—an excellent drop. The Kelly's Rugby Hotel best wine dry red blends or other variety, in classes 8, 9 and 13, went to the 2014 Tamburlaine Reserve Malbec. Vigneron of the Year was James Sweetapple, the extraordinary winemaker from Cargo Road Wines and a good friend of mine. I also mention Swinging Bridge, which did not get a top gold but was best in class for sparkling white; Colmar Estate Riesling; Printhe Wines Mountain Range Sauvignon Blanc; Carillion The Crystals Chardonnay; Patina Wines Reserve Chardonnay; Carillion Estate Grown Pinot Gris; Borrodell Vineyard Pinot Noir; Gartelmann Joey Merlot; the Cooks Lot Shiraz; and the Brangayne Cabernet Sauvignon. I congratulate all of Orange's world-class winemakers for another extraordinary Orange Wine Show.

AUSTRALIAN TECHNOLOGY PARK

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) [12.43 p.m.]: Today I speak about an area in my electorate that is under threat—an area that is very much valued by the community and is of great significance not only for its heritage but also for its contribution to the present day and into the future. The Australian Technology Park and Eveleigh Carriageworks precinct sits at the heart of the crossover between the wonderful suburbs of Redfern, Eveleigh, Alexandria, Darlington and Erskineville. The New South Wales Government announced plans to privatise and sell off this site and, at the same time, UrbanGrowth was seeking to "consult" the community on plans for the Central to Eveleigh corridor. An announcement on the successful bid for the privatisation of the site is imminent.

Today I will focus on the history and the significance of the Australian Technology Park site and what it means for the community members who live in the area. Construction of the yards commenced in 1884 and the first workshop opened in 1887. The manufacture of locomotives commenced in 1907 and the extensive new locomotive workshop opened that same year. The site continued to grow and expand throughout the twentieth century until the advent of diesel locomotives in the mid-1960s. Manufacturing and repairs eventually ceased on the site in the mid-1980s and it was converted to its existing public use as the Australian Technology Park in 2009. Its rich history closely links the innovation of the past with the innovation of the present day and of the future.

The Australian Technology Park was once the site of Australia's largest industrial complex, the Eveleigh Railway Workshops. The site has been recognised both nationally and internationally for its heritage significance. The site is equally important for its social and industrial history, being the site of

important struggles for historic working conditions, including work-free weekends, amenities and fair pay. The Greens have strongly objected to the idea of privatising this site since it was first announced and we will continue to do whatever is possible to ensure that this important heritage site is preserved and remains accessible to the local community.

We need creative ideas that improve public assets, not the privatisation of valuable public resources. Preserving Sydney's rail heritage should be a priority. Heritage should be seen as a living thing and it should not be about locking up places for the uber wealthy to access or for private companies to use. The community should be able to access green and open space and to be a part of that living heritage. We know that people who live around the area have almost no green space left—it is a high-density area—and now we are being told that this area will potentially lock out the community from the beautiful industrial sites that have been a part of our lives for many years.

It is not only The Greens who are strongly opposed to the sell-off the Australian Technology Park; there has been strong community opposition to its privatisation, including from Redfern Eveleigh Darlington Waterloo Watch [REDWatch], the Alexandria Residents Action Group, the Friends of Erskineville and many start-up companies that have started a petition that thousands of people have signed to save the Australian Technology Park site as a technology hub. Tom Forgan, founding chief executive officer of Australian Technology Park, and Stan Jeffrey, founding director of Australian Technology Park Innovations, have come out in support of maintaining this important site as a technology hub. The City of Sydney's report found a number of risks involved in the privatisation and there are concerns about the expressions of interest process and the lack of transparency. It was a pleasure for me to visit the site and to be taken on a tour recently by Brian Dunnett.

I visited Guido the blacksmith and saw the working blacksmith within the railyards. I also got to speak to a number of the tenants in the innovation and technology hub areas who are key to making the site work. A forum held earlier this year included Geoff Turnbull from REDWatch; Professor Lucy Taksa, who has written extensively about the history of the Eveleigh workshops; Dick Butcher, who spoke about his time as an apprentice welder in 1956 and how he became chief engineer and welding inspector at Eveleigh; Peter Tighe, who was the former National Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union; Mark Buttiging, who also spoke as a State organiser with the Electrical Trades Union; and Brian Dunnett. They all spoke about how this site is significant not only for its rail heritage but also for Sydney's industrial heritage, which is why it needs to be protected.

This week UrbanGrowth will hold a community consultation about the north Eveleigh site. We are not hearing about affordable housing targets; we are hearing about 20-storey buildings in this area. We are not hearing about more open and green space; we are hearing about more density without support. We know that this community can stand together and win—we have seen an interruption to the Alexandria Hotel demolition plans. This community will come together and call on the Government to cancel plans to privatise the Australian Technology Park site and to keep it in public hands.

SCONE GRAMMAR SCHOOL OPEN PRIMARY RUGBY LEAGUE GRAND FINAL VICTORY

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) [12.48 p.m.]: I take this opportunity to congratulate the Scone Grammar School Open Primary Rugby League team on its wonderful achievement of winning the Knights Knockout Rugby League Open Primary Grand Final held recently at the Hunter Stadium in Newcastle. Over the course of a few months team members played several games to be at the top level. On 21 May 2015 they travelled to Croudace Bay to compete in the first rounds of the Newcastle Knights All Schools Rugby League Knockout.

The competition was made up of 34 teams from around the Hunter Valley area. The Scone Grammar School played five pool games against Valentine Public School, Warners Bay Public School, Hamilton South Public School, Tanilba Bay Public School and Telarah Public School and won all games comfortably. Finishing first in their pool, the Scone Grammar School team played the Nulkaba Public

School in the first final, winning three tries to nil. In the semifinal the team played St Joseph's from Taree for a place in the grand final. That was a tough game that resulted in a two-tries all draw. However, the win went to the Scone Grammar School team members as they were the first try scorers. Because the boys were victorious, they travelled to the Hunter Stadium on 14 July 2015 for the grand final.

The boys were running on adrenalin due to the excitement of playing in a big stadium in front of their home supporters. That, coupled with an inspirational pre-game talk from their coach, Kev Watts, gave them the momentum that they needed. It was a very close game but the boys from Scone Grammar won, beating St Paul's from Rutherford for a nail-biting finish of 12-10. What a wonderful achievement for a country team competing against much bigger schools in the region. The team consisted of Beau Devenish, Reagan Holstein, Edward Arnott, Charlie Brooks, Jack Brown, Hayden Bull, Callum Goodwin, Christopher Henderson, Tyler Kelly, Sam Mount, Lachlan Park, Fletcher Shearman, Will Warner, Hamish Watts, Lochlan McClean and Oscar Metcalf.

I congratulate the boys from the Scone Grammar School and the coaching staff on their hard-fought win and their overall achievements in the rugby league competition. We all know that the Hunter has produced some of the best rugby league players that the world has ever known. In fact, the Hunter has a wonderful former Kangaroo, Don "Bandy" Adams, who now lives in Scone. What a wonderful player he is. He has some magnificent family members, who have gone on to great things in rugby league. Given that the Upper Hunter in particular is such a breeding ground for great National Rugby League [NRL] players, I wish the boys at the Scone Grammar School well for their future endeavours. I look forward to seeing some future NRL stars from the Upper Hunter region.

CABRAMATTA CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION STREET CAMERAS

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) [12.52 p.m.]: Everyone in this Parliament will remember that in the 1980s and 1990s Cabramatta was a hotbed of crime. It became known as the heroin capital. We could walk down John Street and see violent gang members brazenly dealing drugs and our streets were littered with the bodies of the young. People were scared to come to Cabramatta. But in 2001 under Premier Bob Carr the then Labor Government, with State member Reba Meagher and the Fairfield City Council of which I was a member at that time, said that enough was enough. Together we rolled out a comprehensive \$28 million six-year strategy to tackle drugs and crime in Cabramatta, which became known as the Cabramatta anti-drugs strategy.

The strategy had four main components: bringing in tough new laws that gave police the power and resources they needed a compulsory treatment plan to help drug users to break their addiction and stop criminal activity; building partnerships with the local community; and, prevention and early intervention to help families and young people at risk of drug addiction, crime and social alienation. The strategy has been spectacularly effective. People from all over Sydney and indeed tourists from around the world now come to Cabramatta to shop, to eat and to play. People now feel safe to walk the streets of Cabramatta at all times of the day. We no longer see drug dealers on our streets. We do not see drug addicts slumped on the roads or in doorways.

A key part of what made the Cabramatta anti-drugs strategy so effective was the installation of closed-circuit television [CCTV] cameras in the central business district [CBD]. Detective Superintendent Scott Cook, who is the commander of the New South Wales Organised Crime Squad and who was 19 when he was posted to Cabramatta, reportedly said that the CCTV cameras were great in helping the police to tackle crime in the area. Up until recently those cameras were monitored live, which made them so effective in preventing crime, but in 2012 the Fairfield City Council decided to pull the plug on the program. The Cabramatta police commander, Superintendent Wayne Murray, said at the time that he was "extremely disappointed" by that decision. He stated:

When the cameras were installed live monitoring allowed them to be a pro-active crime prevention tool ...

With live monitoring being discontinued, the camera network will be purely reactionary ...

The camera network through Cabramatta and Canley Vale's central business districts are the hallmark of a very successful program.

The local business community also opposed the decision. In 2013 there was hope that Cabramatta would receive Federal Government funding to reinstate live monitoring of CCTV cameras. But, disgustingly, the Abbott Government decided instead to line the pockets of all Liberal electorates and councils. In June this year, the National Audit Office found that the Abbott Government's CCTV Safer Streets Program unfairly and unethically distributed \$50 million in funding. Instead of looking at which parts of the country genuinely needed help fighting crime, 90 per cent of the funding went straight to Liberal electorates and councils, often before any assessment by the department.

I am sad to say our CCTV cameras continue to be left unmonitored. Our local police are doing their very best, but they are hamstrung without CCTV cameras as a resource to prevent crime. Now that Abbott is gone—and I am very relieved that he is gone—I urge the Baird Government to talk to its colleagues in Canberra and to tell them to right the wrongs of the Abbott Government by funding CCTV camera monitoring in communities that need it most—communities like Cabramatta. Our local police, our business community and the wider community want the return of live monitoring of those cameras to prevent crime from being committed on our streets. We do not want to see Cabramatta return to the bad old days.

KU-RING-GAI PRIMARY SCHOOLS LEADERS PARLIAMENT HOUSE VISIT

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) [12.57 p.m.]: On Wednesday last week I was delighted to host a morning tea at Parliament House for the year 6 leaders of the primary schools in Ku-ring-gai. The leaders were accompanied by some parents and teachers. As a new member of Parliament, it was great for me to take a fresh initiative and host an event of this kind for the primary schools in the Ku-ring-gai electorate. I hope that the young women and men found it to be an interesting and rewarding experience. The morning tea was very non-political and I gave each of the young leaders a certificate to remember the occasion. I reminded them that not everyone is given a position of leadership in their primary schools and that they should be proud of the confidence others have placed in them.

I expressed the view that some people are natural leaders, but most people—and I include myself in this—have learnt leadership by trial and error. The young men and women appeared to have enjoyed their year of leadership. They have learned ways of getting on with other people and motivating others to work in a team under their leadership. There can be great personal satisfaction from being a leader, particularly when a strategy is set and implemented to reach certain goals. I told them that although there was still much to learn, they were probably well on the way to becoming lifelong leaders. Our society needs good leaders.

Too many people in our society want to follow someone else rather than lead. Being an independent, thoughtful person who makes up his or her mind on what is the right thing to do in any situation is what our community needs from its citizens. If our young people learn that, they will quickly stand out as a leader. I also told our young leaders to be well rounded, to keep working steadily on their schoolwork and to be involved in other activities such as sport, music, drama, art, debating, chess and the like. After I delivered a speech I answered some questions from the school leaders. If in some small way I encouraged our local young men and women to be good leaders in our community in the years ahead it will have been very worthwhile to have hosted them at Parliament House last week.

In alphabetical order of the schools that attended, I was joined last week by Madeleine McDonnell and Shaniece Antoon as well as their headmistress, Sally Rushton, from the Abbotsleigh junior school; Sachin Sirkari and Sophie Thomas from the Beaumont Road Public School; Eleanor Wheatley and Will

Blackburn from the Gordon West Public School; Caitlin Blandford and Harry Martyn from the Killara Public School; Thomas Osborne and Matthew Taylor from the Knox Grammar Preparatory School; Isabella Leonardi and Paris Redenbach of Loreto at Normanhurst; Jessie Dyer and William Jovanovic of the Normanhurst Public School; Caimin Conroy of the Our Lady of Perpetual Succour School; Erin Longney and Charlotte Landers of the Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School; and Zara Oong and Daniel Brading of the Prouille Catholic Primary School.

I was also joined by Eloise Jones and William Feather, together with principal Bruno Diodati, of the Pymble Public School; Ashley Halfpenny and Sophie Burke, together with their headmistress, Cheryl Bailey, of the Ravenswood School for Girls; Hamish Lapsley and Nina Kesby of the Turrumurra North Public School; Brianna Astrom and Luke DuPreez of the Turrumurra Public School; Alexander Bugg and Zach Goodacre, with their teacher, Fiona Russell, of the Wahroonga Adventist School; Claïressa Ng and Jaiden Brocklebank of the Wahroonga Preparatory School; Peyton Henderson and Aaron Kerr of the Wahroonga Public School; Druv Hariharan and Courtney Wilkinson, with principal Julie Webber, of the Waitara Public School; Phoebe Lakenby, with Rudy Harricks from the Warrawee Public School; and Madeline Mamas and Jack Day from the West Pymble Public School.

The young leaders were taken on a tour of Parliament by our outstanding parliamentary guides. Peter Tuziak has conducted many hundreds of such tours and brings his own special style to the tours to bring them to life. Peter had some of the students role-play in the Legislative Assembly Chamber. They played the roles of the Speaker, the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Clerk and the Serjeant-at-Arms, who paraded into the Chamber with a replica mace to begin the parliamentary proceedings. The questions asked of Peter showed that the students took a great interest in the way our State runs and the rich history behind our Parliament.

The tour then continued to the upper House, the Legislative Council, where the guide, Charles Barden, instilled his knowledge of the significance and operation of that place. The children were informed about the significance of the different colours of the two Chambers and the genesis of that part of our parliamentary building. I thank both Peter and Charles for their insightful tours. I know from having spoken to the children, teachers and parents afterwards that they got a lot out of the tours. I thank everybody involved in making the visit a success.

BRISBANE WATER OYSTER FESTIVAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) [1.02 p.m.]: Last Sunday I had the pleasure and honour of opening the Brisbane Water Oyster Festival at Ettalong Beach on the beautiful Central Coast. This iconic festival is now in its fifteenth year and is clearly supported by the region. Each year more than 25,000 visitors attend the festival to enjoy the food, wine and, of course, our famous local Sydney rock oysters. The festival is held each year on the second Sunday in November to celebrate the peak of the oyster season and to promote the beautiful Brisbane Water and our Central Coast beaches. In another life—before my tenure as the member for Terrigal—I was a member of the management committee of the Peninsula Chamber of Commerce and I know firsthand the hard work and dedication that goes into making a festival of this size the success it has become.

The Peninsula Chamber of Commerce established the festival in 2000 to showcase the oyster industry and the fine food and wine companies in the Central Coast and the Hunter Valley. The number of stallholders who attend grows each year, with more than 100 stalls lining the streets and the foreshore. The highlight of the day is the competition: How many oysters can you eat in 30 seconds? It is hosted by local radio station 2GO and has become so popular that two competitions are held. The entries come from all over the region and this year the winner—for the fourth year running—was Mr Howard Luu, who managed to scoff 23 oysters in 30 seconds. The winner of the afternoon session was Mr Luke Jones, who managed to scoff 19 oysters in 30 seconds. Both of the winners received a cruise on Sydney Harbour sponsored by the local travel agent, Hello World Travel.

The oyster festival has developed over the past 15 years from its early days on the Woy Woy waterfront, where the festival would commence the day with the Blessing of the Fleet. Hundreds of people would line the waterfront from Gosford to Woy Woy, with the *Lady Kendall* leading the flotilla of fishing boats and putt putt boats, to be greeted by hundreds more people at the wharf at Woy Woy. The spectacular colours displayed by the boats along the Brisbane Water would be cheered by locals and visitors. The boats were welcomed and blessed by members of the local clergy, praying for a prosperous season and a safe return from the sea. This was followed by a full day of entertainment, fine food and wine and our famous oysters.

In 2005 the Peninsula Chamber of Commerce introduced to the festival the Queen of the Brisbane Water to raise funds for Cancer Council NSW's breast cancer challenge. In its first year, 11 ladies entered, all from different backgrounds and ages, to assist in raising thousands of dollars for breast cancer research. Generous as always, the Central Coast community rallied behind the ladies, with sponsorship and prizes to be won. In that very first year they raised more than \$20,000 and over a period of five years raised in excess of \$350,000 for the Cancer Council NSW breast cancer challenge.

After five successful years at Woy Woy, the oyster festival outgrew its first home and was re-established at Ettalong Beach waterfront. With more space and major sponsorship opportunities, the festival grew to include the well-known wood chopping competition, cooking demonstrations and, of course, the now famous oyster eating competition. The festival fired up to become well known for its fantastic entertainment through our local G'day Hollywood Productions with Jenifer Green and Wayne Cornell. Wayne has acted as master of ceremonies for the entire 15 years of the oyster festival. With their years of expertise and knowledge, Wayne and Jenifer have organised well-known bands and local artists to perform at the festival. There was also the opportunity to expand its fine food and wine selections and to showcase local artisans.

Gosford City Council and the Ettalong Beach Diggers Club came on board as partners to secure the festival for future years. With thousands flocking to the event, it became evident that the opportunity to bring tourism dollars to the region was also growing. The Palm Beach ferry now carries hundreds of passengers on each trip from Palm Beach to Ettalong Beach wharf and the festival's good name has now reached the northern beaches of Sydney. The local hospitality industry, the cafes and restaurants, reported a massive increase in their turnover and the presence of lots of new faces in town. Accommodation providers, such as the Mantra Ettalong Beach and the local motels, have reported 100 per cent occupancy and a massive increase in visitors on the weekend of the festival. This clearly shows the economic growth not only for Ettalong but also for the region.

One of the most well-known parts of the oyster festival is the display by the New South Wales Mounted Police horses from the Brisbane Water Area Command. The horses attend each year and, after a long day of greeting people, are rewarded with a relaxing dip in the water of Ettalong Beach. Parents and children follow the horses around the festival. The Central Coast is known for its heart and soul and in our tiny enclave at Ettalong Beach we see the generosity of our community, with support from the Ettalong Beach Diggers Club, Gosford City Council, Central Coast Holden, Brisbane Water Private Hospital, Radio 2GO, NBN Television, Hello World Travel—all the fantastic local businesses which help to support the oyster festival. I congratulate the Peninsula Chamber of Commerce on running the fifteenth successful festival. I look forward to an even bigger and better event for the 2016 oyster festival.

Ms KATRINA HODGKINSON (Cootamundra—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.05 p.m.]: I thank the member for Terrigal for his contribution on the fifteenth Brisbane Water Oyster Festival at Ettalong Beach. It sounds like a terrific festival and I can only imagine the volume of oysters that must have been consumed—it sounds delicious. The Central Coast has had a rough time over the past few years with the Pacific oyster mortality syndrome affecting oysters in the region. To have something so positive for the tourist industry in this beautiful part of New South Wales is fantastic. Congratulations to the organisers and to the member for Terrigal for raising this important issue with us today.

CANLEY VALE PUBLIC SCHOOL EVENTS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) [1.06 p.m.]: On Monday 9 November 2015, I visited Canley Vale Public School to take part in two events: the Lone Pine tree-planting ceremony, hosted by 6M; and the school's Remembrance Day ceremony in the school hall. I was moved by both events, particularly the readings by class 6M at the Lone Pine tree-planting ceremony, which was performed in front of the school's memorial garden. In attendance were Mr Ben Matthews, the Principal of Canley Vale Public School; the college executive; Mr Norm Babbage, World War II veteran; teachers; students; and parents. I also congratulate year 6 teacher Mrs Vicky Morante for coordinating both events with her delightful class, 6M.

I will now read excerpts from the address given by 6M at the tree-planting ceremony.

We are here to commemorate the battle of Lone Pine and to ensure that the significance of this battle will be remembered throughout history by planting an Aleppo pine tree that was grown from a seed descended from the lone pine tree in Turkey.

The Lone Pine was a solitary tree on the Gallipoli Peninsula, which marked the site of the Battle of Lone Pine, in 1915. Pines that are planted as a memorial to the Australian and New Zealand soldiers who fought in Gallipoli have also become known as "Lone Pines".

When the Battle of Lone Pine began, Turkish troops had felled nearby pines to fortify their trenches and only a solitary tree remained on the afternoon of 6 August 1915. It was one of the bloodiest actions of the Gallipoli campaign and one that still sits in the minds of many as significant in Australia's history. Standing on a rise known as Lone Pine ridge, that remaining tree was blown to pieces as fighting intensified. But not before becoming the namesake of the battleground and a poignant symbol of the enduring Anzac spirit.

More than 2000 Australians, and an estimated 5000-7000 Turks, died.

After the battle, at least two diggers salvaged pinecones from Lone Pine Ridge.

Sergeant Keith McDowell, of the 23rd Battalion, collected a cone from the remains of the Lone Pine itself. He carried it in his rucksack as a memento for the duration of the war.

On his return to Australia, he gave it to his aunty Emma Gray near Warrnambool, Victoria.

A relative recalled him saying:

"Here, Auntie, you've got a green thumb; see if you can grow something out of this."

She planted some of the seeds 12 years later.

Five sprouted and four survived. In 1933 one of these was planted at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne.

The other three were also planted in Victoria, at Warrnambool Botanic Gardens and The Sisters, near where Emma's family lived, and at Wattle Park, in Melbourne.

Lance Corporal Benjamin Charles Smith, of the 3rd Battalion, also collected several cones from the branches used to cover trenches and sent them home to his mother in Inverell, NSW.

The seeds then sat in a drawer for 13 years before she finally sowed some of them and successfully raised two seedlings, one of which was planted in Inverell. The second was planted

in Canberra.

That tree planted in Canberra still stands there today, some 20 metres tall despite suffering severe storm damage in December 2008. The Pine Tree that we will plant today was cultivated from the seeds of that tree in Canberra.

With the help of this school community our Lone Pine will grow tall and straight of limb, much as our Anzac men and women were, when they volunteered to serve their country.

As we look around, at the bright faces of our future, it is difficult in some ways for us to consider the immense loss of so many loved ones, sons to fathers and mothers, fathers to sons and daughters.

This Pine is symbolic of the friendship that has built up over time, over 100 years, between Australia, New Zealand and Turkey. In some respects, this has been built from shared loss of loved ones suffered by the families of all those who served their nation.

While we rightly remember service, courage and sacrifice, in the Battle of Lone Pine, there is another significance.

It is indeed signified by the Pine Tree and that is a message of hope. It is a message of renewal of new life.

It is the hope of 6M students, that all the children of Canley Vale Public School will be able to bring their children and their children's children to sit under the shade of this pine and understand that it holds a special significance in our country's history.

HOLSWORTHY ELECTORATE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) [1.10 p.m.]: First, I express my gratitude for the work the paramedics in our community do and the countless lives they help save. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to meet many different paramedics and thank them last Thursday, on Thank a Paramedic Day, when I was at Liverpool Hospital with the Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Medical Research, the Hon. Pru Goward. Whilst I was at Liverpool Hospital I was given a tour of the hospital, which I have taken many times and each time I am there I see something new. This time I was updated on the further developments in the hospital. I met with some staff who discussed with me the future of the hospital as well.

The work that is currently being completed at Liverpool Hospital and in other south-west Sydney hospitals is incredible and important to the overall health of New South Wales. During Minister Goward's visit we joined staff and researchers at the Casula Powerhouse to recognise south-west Sydney health professionals for their innovative medical research and services and to award them the status of the South Western Sydney Local Health District Academic Unit. The title of "academic unit" is a prestigious one, awarded to departments that provide services to patients that are multidisciplinary, cover certain health problems or diseases and are based in one or more facilities within a local health district. I was able to congratulate the mental health program, radiation oncology and respiratory and sleep medicine teams, each of whom has been awarded the inaugural title. It was a very proud moment for me and I know that all of these teams have provided invaluable research thus far and will provide more valuable research and support to people not just within my electorate but in the greater Western Sydney region and New South Wales as a whole.

I am proud of all the health professionals across my electorate and in New South Wales. I am delighted that some of the work they do was recognised in the 2015 NSW Health Awards, which were held in early November. The South Western Sydney Local Health District was a finalist in many different

categories including: "Patients as Partners" for the Just PEACHY, or palliative care home support group, program; "Local Solutions" for Success story—ophthalmology outpatient services; "Collaborative Teams" for improving long-stay patient management; and "Volunteer of the Year", Mr Brian Rope. The Minister for Health, on her Facebook page, gave the South Western Sydney Local Health District a plug as the winner of a very important award on the day, the "Patients as Partners" category for the Just PEACHY program, an incredible program.

The Just PEACHY program is an important program that assists people at the time of life that all of us do not really want to deal with—dying. The Palliative Care Home Support [PEACH] packages include personal care during the day, an evening visit from a registered nurse and video support from a night nurse as the patient reaches the end of his or her life. This program is aimed at helping people reaching the end of life to stay at home. We have learned that about 80 per cent of people would prefer to stay at home rather than die in hospital and it is important to give people that choice. The PEACH program is coordinated in collaboration with not-for-profit health provider Silver Chain. I joined the Minister for Health, the Hon. Jillian Skinner, when she was in Casula last week to announce the rollout of this program in three health districts, South Western Sydney, Nepean Blue Mountains and Illawarra Shoalhaven. These programs are part of the New South Wales Government's statewide \$55 million commitment to community-based palliative care over six years.

On the day I also had a chance to meet with carers, family members and palliative care workers of people with terminal illnesses. Through my conversations with them I was able to get a better understanding of the importance of this package. One story I heard was of a man who was suffering from cancer and, through the program, was able to stay at home to be with one of his best mates, the family dog. This would not have been possible in a traditional hospital palliative care arrangement and it made his final days much happier and more comfortable than they otherwise would have been. The Minister said on the day, "Around 80 per cent of Australians tell us they would rather spend their last days with loved ones in their own home than in an acute hospital setting. Flexible packages tailored to the individual's needs are ensuring more people are fulfilling their wish." Once again I thank all the healthcare workers for what they do in my local community and the New South Wales community.

TRIBUTE TO CATHARINE ATKINSON

TRIBUTE TO JAYDEN STEELE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) [1.15 p.m.]: I acknowledge two hardworking and dedicated members of the St George community, Catharine Atkinson, who is the director of Jack and Jill Preschool in Bexley, and Jayden Steele, who is a member of the young carers program. Jack and Jill Preschool was established 65 years ago by parents in the Bexley area and it is still run by a management committee of local parents. This committee would certainly have been saddened by the news that the principal of the school, Catharine Atkinson, has, after 25 years of service, decided to retire. Catharine has devoted much of her professional life to this very active community-run preschool.

She began her career there in 1990, after 10 years as a primary school teacher. After five years as an additional needs teacher and 10 years as a full-time teacher Catharine has served as the director of the school since 2005. I know Catharine to be focused on using new and engaging ways to educate young people whose minds are often not on the task at hand and fighting to provide first-rate facilities for the children of Jack and Jill to enjoy. Catharine has been a tireless worker for the thousands of kids who have attended the school over her years working there—in fact, two of my children were lucky enough to be educated by Catharine and the other teachers at this St George institution.

My wife and I are extremely grateful that they had access to such a dedicated educator who has imparted to our children compassion, fairness, tolerance and a sense of community. I also acknowledge Jeanne Mithieux, the president of the management committee, and the other teachers who work so hard on behalf of the children of the Bexley-St George area: Dianne Smith, Ruth Poat, Julie Hodder, Mariam

Chahine, Lee Ping Gu, Chris Crundwell, Kerrie Bathsford and Megan Oates. On behalf of the people of my electorate, I wish Catharine all the best in her well-earned retirement after a long innings.

Jayden Steele is a young carer in year 10 at James Cook High School. He is the eldest of four siblings and, along with his mother, Sam, he helps to care for his younger brother, who has a severe intellectual disability and uncontrolled epilepsy. Jayden is also a member of the Carers NSW Young Carers Program. As the only other male in the house, Jayden takes on a significant role in his brother's care, helping with all aspects of his personal care, including showering and administering first aid when his brother has a seizure. When his brother is in hospital, Jayden looks after his other siblings, who also chip in, sharing the cooking and cleaning duties with Jayden and his mother.

Jayden makes a huge contribution to his family and community. He is an outstanding young citizen. Jayden shares a special bond with his mother, whom he is very close to, and although his family have faced many challenges they are a strong, resilient and loving family. Most recently he has been a member of the Youth Carers Project Committee and has played an integral role in the development and production of a short film to help raise awareness of young carers. Jayden reminds us that there are more than 2.7 million unpaid carers in Australia, 300,000 of whom are under the age of 25. As a staffer who is working for me this week, Andrew Bell, commented:

Jayden, as well as the 100,000 other young carers in New South Wales, devote their time and energy to helping those less fortunate than others, often with little recognition from the public for their work.

It is important to take note of and spread the word about the service that young adults have given to those in need, and to remind any young carer out there that help and support are available if ever they need it.

WAR MEMORIALS

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) [1.20 p.m.]: On the eve of Remembrance Day 2015, it is opportune to note that we have 2,557 war memorials recorded in New South Wales. We use honour rolls, plaques, clocks, stained glass windows, books of remembrance, and, of course, retired cannons, to provide a moment for reflection on the costs of war. Albury opened its new Murray Arts Museum gallery [MAMA] on 2 October, but few people know about a war memorial brass plaque on the wall to the right of the former entrance in Dean Street. The plaque reads:

This tablet was erected by the returned soldiers and sailors of Albury and District as a record for ever of their deep gratitude and everlasting appreciation of the noble work done by the women of Albury and District on their behalf both during and after the Great War. 1914 to 1918.

In Albury Botanic Gardens there is a war memorial tree. A plaque, placed on a boulder in front, makes this memorial very personal, while providing family and historical links:

This tree was planted in memory of Sgt. Norman F.B. Huon 8th Regiment Australian Light Horse killed in action December 23rd, 1916 Bir el Maghaba Egypt. Nephew of Hamilton Hume.

Another memorial tree—this time a Lone Pine—lives in the Albury Cemetery. The inscription reads:

Aleppo Pine (*Pinus Brutia*) from the original Lone Pine on Gallipoli grown in the Jubilee Year 1965 planted in memory of departed comrades. Lest We Forget.

And Walla Walla has a war memorial swimming pool, out front of which a mounted field gun points to the sky. But, arguably, the most important of our war memorials, as a class, are the country halls. These halls, which were built to house the act of remembering a conflict, are turned into places to celebrate achievement or, more simply, places for fun and entertainment. When we think of what the nation's armed

forces fought for, we think of important principles such as freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, democracy and justice. But we also know they fought, as ordinary men and women, for ordinary, peaceful lives at home. And the dances, balls, prize givings and performances in these country halls must have been part of what the nation's armed forces were fighting to protect. This is what they yearned to come home to.

There is a cost to these memorials. The plaque on the Tumbarumba Soldiers Memorial Hall recognises this when it records thanks for "The drive and enthusiasm of sub-branch president Mr Ron Hilton (a tireless campaigner for the RSL and the youth of the community)". In my electorate the architecture of the memorial halls always rewards attention. It might be the Walbundrie District Memorial Hall, with its white marble Roll of Honour. The hall is a plain brick structure of simple 1950s style, with stepped brick courses rising in tiers. This contrasts with the stylish arched windows and classical pediment of the Corowa Memorial Hall in Sanger Street. Many memorial plaques make plain reading too. There was a war; here are the dates; people made sacrifices; we remember their noble actions; lest we forget. Yet who can forget the words attributed to the Turkish leader at Gallipoli, Kemal Ataturk, inscribed on the Anzac Cove memorial:

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ... You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace.

Occasionally an Australian breaks out and expresses something more poetic, like this:

We do not know this Australian's name and we never will. We do not know his rank or battalion. We do not know where he was born, nor precisely how he died ... We will never know who this Australian was ... he was one of the 45,000 Australians who died on the Western Front ... one of the 60,000 Australians who died on foreign soil. One of the 100,000 Australians who died in wars this century. He is all of them. And he is one of us.

So said then Prime Minister Paul Keating on 11 November 1993 at the entombing of the Unknown Australian Soldier. Country memorials seem more taciturn, inarticulate, holding back. The Heritage Council of New South Wales is currently looking into listing the Urana Soldiers' Memorial Town Hall on the State Heritage Register. As the council says, the hall—

... dating from 1884 and 1924, may be of state aesthetic and rarity significance for its monumental scale within a modest urban setting. There may be state historical significance for its demonstration of this major investment by a tiny community in commemorating the large proportion of its citizens who enlisted in World War I.

Once again the Government is providing funding to help protect and conserve our war memorials, through the Community War Memorial Fund. Two applications from my electorate were successful in the 2015 round. The City of Albury RSL Sub-branch received \$7,500 to relocate plaques at the Albury War Memorial and to stop litter accumulating, as well as to fund construction of walkways and a wall. At Henty, a grant funded conservation works. We do well, as communities, to erect war memorials. We do well to maintain them, for to do so is to honour great sacrifices made. But long may we also use and enjoy those memorial halls that were meant for celebrating what has been so hard won. Lest we forget.

ST GEORGE COMMUNITY AWARDS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) [1.25 p.m.]: On Thursday at Club Central in Hurstville I will host the St George Community Awards, the fifth year of the awards, when approximately 80 people will receive an award in a number of different categories: Individual Volunteer Achievement Award, the Youth Achievement Award, the Senior Volunteer Achievement Award, the Business Achievement Award, the Sporting Achievement Award, the Community Group Achievement Award, the Environment Achievement Award and the New South Wales Government Community Achievement Award. One of my highlights as

the member for Oatley is hosting this annual event.

Our community is blessed by natural beauty and geography, but even more so by the calibre of its people and their sense of service, purpose and achievement. This makes selecting winners for the St George Community Awards a very difficult but rewarding task. No doubt all members will feel something of that reward as achievements in community services, leadership, environment and business are recognised. I thank in advance all award winners for their service and commitment to our local community and beyond over the years, and the nominators for their enthusiastic response. We received well and truly over 100 nominees for the different categories but we were only able to select fewer than 80. I acknowledge the nominators for their desire to see effort and achievement recognised for their particular community groups.

In advance I thank also Paul McGrath from Radio 2NBC, who has been the emcee of the St George Community Awards every year. On Thursday night there will be dancers from Mortdale Public School, led by Anita Christo, and the management and staff of Club Central, who always go out of their way to help host the event. I also acknowledge John Brogden, our special guest on Thursday evening, who members will remember not only as a Leader of the Opposition but also for his outstanding work as chairman of Lifeline. He is also the chief executive officer of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. During the past five years we have been blessed with speakers such as former Premier Barry O'Farrell and Premier Mike Baird. Two years ago we had local boy made good the Commissioner of Police, Andrew Scipione, as a speaker and two years ago the Governor of New South Wales, Dame Marie Bashir. We will honour a number of community groups next Thursday night.

We are honouring quite a few community groups on Thursday night. I will mention them for *Hansard*. The Riverwood Anglican Church does outstanding work. On a Wednesday the lunch and leisure group at the church offers mental health support for those living in the community housing estates in the Riverwood, Peakhurst and Narwee areas. They do a wonderful job peer mentoring many isolated people in the community, and arrange many outings and events for older residents. They provide a safe and friendly environment and create a link into church activities.

I acknowledge the great work of the Narwee Disability Support Group, led by a former nurse Ivy Sutton. It has been established for a little less than 10 years. It works in conjunction with New South Wales Government, St George Hospital and Canterbury Hospital to offer support and education to families caring for children with a disability. Using social networks the group provides training, practical suggestions and discussion forums. It recruits new foster carers and assists with the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. They are two of the many groups being acknowledged this Thursday at the fifth annual St George community awards. On behalf of all members I congratulate the winners and look forward to reporting back to the House on a successful event.

Private members' statements concluded.

Pursuant to resolution community recognition statements proceeded with.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION STATEMENTS

THIRLMERE FESTIVAL OF STEAM

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) [1.30 p.m.]: I acknowledge the success of another Thirlmere Festival of Steam, one of Wollondilly's most celebrated annual events. The steam festival attracted more than 6,300 visitors in 2015. Each visitor enjoyed a momentary snapshot of Australia's past, the abundance of street stalls, displays and entertainment. Courtesy of the Canberra Railway Museum, Thirlmere was lucky enough to host the Beyer-Garratt 6029 steam locomotive. The 6029 was the largest and most powerful class of locomotive in Australia of its time. It has taken eight years to restore it to

working order, with more work still to be done. For locomotive enthusiasts, being up close to the Beyer-Garratt was awe inspiring. I am proud to have organised sponsorship of the festival this year and over the past few years. I take this opportunity to thank the Rotary Club of Picton. Its sponsorship ensures that the steam festival remains an annual event on Wollondilly's social calendar that is not to be missed.

LAKES UNITED SEAGULLS RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) [1.31 p.m.]: "Mate, just belief. In grand finals, it's all about belief." That is what Lakes United Seagulls halfback Brad Murray believes was key to the recent astounding victory in the 2015 Newcastle rugby league grand final. Lakes defeated the Macquarie Scorpions 24 points to 18, despite going into the half-time break down 18 points to four. It was an incredible achievement. Lakes stormed to the front with three tries in 10 minutes that turned the match on its head. It was one of the best grand finals in recent memory. Hundreds of Lakes supporters invaded the pitch to embrace the players who had propelled the Belmont-based club back to the peak of the competition sooner than anyone believed possible—only two seasons after failing to win a single game Lakes are the champions. It has been said that Lakes' refusal to die kept the club alive in the Newcastle rugby league competition during its darkest days. It was the same spirit that led to the sweetest victory of all: a grand final win in the National Rugby League. I also congratulate the Macquarie Scorpions but, most of all, well done to the mighty Seagulls.

DEBBIE MONCK, TAREE WEST HOCKEY CLUB LIFE MEMBER

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) [1.32 p.m.]: I inform the House that in recognition of her contribution to the Taree West Hockey Club Debbie Monck of Taree has been awarded life membership. Debbie joined the Taree West Hockey Club in 2001, playing with friends in division four competitions. In 2005 Debbie started moving up the divisions, eventually playing division one in 2009. From 2009 to 2011, she played division one as the goalkeeper. Despite having no formal training in the specialist position, Debbie took on the division one role in 2012. In 2013 Debbie broke her ankle but continued to compete in division one, often playing on one leg. Debbie has umpired many games for Taree West in both the men's and women's competition. She is currently the club's umpire and convener. From 2009, Debbie has been secretary of the Taree West Hockey Club and continues to give much of her time and passion to the sport she loves.

BRETT LAMBKIN EIGHTIETH BLOOD DONATION

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) [1.33 p.m.]: I commend the life-saving efforts of Wallsend resident Brett Lambkin, who has made his eightieth donation at Newcastle's only permanent Australian Red Cross Blood Service centre. Mr Lambkin is a teacher at Belmont High School and has been a regular at the Newcastle donor centre for 28 years. When the service was relocated this year to the new centre at Broadmeadow Mr Lambkin was the first to donate his platelets. I am a proud B negative blood donor, and I encourage all eligible New South Wales community members to join Brett and me in saving a life by giving blood.

MR AUSTRALIA MARC WHEELDON

Mr ANDREW GEE (Orange—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.34 p.m.]: I congratulate Eugowra farmer Marc Wheeldon, who has claimed the title of Mr Australia at the National Amateur Body Builders Association World Fitness Federation titles. Marc won the tall men's category and the overall first prize against other category winners. The journey to the title was a gruelling one for the Eugowra farmer, who now operates Iron Works Fitness in Parkes. The first eight to nine months of Marc's training consisted of the bulking phase, which involves putting on as much muscle as possible. Marc did weights five times a week and ate eight or nine times per day. Having increased his weight to 113 kilograms, he then had to lose 26 kilograms to make weight for the competition.

Marc gave himself 16 weeks for the diet-down period, which meant six to eight weeks of clean eating and then a further eight weeks of cardio workouts and limited carbohydrates intake. In the final three days before competition he cut out all sodium and on the morning of competition sweated the last kilogram off in the sauna. It all paid off, with the Mr Australia trophy now proudly on display at Iron Works Fitness in Parkes. Members of this House salute Marc Wheeldon on his great achievement.

PORT KEMBLA FOOTBALL CLUB UNDER 16 BOYS TEAM

Ms NOREEN HAY (Wollongong) [1.35 p.m.]: I extend my congratulations to the Port Kembla under 16 boys football side, who recently capped off a dream season by winning the prestigious New South Wales Champion of Champions statewide knockout tournament. They won the final against Castle Hill 4:0, with goals from Rene Vescio, James Pallone, Emmanuel Kamara and Emanuel Hondroudakis. Leading into the final they had a comfortable 4:0 victory over Camden Tigers, based in the electorate of Chris Patterson. They then beat Forest Killarney, which is in Brad Hazzard's electorate of Wakehurst, before their convincing 5:0 win over semifinal opponents Albury Wodonga, which is in Greg Aplin's electorate. The team should be extremely proud of their results. This dream outcome is a testament not only to their talent but also to their commitment—and of course to their good local member. I am very proud to be Port Kembla Football Club's patron and acknowledge the dedication of the committee, particularly President Emilio Salucci and Secretary Maria Cazzolli. I look forward to many more successes for the black and whites.

CLARENCE VALLEY COUNTRY MUSTER

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.36 p.m.]: I offer my congratulations to Wendy Gordon of Calliope on recently organising the third Clarence Valley Country Muster on her property. Wendy's dedication to hosting this five-day event saw a large turnout of fantastic artists again this year. Each year up to 500 country music enthusiasts turn up in their caravans and RVs to camp on her property. This year more than 350 caravans were parked on her rural property at Calliope and the atmosphere was fantastic. There were musicians, bush poets, art exhibitions, great food and camaraderie. It was like a seniors Byron Bay Bluesfest but there was no need for security or sniffer dogs—unless they were after heart pills, blood pressure pills or pills to make you go or not go to the toilet. It was a fantastic week and congratulations go to Wendy and the organisers on hosting such a spectacular event and making it a fun country experience.

CAMPBELLTOWN CARER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) [1.37 p.m.]: I ask the House to acknowledge Rosemeadow carer Jill Hughes, who has been named the Campbelltown Carer of the Year. Each year the award acknowledges and celebrates the enormous contribution that carers from across New South Wales make not only to those they care for but also to the community. Award recipient Jill Hughes is a foster carer who looks after three children with various disabilities who have had very challenging childhoods. Jill's foster children require constant care and there is no doubt their lives would be far worse without her commitment.

It takes a very special person to take on the full-time care of children with disabilities and challenging histories. Jill has done an exceptional job of turning around the lives of her foster children and her efforts are a testament to the work of carers across New South Wales. In New South Wales one in 10 people are carers. Carers do an incredible amount of unpaid work, all because they want to make the lives of those around them better. I ask the House to join me in congratulating Jill Hughes on receiving the award for the Campbelltown region. I congratulate all recipients of NSW Carer of the Year awards.

AUSTRALIAN KARATE FEDERATION COMPETITION WINNERS

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) [1.38 p.m.]: I congratulate two local young athletes, Dane Clark of

Tahmoor and Izaak Taylor of Wilton, who recently competed in the 2015 Australian Karate Federation Australian Open at the Whitlam Leisure Centre in Liverpool. The two boys have been training diligently under the guidance of Mr Arthur Moulas of Arthur Moulas Martial Arts in Tahmoor, and their dedication was reflected in their impressive performance on the day: Dane Clark achieved bronze in the boys kumite 10 years category, and Izaak Taylor achieved bronze in the boys kumite under 10. The competition attracted 600 competitors—each of the highest standard from every State—and an even larger crowd of spectators. Dane, Izaak and Mr Moulas should be very proud of their achievements, and I look forward to seeing the results of the 2016 competition, which will no doubt be just as impressive.

KING PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL WANDERERS CUP CHAMPIONS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) [1.38 p.m.]: I congratulate King Park Public School on its second consecutive victory in the Western Sydney Wanderers State Cup, a knockout competition played throughout Western Sydney that started in July 2015 and ran until October 2015. The King Park Public School team performed well during the finals by defeating St Paul's from Camden three goals to nil to secure their second consecutive cup. I congratulate Mrs Jara, the players and the football coaches from Westfields Sports High School who provided assistance to the team. I congratulate the team members on their outstanding performance during this year's knockout competition.

LEGION OF HONOUR MEDAL RECIPIENT GREGORY PARSONS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.39 p.m.]: I congratulate Mr Gregory Parsons of Berry, who was awarded the French Legion of Honour medal at a special ceremony on Thursday 5 November at the War Memorial in Hyde Park. Mr Parsons flew 57 bombing raids as part of a Pathfinder squadron in Lancaster aircraft during the Second World War. He was based in England but came from Brisbane and joined the Royal Australian Air Force. He was then selected as a navigator of the elite group. Aged 95, he now resides at the Berry Masonic Village near his daughter Barbara Smith and her family. I thank Mr Parsons for his decorated and distinguished service to our country.

BANKSTOWN BULLS JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) [1.39 p.m.]: On 24 October 2015 I attended the annual Bankstown Bulls Junior Presentation at Ruse Park, Bankstown. The Bankstown Bulls is a junior rugby league club and is one of the largest and most successful clubs in the Bankstown region. The club is open to all participants and strives to provide youth with unlimited opportunities to unleash their full sporting potential. As the club's patron it was my honour to give the awards to outstanding players between the ages of five and 13. I was delighted to acknowledge the young players for their displays of sportsmanship, teamwork and performance on the pitch. Bankstown has a rich history of raising and developing professional athletes to compete on a world scale. I thank the Bankstown Bulls for giving young players the opportunity to develop their sporting talents. I acknowledge the efforts of president Najib Nohra, secretary Danny Safetly, registrar Matthew O'Neill, Romiz Barakat, Ted El Sayed and the entire executive team, along with all club volunteers who help to make up the Bulls family

TRIBUTE TO CAITLIN BARGWANNA

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) [1.40 p.m.]: I congratulate 10-year-old Mungindi resident Caitlin Bargwanne on earning herself a spot on the New South Wales Primary Schools Sports Association [NSW PSSA] track and field team that will compete at the National Championships in Canberra in December. Caitlin competed in a number of events at the NSW PSSA State Athletics Championship, placing fourth in the 200 metres para-athlete event, winning a gold medal in the discus para-athlete event and placing in the top 10 for the 100 metres para-athlete sprint. Her achievements are even more special because last year Caitlin was diagnosed with an intellectual disability. Rather than let her disability get in the way, Caitlin uses it to motivate her to succeed in athletics, which is her passion. I congratulate Caitlin on her achievements and wish her all the best for the National Championships next

month.

WOMEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT ADVOCACY SERVICE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) [1.41 p.m.]: I commend the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, which is a vital program that supports women who are accessing any of the 114 local courts in New South Wales. Staff from the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service meet with women before, during and after a matter is heard to assist women to obtain legal protection from domestic violence as well as access other support services such as housing, counselling and family law assistance. The staff offer a hand to hold and a shoulder to cry on, and help women get the assistance needed. As such, they provide an incredibly valuable service to women escaping domestic violence. The program is independently run but receives funding through Legal Aid NSW.

I recently held a domestic violence forum for my constituents in the electorate of Charlestown, which representatives of the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service attended. I note their increasing workload, particularly because of their responsibility to contact domestic violence victims within 24 hours of their making a report to ensure that they get the support they need in a time of incredible distress. I commend their work.

TAD DISABILITY SERVICES FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.42 p.m.]: Last night I attended an occasion marking the fortieth anniversary of TAD Disability Services in New South Wales. It was held at Admiralty House, hosted by Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove and attended by various New South Wales parliamentarians including you, Madam Temporary Speaker Gibbons. TAD Disability Services was founded by George Winston, who used to live with his wife at Killara in my electorate of Davidson. Along with a group of engineers and others, George has used his skills to change the lives of people living with disabilities. The team at TAD Disability Services design and build various items to be new equipment solutions. The current aims of the service include exploring new technologies, expanding its workshop and engaging more young volunteers to meet client needs. Amongst the volunteers and supporters attending last night's event were Maureen Shelley and Graeme Innes, who I am pleased to say remain constituents of the Davidson electorate and who have contributed strongly in various ways to making our society a better place for people with disabilities.

NATIONAL DAY OF UNITY

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) [1.43 p.m.]: Last weekend I joined thousands of people at the Walk Together event and National Mosque Open Day. The National Day of Unity, which is a joint collaboration between the Lebanese Muslim Association and Welcome to Australia, celebrates our diversity in the face of adversity. Such events give people an opportunity to learn and they promote understanding at the grassroots level. It was heartwarming to see a range of people from different cultural heritages and religious beliefs participate in National Unity Day. Volunteers ran similar events throughout the country.

The day received bipartisan support. At the event I had the chance to join my colleagues from both sides of the House, including you, Madam Temporary Speaker Gibbons. We were given an insight into the community at the Lakemba mosque. The generosity and sincerity with which they greeted us was most welcome. I also took the opportunity to walk side by side with others, including Race Discrimination Commissioner Dr Tim Soutphommasane, under the banner of respect and understanding. No matter where people come from, we are united by our shared belief in the values of multiculturalism. We must continue to strive to implement those ideals through small acts of kindness in our everyday lives. As a nation we are better when we are together.

TRIBUTE TO KAY STEWART AND CON MOTTEE

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) [1.44 p.m.]: Kay Stewart, who celebrated 30 years of service at Forster Public School in 2014, has decided to retire and take up some more relaxing pursuits in arts and craft and caring for her grandchildren. Kay started at Forster Public School as a casual administration officer in 1984. She eventually began working full time and was responsible for enrolment and school records. In 2008 Kay was appointed office manager, with responsibility for the school finances. She recently compared modern office procedures and resources, which include multicolour photocopiers and computers, to those that were previously available in public schools.

Con Mottee—the well-known, much-admired and now retired pharmacist—recently celebrated 60 years since he started work at Saxby's Pharmacy in Taree. Con was originally from Kempsey and moved to Sydney to study for his pharmacy degree at the University of Sydney before he returned to Kempsey as a relief pharmacist. In 1955 Con moved to Taree and began working at Saxby's. He was invited to join the staff full time in February 1956. He met and later married Taree girl Jill Smith and settled into married life. Con recalls the days when all medicines were made up from bottles of powders and mixtures in the dispensary. All that changed when drug companies and computers made the task simpler, but pharmacists still have a high level of medical responsibility.

TRIBUTE TO SHIRLEY FRY

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) [1.45 p.m.]: Last weekend I attended the last afternoon tea of the marvellous Shirley Fry to raise money for the National Breast Cancer Foundation. Shirley has been holding fundraising events for the past 29 years, 12 of which were for the National Breast Cancer Foundation. While she is no longer holding her annual high teas or girls' nights out, she is continuing with fashion at Blue Illusion, the breast cancer walk, the Pink Ribbon Day stall and her patchwork quilt raffle. While the National Breast Cancer Foundation is the main charity she supports, she has over the past three decades supported more than 10 charities. She can be regularly found at Burwood Plaza helping the local pharmacist, running stalls and generally making everyone feel valued and happy. I thank Shirley for her generosity of spirit, her contribution to making our community stronger and the extraordinary kindness she has shown to so many people in the Burwood community.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES AND PHOEBE LITCHFIELD

Mr ANDREW GEE (Orange—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.46 p.m.]: I am pleased to inform the House that Kinross Wolaroi School 2015 year 12 graduate Charles Litchfield has been awarded a prestigious national award for his all-round success. Charles received the 2015 Caltex Best All Rounder Award for his achievements on the sporting field and dedication to music while also maintaining his academic grades. Charles said that his biggest achievement this year was in cricket, which he has been playing since he was five or six years old. He represented New South Wales in cricket as well as playing in the school's first XV rugby team. Although sport is his main talent, he also had lead roles in three school musicals as well as forming a year 12 boys' quintet that won best overall choir at the City of Orange Eisteddfod.

Charles was also involved with the Kinross Cadet Corps, was deputy head boy prefect and helped raise money for school charity Camkids, which helps children in Cambodia. Charles hopes to study exercise physiology at university next year. We congratulate him. We also congratulate Kinross Wolaroi School student Phoebe Litchfield, who is Charles's sister and was named as New South Wales captain at next year's School Sport Australia Girls Cricket Championship in Brisbane after a commanding performance at the New South Wales Primary Schools Sports Association titles in Dubbo.

HUNTER WETLANDS CENTRE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) [1.47 p.m.]: I was pleased to recognise the efforts of so many people who have contributed to the Hunter Wetlands Centre, to its creation and to its current glory during its thirtieth anniversary celebrations. In just 30 years, the land on which the Hunter Wetlands

Centre now sits has been transformed from a garbage dump and disused football fields to a thriving, wondrously diverse Ramsar-listed wetland. I extend my thanks to past and current board members of the Hunter Wetlands Centre and the many volunteers who have put so much energy into protecting and showcasing the wetlands. I particularly recognise founding father Dr Max Maddock, chair of the board David Crofts and chief executive officer Stuart Blanch for mapping an innovative future.

The Hunter wetlands were also in the spotlight when the Mayor of Kushiro from Northern Japan visited the Hunter to renew the sister wetlands relationship. The relationship honours the environmental connection forged by migratory birds that travel the 8,500 kilometres from Hokkaido to the Hunter each year. Its renewal recognises the importance of wetlands and promises an exchange of knowledge and skills between Australia and Japan for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. I also thank Nigel Dique for coordinating the renewal and looking after our international visitors.

AUSTRALIAN VOCATIONAL STUDENTS PRIZE

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) [1.48 p.m.]: I congratulate the three Picton High School students who were awarded the Australian Vocational Students Prize. Will Thompson, Jasmin Gardener and Vanessa Netrvál received a certificate and \$1,000 in prizemoney for their efforts. The Australian Vocational Students Prize recognises the accomplishments of students who have completed their high school studies while finishing vocational training. Will, Jasmin and Vanessa were awarded the prize for their dedication to their studies while training in the entertainment, primary industry, furnishing and construction sectors. I have high hopes for these students, who have put in considerable effort and who have valued their education while training for a rewarding career in their respective professions. I urge all students undertaking vocational training to observe the example set by these three commendable students and to emulate their success.

CEDARS OF LEBANON CARNIVAL 2015

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) [1.49 p.m.]: On 18 October 2015 I was delighted to attend the 2015 Cedars of Lebanon Carnival at the Harbourside Amphitheatre, Darling Harbour. The event was an opportunity for members of the Lebanese Australian community and the wider community to come along to share the rich traditions of the Lebanese culture and to pay homage to late legend Sabah El Shahora, who starred in countless movies, plays and musical events, making her one of the most successful Arabic actresses in history. I thoroughly enjoyed the folklore, music, dance, arts and crafts of Lebanese Australians on display.

I acknowledge group founder Elie Akouri, who is a passionate promoter and advocate of traditional Lebanese folkloric traditions, and all the wonderful dancers of the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group. Elie has been an integral part of the group for 39 years, and it is largely thanks to his tireless efforts that these traditions continue to be showcased to a growing audience. I extend congratulations to the sponsors, Arab Bank Australia, 2moro 1620am, Bankstown City Council, Parramatta City Council, the City of Canterbury Council, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and the Ghossayn Group, for supporting the carnival.

SHELLHARBOUR MARINE RESCUE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.50 p.m.]: I congratulate three brave volunteers from Marine Rescue Shellharbour who were recently recognised at the celebration of the Shellharbour Marine Rescue's thirtieth anniversary. Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos presented vessel master Peter Keft, helmsman Shane Gallaty, and navigator Geoff Troth with the Commissioner's Commendation for Courage. Commissioner Tannos said the commendation was formal recognition of the three crew members' bravery and operational expertise in the face of exceptional challenges during the rescue mission on 5 October 2014 to save two men and a 12-year-old boy stranded in a tinnie in turbulent seas off Gerringong. I am informed that the three people on board the tinnie owe

their lives to the crew members of Shellharbour Marine Rescue. I congratulate Peter, Shane and Geoff on this recognition of their unwavering commitment to the safety of the local boating community and on their tremendous courage. They should be recognised for their service and courage, and I commend them to the Parliament.

Community recognition statements concluded.

[Temporary Speaker (Ms Melanie Gibbons) left the chair at 1.51 p.m. The House resumed at 2.15 p.m.]

BIRTH OF THOMAS ALFRED BUSH ROBERTS

The SPEAKER: Before I start the acknowledgements and welcome to all of our guests in the gallery this afternoon, I congratulate and make a very special mention of the birth of the third child of the Leader of the House, Thomas Alfred Bush Roberts, born Friday 30 October 2015, weighing 3.8 kilos—that is a good size. Mother and baby are both doing well, as is the very proud father of three sons now. Congratulations.

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to Prue Gusmerini, Director Government Services, along with Pheona Twist, Jenny Jones, Patrick Doyle and Judy Bessant from the Department of Planning and Environment to the gallery today, guests of the Minister for Planning and member for Pittwater. I also acknowledge and welcome Andrew Gordon and Kel Graham from Lismore, guests of the Deputy-Speaker and member for Lismore. I also welcome Ralph Spencer-Tucker, participant in the 2015 Commonwealth Youth Parliament representing Jersey, guest of the Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast and member for Kiama.

I also welcome 45 students and their teachers from Macquarie Fields High School, guests of the member for Macquarie Fields. I also welcome nine students and their teachers from Al Sadiq College in Greenacre, guests of the member for Lakemba. I also welcome adjunct professor and former Auditor-General Peter Achterstraat along with seven young company directors from the University of Sydney Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. I also acknowledge and welcome Annie Wang, a year 10 student leader from Prairiewood High School who is undertaking a work experience placement with the member for Prospect, guest of the member for Prospect.

CENTENARY OF FIRST WORLD WAR

The SPEAKER: Exactly 100 years to the day, on 10 November 1915, His Majesty's Secretary of State for War set foot in person on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Lord Kitchener of Khartoum—the hero of the Battle of Omdurman and the man who had personally signed the death warrants of Lieutenant Harry "Breaker" Morant and Lieutenant Peter Hancock—had come to see with his own eyes what a disaster the Gallipoli campaign had become. Evacuation was already on his mind. That same day the Royal Australian Navy Bridging Train commenced the evacuation of stores and equipment. On 13 November he visited Anzac Cove. The diaries of the Diggers are full of awe in the presence of this larger-than-life hero—he whose face had proclaimed to the men of Empire: "Your country needs you."

It did not take the Field Marshal long to agree with the assessment of just about every officer that the Gallipoli venture had been doomed from day one and that a planned and orderly evacuation was the only realistic course of action. By the end of the month the only successfully planned and executed part of the campaign began. The evacuation, done in good order, proved that the brave and heroic soldiers of Anzac who were so often boisterous, robust and at times ill-disciplined, could be exactly the reverse when required. Kitchener lingered but a few days on the peninsula, returning to face ever growing problems on the Western Front. Barely seven months later the great man himself went down with most of the crew of *HMS Hampshire* when it hit a German mine en route to Russia. Lest we forget.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following bills reported:

Electricity Supply Amendment (Energy Savings Scheme) Bill 2015
Energy Legislation Amendment (Retail Electricity and Gas Pricing) Bill 2015
Local Government Amendment (Councillor Misconduct and Poor Performance) Bill 2015
Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
Mining and Petroleum Legislation Amendment (Grant of Coal and Petroleum Prospecting Titles) Bill 2015
Mining and Petroleum Legislation Amendment (Harmonisation) Bill 2015
Mining and Petroleum Legislation Amendment (Land Access Arbitration) Bill 2015
Protection of the Environment Operations Amendment (Enforcement of Gas and Other Petroleum Legislation) Bill 2015
Work Health and Safety (Mines and Petroleum) Legislation Amendment (Harmonisation) Bill 2015

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Notices of Motions

Government Business Notices of Motions (for Bills) given.

QUESTION TIME

[Question time commenced at 2.24 p.m.]

PRISON OVERCROWDING

Mr LUKE FOLEY: My question is directed to the Minister for Corrections. Will the Minister accept Justice Paul Conlon's challenge to attend his court and prove his statements about jail overcrowding are wrong?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Finally. It has been over a month since the Leader of the Opposition—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The member for Prospect will come to order. The Minister has not begun his answer and the member for Prospect is interjecting. I warn the member for Prospect that he will be called to order and removed from the Chamber. It is too early for interjections. The Minister has the call.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: It has been over a month since the Leader of the Opposition started having secret press conferences. He has been hiding in the shadows of the tree of truth.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn members that they will be removed from the Chamber if they continue to interject. I call the member for Keira to order for the first time. Members will cease interjecting.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: He is just like a member of the French Resistance, secretly hoping that people will listen to him.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira will come to order or he will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: What I have been more concerned about is that the Opposition leader has been having these press conferences without the shadow Minister. He has been taking all of the glory

and the honour, hoping that by some strange coincidence—

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

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: It is Standing Order 129, relevance. I am not there because I am looking for prisoners on the run.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: To quote the member for Epping, if Opposition members are looking for prisoners, they should look in their own party room because there is plenty of room in the prisons for members of the Labor caucus. The Opposition leader has been there.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much shouting in the Chamber. I call the member for Keira to order for the third time. Members will cease shouting.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: He has been hoping that some misfortune in the Corrections portfolio might have a converse response to his polls going south. I am delighted that he has finally taken an interest in the Corrections portfolio. I will be keen to hear if he has ever been to a prison; I suspect that he has not. I suspect that his newfound interest in the Corrections portfolio means he has been out to a prison and thanked our corrections officers? That is a no as well. I suspect that his newfound interest in the Corrections portfolio means he has been actively involved in Labor's policy formation in this portfolio? No. All of a sudden, he has decided to take an interest. As the Premier and I said this morning, we make no apology for the fact that we have tough bail laws in this State.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: We make no apology for the fact that we have a—

Mr John Robertson: Why don't you apologise for closing the jails?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Blacktown will come to order. The member for Blacktown will stop shouting. I call the member for Blacktown to order for the first time. Members will not shout at Ministers.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I hear the member for Blacktown asking for an apology. I was glad to hear that when he was the Minister for Corrections he was interested in privatising jails. I am relieved that when it comes to discussions about the Corrections portfolio, I will not be getting a running commentary. I do not know what his friends in Unions NSW think about this, but the member for Blacktown has decided to enter the debate and ask for an apology.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: There is one thing we do not need from the member for Blacktown and that is advice about the direction that this portfolio should go because his strong support for the private sector—

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! What is the member's point of order? It is a wonder the Minister can be heard with the level of interjection coming from the Opposition side of the Chamber. Members will come to order.

Mr Guy Zangari: It is Standing Order 129. The Minister is not being relevant to the question. Will

he visit the court of Justice Conlon?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member will resume his seat. The Minister has been subject to interjections from the Opposition side of the Chamber. He is now returning to the leave of the question.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I suggest to the shadow Minister that if he wants to have a discussion about this he can call me later. I know the Leader of the Opposition gave him my phone number.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will return to the leave of the question.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Of course the prison system is under stress.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: That is because in this Government we want to make sure that criminals are kept off the street. Of course, the prisons portfolio is working— [*Time expired.*]

Mr Luke Foley: I seek an extension of the time for the Minister.

The SPEAKER: The Minister's time had expired. There is too much audible conversation coming from Opposition members. If they continue, members will be asked to leave the Chamber.

NORTHERN BEACHES AND NEWCASTLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA: My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the Government improving public transport services for residents of both the Northern Beaches and Newcastle?

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Swansea to order for the first time. Opposition members will come to order.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: I thank the member for his question.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The member for Fairfield is interested in good public transport services, as is the Government. This whole Government is interested in good public transport. I do not understand why this Labor Opposition is the most anti-public transport body in the history of the State. They cannot stand public transport.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: There is not a public transport project that members of the Opposition have seen that they do not want to cancel. They want to cancel every single one. They are against public transport.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time. He will cease interjecting.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: For a minute the Opposition was in favour of a public transport project, and then the member for Keira read some serious reports and that was that. The members of the Opposition were gone—they were not interested. I do not understand the Opposition. The good news is that on this side of the House we are interested in public transport.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We are interested in good public transport for the people of New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the third time. Members will cease interjecting.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: Whether it be the metro rail network, which is going to transform the rail network across the city, the North West Rail Link—

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: Hang on, member for Newcastle. You are too early, mate. Just hang on. Whether it be the metro, which we are delivering—it is great to see, under this Government, all of the tunnelling being completed—or the SBD and South East Light Rail, or the revitalisation of Newcastle—

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: —at every turn we are about delivering better services for the people of this great State.

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

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: What?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Newcastle should not say "What?" to me.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: I ask the member for Newcastle, Crackers, to stay. I do not want him to leave yet. What is important is that this Government governs for the whole State. Wherever there is an opportunity in regional New South Wales or in the city we are determined to make a difference. Even those in the Illawarra know that we are about improving the roads—the Albion Park Rail bypass—but we know that the Opposition is against that as well. Wherever we move in the State, this Government makes a difference in terms of delivery of services and roads. The Northern Beaches have waited for a long time for a dedicated public transport corridor.

We are delivering that through the B-Line service—a 27-kilometre bus rapid transit network. The great news is that from 5.30 in the morning until 11 at night there will be a service every 10 minutes when it is fully rolled out, and every five minutes in peak hours. There will be modern stops and more parking. Accessibility is a critical part of the project. There will be new buses and, importantly, road works will also include accessibility and improvements in travel times as we deliver the project. In addition, there will be 480 additional weekly services to enable us to be prepared for the introduction of the B-Line service.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: There was even great support back in March, from the Labor candidate for Pittwater. That candidate said, "We're major fans of the BRT." So, Labor members were excited by it and we are excited. What we are doing is very different to what Labor did to the Northern Beaches. Everyone remembers the former Treasurer, Eric Roozendaal. Can anyone remember him? The Opposition is trying to forget about him. Roozie, in spectacular fashion, came out before the election—this is what the Opposition does—and said, "We're going to spend \$58 million in this corridor." The Labor members said, "Yes, we are!" Three weeks after the election Eric Roozendaal said, "By the way: no, we're not." The project was gone, and the Opposition could not care less. The member for Keira was up to his neck in supporting taking that money away.

We are also proud that today we can get on with delivering for the people of Newcastle. Whilst the local member has supported the Save Our Rail group, and wants to stop the revitalisation of the city, in an historic decision today the court found that the Government was entitled to proceed as it had proposed. That is great news for the people of Newcastle. We can now finally get on with it. I know the member for Newcastle goes to council and supports the project but comes into this Chamber and speaks against it. I do not know where he sits on this matter.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maitland will come to order. I call the member for Swansea to order for the second time.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We will continue to work for the people of Newcastle, the people of the Northern Beaches and the people across New South Wales.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We will improve services with more public transport. That is what we are on about.

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

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Swansea left the Chamber at 2.35 p.m.]

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting. They cannot hear when they are being placed on two or three calls to order.

PRISON OVERCROWDING

Mr GUY ZANGARI: My question is directed to the Minister for Corrections, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Veterans Affairs. An escaped prisoner, John Robert Bamblett, is on the run. Given that the prisons are now full, if he is ever recaptured, which prison will the Minister put him in?

The SPEAKER: Order! More members will be asked to leave the Chamber if the interjections and noise continue.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I have a very good answer to that question. Because I predicted it, I will give that answer later on in question time.

Mr John Robertson: Point of order: I know it is early but my point of order is with respect to Standing Order 129. The Minister has already indicated that he is not going to answer his question.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is a reasonable point of order, but I will hear what the Minister has to say.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I thank the member for Blacktown and the deputy chairman of Labor's pro-privatisation campaign. It has been wonderful to have his contribution. The question from the Opposition is about escaped prisoners. Like all of us in this House, I am concerned that there have been about eight escaped prisoners over the course of the last 12 months. Of those eight escapees about six have been recaptured. I want to pay tribute to our wonderful police and corrections officers, who work so well to ensure that those escapees are brought back into custody.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition, the member for Bankstown and the

member for Wyong will come to order. I would appreciate some silence from Government members as well. There are far too many audible conversations in the Chamber.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I think it is very important for the House, the people in the gallery and all of those sitting at home and watching this question time—

Mr Luke Foley: Someone bring out the smelling salts.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Before I get onto the rap sheet of the Leader of the Opposition I think it is very important for this House to realise that the number of eight escaped prisoners in the last 12 months fades into insignificance when compared to a year under Labor's administration, when there were 153 escapees.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: My point of order is with respect to standing order 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear because the Leader of the Opposition is making some kind of noise.

Mr Guy Zangari: The Minister is nowhere near answering the question, which is about John Robert Bamblett and where he will be placed once he is recaptured.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is being quite relevant. He is talking about escapees.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I am merely attempting to bring context to the answer. The Opposition is criticising this Government—with its tough bail laws, its efficiency drives, its guarantee that it is running one of the most effective Corrective Services departments in the world, and with its world's best practices and a \$1.2 billion budget—and trying to compare the efficiency of this Government with 153 escapees in one year under a Labor Government. I repeat: 153! Let us reflect on some of those 153 escapes. Who remembers the helicopter going into the Silverwater jail under the Labor Government?

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I know that the Labor Opposition has some serious questions to answer over the third runway for the Sydney Airport, but was it necessary to open up the escape from the Silverwater jail?

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Bankstown that she is on three calls to order.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: The answer to the question asked by the shadow Minister is that the offender to whom he referred, like all escaped offenders under this Government's administration, will be found. There are beds available in NSW Corrective Services facilities, and I have announced more beds today. The shadow ministers should not worry: Beds are available.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Beds are available in Long Bay. Cells are available. Cells will be available in Grafton. We are approaching this issue like any responsible government would.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: We are approaching this challenge like any responsible government would.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bankstown will remove herself from the Chamber for a period of two hours under Standing Order 249 (1). She was called to order three times.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Bankstown left the Chamber at 2.40 p.m.]

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: That is a shame. I did not hear what the member for Bankstown said. I am sure it was a very positive contribution.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members are having fun, but that is about to stop. If it does not, others will be removed from the Chamber. The next member who is called to order three times and continues to interject will be removed from the Chamber for a period of three hours and the next member who interjects will be removed from the Chamber for the remainder of the day. The Minister has the call.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Even though the shadow Minister clearly has been removed by his leader from public debate on this issue, he may rest assured that beds are available. The escaped offender will be found and he now risks an additional two years imprisonment in maximum security.

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

PRISON OVERCROWDING

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: My question is addressed to the Minister for Corrections. What is the New South Wales Government doing to increase capacity across the State's jails?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maitland will come to order. The Minister has the call.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I thank the member for Clarence for his question.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I also thank the member for Clarence for his interest in this matter, his constructive contribution to the debate, and for the wonderful relationship he has with the corrections community in his electorate.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I am delighted that the member for Clarence has taken such an interest in the Government's response to this challenge. It is a fact that the prison population is subject to significant and sometimes dramatic fluctuations—such as those that occurred under the former Labor Government when 153 escapes occurred in one year—and that makes it difficult.

Mr Chris Minns: In 1995.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: As the member for Kogarah said, that was just in 1995! There were 16 years of Labor government after that and there probably were just as many escapes each year after that.

The SPEAKER: Order! I again warn Opposition members not to interject.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: There are more than 12,100 prisoners in the system, which is a record, but we have vacancies. There is no doubt that, due to capacity issues, the prison system is facing pressure. The problem is a challenge for the New South Wales Government and one that the Premier and I take very seriously. According to the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR], a contributing factor

to increases in inmate numbers can be attributed to high arrest rates and tougher penalties. If the only problem in New South Wales is that we have a very effective Police Force, I am more than happy to have that problem!

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I make it clear that the Government makes no apologies for adopting the position of being tough on crime. The New South Wales Government has an infrastructure plan to meet the needs of the increasing prison population. We have funded more than 1,900 beds since March 2014. We delivered on an election commitment to reopen the Kirkconnell Correctional Centre, which has an operational capacity of 260, and we have reconfigured Kariong from a juvenile correctional centre to an adult correctional centre. In the recent budget the Government provided a record \$1.2 billion for the correctional system. To deal with capacity in New South Wales prisons, this Government is opening up more than 400 new beds in the short term to ease the pressure on our jails.

Those beds include modular cells, which have been fabricated and which will provide an additional 160 beds at the outer metropolitan multipurpose and Parklea correctional centres, with 80 coming online at the end of the month and another 80 coming online in the first few weeks of December. In addition, an extra 105 beds will be provided at the Wellington Correctional Centre, 45 of which are already installed and the remainder will be installed within the next fortnight. Moreover, 114 beds at the Grafton Correctional Centre will be opened in the next three weeks. An additional 52 beds will be opened at the Glenn Innes Correctional Centre in the next three weeks, and I note the support of the member for Northern Tablelands for that wonderful institution. Those additional beds are a short-term measure that will help to ease some of the immediate pressure on the system. Gradually they will be replaced with additional cells in new and modern correctional facilities.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Fairfield will cease his disorderly conduct.

Mr David Harris: Good one!

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: What would the member for Wyong, who interrupts, have offenders in? What would you have them in?

Mr David Harris: They are already in sleeping bags on the floor with what you are doing.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Nothing has been said by Opposition members over our homeless veterans, but he is very concerned about prisons. Are you? We will have to come back to that.

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

Ms Jodi McKay: Madam Speaker, I think you know what my point of order is: That the Minister should direct his comments through the Chair, and not across the Chamber.

The SPEAKER: Order! Because of interjections made by Opposition members, it is very difficult to hear what the Minister is actually saying. The point of order is noted. The Minister will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Madam Speaker, to support capacity issues in the long term, the Government is procuring a new 600-bed correctional facility in Grafton and is expanding capacity at Parklea, thereby creating an extra 1,000 beds. Grafton's new correctional centre will be built under a public-private partnership, which I know the member for Blacktown supports. The new facility will boost prison capacity and jobs significantly, particularly in regional New South Wales. The centre will have the

flexibility to accommodate mixed security classifications and will house both male and female inmates. Yesterday I visited Windsor and inspected the facilities, met with correctional officers and saw the work that is being done to rehabilitate offenders.

Mr John Robertson: What is the name of the jail at Windsor?

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

Mr John Robertson: What is its name?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: The John Morony Correctional Centre is its name.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: That is another one that I am sure the member for Blacktown and his friends wanted to privatise, but I have never seen anyone change his tune so quickly in relation to privatisation than he did. This Government also has committed \$994,000 to the purchase of three new inmate transport trucks.

Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale does not have to be present in the Chamber. He is free to leave.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: As I was saying, the Government has committed an extra \$994,000 for three new inmate transport trucks to meet the increased demand in inmate movements in and out of courts. I take this moment to thank our frontline correctional officers, who have done an outstanding job of dealing with the capacity issues that this Government has faced. I will work directly with the commissioner and the unions to examine all available options in the short term to deliver extra capacity across New South Wales jails, in consultation with the broader community.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS REFORM PROGRAM

Ms LINDA BURNEY: My question is directed to the Minister for Education. When will he finally tell the public how much will be spent on the full rollout of the Learning Management and Business Reform [LMBR] program?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister does not need any help from any member on either side of the Chamber. He can answer the question by himself, without interjection.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: I have answered the very same question on many occasions.

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

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: Eight years ago the former Labor Government funded the construction of the Learning Management and Business Reform [LMBR] program, which is more than just a software package for schools. It is for corporate services, TAFE and all such things. The former Labor Government budgeted for the cost of building it, but not for the cost of implementing it. The Baird Government is in the process of rolling out the program to schools. The Government undertook a pilot program. Of course, the purpose of undertaking a pilot program is to identify potential problems. The Government has made no secret of the fact that there were problems with the program. An enormous amount of work has been

done to rectify those problems. But without that reform, schools cannot have the flexibility that the Government has given them.

We trust principals to make the right decisions about how to use the resources of their schools, unlike the socialists on the other side who do not trust anybody except their mates in Sussex Street and the unions. They do not trust anybody. If principals are to be given their budgets to run them the way the principals want them to run and to make decisions about how they spend their money, then they particularly need a finance package to be able to do that. It is a complex business. We are talking about 2,200 schools on top of TAFE, corporate services to the institute it is being rolled out to—

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

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: For all those reasons it is a very complex business. Yes, it does cost money, but the additional resources to roll it out go to things like the professional development of staff. I remind those opposite that a number of years ago when you were in government you made a deal with the Public Service Association [PSA]. The other day I saw a photograph of the man who calls himself the boss of the PSA in the paper talking about this and complaining about the LMBR. As I said, there have been issues that we have addressed. We have given additional resources to schools, additional time for staff to do training et cetera.

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

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: But when you were in government you did a deal with the Public Service Association—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: Different Minister, same point of order. I note that the Minister is not directing his comments through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister should address his comments through the Chair.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: The previous Labor Government did a deal with the PSA, their union mates. We have heard in the royal commission about deals that union bosses did with Labor governments. The deal they did—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129, relevance. I do not think it is relevant in relation to the LMBR.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has been relevant throughout his entire answer. The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat. I will listen further to what the Minister has to say.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: It relates directly to the costs associated with the LMBR because the deal they did was that the PSA had agreed that Labor would sack 400 administrative staff—

Ms Linda Burney: Point of order: Madam Speaker, when the Minister gets to panning the unions, you know he is in trouble.

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

Ms Linda Burney: It is Standing Order 129. The question was how much it would cost.

The SPEAKER: Order! I said that the Minister had been relevant. There is no point of order.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: I said right at the beginning that we will provide details of those additional costs at the time of our choosing. We are not going to jeopardise taxpayers' money by contravening

commercial-in-confidence negotiations with some of the providers of the training, et cetera. Those figures will be given out in due course. I remind you that when you were in government you made a deal with the PSA that you would sack 400 administrative staff in schools.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! Is it the same point of order?

Ms Jodi McKay: Yes, it is.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield raises a legitimate point of order. I remind the Minister to address his comments through the Chair.

Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI: The previous Labor Government did a deal with the PSA to sack 400 front office staff in schools to help pay for the LMBR. You were going to sack 400 of the very people you need to do this work. That is the deal that you did with the PSA, so the PSA has a hide—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! It is easy to lapse into that style. I do not think the Minister intended to lapse into it.

Ms Jodi McKay: It is the third time he has done so.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the Minister to direct his comments through the Chair. However, his time has expired.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. What milestones has the New South Wales Government reached in delivering new and improved public transport services for the people of New South Wales?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I thank the member for his question. It was great to be with him and the member for Castle Hill last week to unveil the new metro train model that I think will revolutionise Sydney's rail transport. It has been a big week. The Government announced transport for Newcastle. I went to Brookvale yesterday to announce the B-Line. Very pleasingly, this morning I met Tommy the springer spaniel, a graffiti dog who has sniffed out 1,200 spray cans across the network, which has led to arrests and reduced the cost of removing graffiti. The Government is hitting milestone after milestone on its major projects. I am pleased to confirm that 90 per cent of tunnelling for the Sydney Metro North West project has been completed. The CBD light rail is also underway, with the construction of zone 5 in the centre of the city. In the past week 4 million Opal cards have been issued and the School Opal card, which will be available from next year, was announced.

The Wynyard Walk is underway. The Sussex Street bridge is now open. ICC Sydney is on track. The Government has awarded the contract for the Barangaroo ferry hub, and work is well and truly underway. Everywhere people go work is underway with cranes in the sky and jobs on the ground in Sydney and across the regions. I am pleased to report that the shadow Minister, Ryan Park, has been on the public transport case. It seems that my learned friend has been busy. He gave a speech to the Rail Tram and Bus Union [RTBU] on 30 October, I think it was. He said, "Park your ideas here. Comrades, give me your best and very serious suggestions to improve public transport." He also outlined a number of his own ideas while he was giving this address. First, he wants drivers on driverless trains.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: I do not know what the Minister's source is, but I did not address

the dinner.

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

Mr Ryan Park: The Minister was misleading the House.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: He was at the dinner throwing around his ideas—he has just confirmed that. First of all, he wants—

Mr John Robertson: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129. The question was specifically about milestones, and as much as the Minister would like to talk about some fancy dinner that the shadow Minister did not speak at, that in no way relates to milestones.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will hear more of the Minister's answer. Members will cease having conversations across the Chamber. The Minister has the call.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: For the benefit of the member for Blacktown, the question was about public transport. There he was at the dinner with his union friends and he came up with some ideas. The first one is that he wants an extension of the B-Line, which he has seen the Government building for the Northern Beaches. He wants to know how union officials are going to get to their holidays at Currawong and that is why he wants that extension.

Mr John Robertson: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I ruled that I would listen further to make sure the Minister was being relevant, and so far he is. I will continue to listen to the answer, and if he strays any further I will ask him to return to the leave of the question.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: He has announced also the Labor Opal card where you tap on at Sussex Street and tap off at the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC]. The best thing about the Opal card is that after eight journeys those on this side of the House give commuters free journeys for the rest of the week. Under Labor's plan, after eight journeys you get a free mining licence!

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129. The Minister has forgotten Minister Elliott's prisoners' Opal card where you just tap out!

Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It was a tremendous dinner. I have heard all about it. Across the board this Government is reaching its milestones. Projects are underway throughout New South Wales and are being delivered on time and on budget. It is pleasing to see this Government deliver across regional and country New South Wales through to metropolitan Sydney. There has been major investment in the Princes, Newell and Pacific highways. Mega projects underway. It is only fitting that those opposite take this matter seriously and get on board with the infrastructure plans.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS REFORM PROGRAM

Mr CLAYTON BARR: My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Given the continuing cost overruns on the Learning Management and Business Reform [LMBR] will he guarantee that the Minister for Education will still be his deputy in a fortnight?

The SPEAKER: Order! The question relates to an internal party matter and is out of order. The

standing orders state that questions should relate to matters in the public interest or under the Minister's portfolio. I rule the question out of order. Any member who disagrees with the ruling can leave the Chamber. Government members will come to order.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE: My question is addressed to the Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education. How is the New South Wales Government improving preschool participation for children across the State?

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS: It was great to be in Wagga Wagga on Friday. Together with the member for Wagga Wagga I visited some fantastic early childhood education services. We dropped in to Kapooka preschool, which will benefit from the additional funding announced yesterday. We also visited the Wagga Wagga Early Years Learning Centre, which has received additional funding under the \$20 million Long Day Care National Partnership Grants Program. The Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation Community Child Care Centre provides quality early childhood education for the great community of Wagga Wagga. Yesterday I had the pleasure of visiting West Epping Pre-School with the member for Epping, where I announced \$45.5 million for initiatives to increase the number of children participating in preschool.

This Government knows the difference that quality early childhood education makes to a child's start at school. That is why it is providing \$11 million in bonus payments to preschools that enrol four- and five-year-old children for 15 hours per week through the community preschool 600 hours incentive program, which provides an opportunity for community preschools to increase their funding allocation significantly by increasing the number of children enrolled prior to school for 600 hours per year. If services increase their enrolment numbers of these children a bonus payment will be made. This payment will be up to 15 per cent of their total funding. In many instances, services will have four- and five-year-old children enrolled for two days a week, but enrolling a child for an extra half a day could mean a substantial bonus payment for members' local preschools.

The Government is also committed to rewarding those who achieve these targets. Services that enrol 90 per cent of children in the year before school for 600 hours per year will also receive a bonus payment. The 600 hour incentive aligns with the New South Wales Government's commitment under the National Partnership Agreement with the Commonwealth Government. For New South Wales a significant amount of funding under this national partnership is tied to meeting the 600 hour performance indicator. This initiative will therefore reward preschools for working with the Government to ensure that New South Wales receives its fair share of Commonwealth funding. Yesterday I announced an additional payment of \$13 million over four years to all community preschools across the State to assist in the provision of quality educational programs.

Under the 2016 model, all base funding rates and loadings for preschools will increase. The maximum base rate will increase to \$5,402 per child and the minimum base rate will increase to \$1,850. The funding for three-, four- and five-year-old Aboriginal children and children from low-income families will also increase to the maximum of \$5,402 per child. The New South Wales Government's operational support program for community preschools will be extended to 2018. An additional \$4 million will assist services develop sustainable strategies to increase the number of four- and five-year-old children enrolled in quality preschool programs for 600 hours per year. There is also great news for rural and remote communities. A new \$12 million Preschools for Sustainable Communities program will provide additional funding to community preschools in rural and remote areas where access to preschool services may be limited.

This replaces existing transition funding for eligible services in rural and remote areas. Commencing in 2016, Preschools for Sustainable Communities will provide additional funding to these community preschools for four years. The New South Wales Government will also provide \$5.5 million

over three years to improve data quality and data management. A clearer picture of activities enables the New South Wales Government to better support services so that more children across the State can access a quality preschool program and get the very best start to their school life. This package builds on existing funding initiatives that support the Government's commitment to increase the participation of children from low-income and Aboriginal families to ensure that cost is not a barrier to accessing high-quality early childhood education.

ATTORNEY GENERAL AND REAL ENERGY SHAREHOLDING

Mr PAUL LYNCH: My question is directed to the Attorney General. Did she disclose to her colleagues her shareholding in Real Energy at the time Cabinet considered the deregulation of gas prices?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: The question from the shadow Attorney General is disgraceful. My disclosures are on the record.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: Members are free to check them. Everything is there to see, including my pecuniary interest statement. Unlike members opposite, Government members place everything on the record. It is there to see. This is just a cheap tactic by the Opposition to distract the Government from its important work; but the Government will not be distracted. I will tell the House the kind of work that this Government has got on with. There are no ideas from those on the other side of the Chamber; all they do is take cheap personal shots at Government members to distract them from the business of government.

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

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: I will tell the House about the proud record of this Government in the area of justice. I went to Canberra last Thursday and Friday, with my colleague the Minister for Justice and Police—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney General has the call.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: —to persuade the Commonwealth Attorney-General and the States and Territories Attorneys-General to ensure that we have a national framework for redress for the victims of child sexual assault in State, Federal and Territory institutions. The result of that discussion and debate in old Parliament House is a commitment from the Commonwealth Attorney-General to look at a national framework. This is the work of government. This is responding to those cries for practical and monetary assistance, for redress for those who suffered at the hand of State and Territory institutions. That is the work of government, and I will not be distracted from it by the shadow Attorney General. He can take cheap shots; I have nothing to hide. I will remain focused on issues of justice, along with my colleagues in the justice cluster: the Minister for Justice and Police, and the Minister for Corrections.

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

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: It is not only about redress, although that is important for victims of child sexual assault. This Government has toughened the bail laws to respond to the concern in our community about terrorism, and to the increased risk to our police officers, who put their bodies on the line every day of the week to protect our local communities. There was not a peep from members opposite when the bill amending the bail legislation was introduced; they supported a good idea. They have none of their own but are happy to support ours.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will cease interjecting.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: The Government has ensured that this State has the toughest laws applying to people connected with terrorism in our community. This is the heavy lifting of government: responding to community concern, keeping our communities safe, representing their interests in the Houses of Parliament, and maintaining confidence in the justice system. I will not be distracted from that work while members opposite take cheap shots. Shame on them!

Mr PAUL LYNCH: I ask a supplementary question. Arising out of the Attorney General's answer, did she excuse herself from the discussions on the deregulation of gas prices?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: The shadow Attorney General should know better than that. He is asking me to talk about the Cabinet process. I pride myself on conducting myself with integrity. No matter what members opposite throw at me, I act with integrity. I always have and I always will, and I will not breach Cabinet confidentiality.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AMALGAMATIONS

Mr THOMAS GEORGE: I address my question to the Minister for Local Government. How will stronger councils deliver better services to the constituents of New South Wales?

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I thank the member for Lismore for his question and for providing me with the opportunity to update the House on local government reform. The member understands his community and puts it first when making decisions. It is encouraging that many councils across New South Wales have responded positively to the release of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal report on local government and that they are taking the opportunity to engage in final consultations. Councils are having open discussions with their neighbours and the Government about the benefits of merging.

With less than two weeks to go, the end of the final consultation period is close. This Government is committed to recognising those councils that have done the right thing by their communities and it is providing significant funding for councils that merge. It is also supporting those councils that lodge submissions by 18 November. Up to \$15 million is available to help councils to work through their decisions to merge. Many have demonstrated an ability to make decisions in the best interests of their communities—

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: —to invest in community infrastructure, and to provide better service or to lower rates. That is a great deal of money and councils are talking about how best to use it. They are talking about whether it can be used for libraries, playgrounds and footpaths, or to repair swimming pools. These are some of the facilities that communities have been asking their councils to address for a long time. The Government is also providing \$10 million to meet the up-front costs of merging. Councillors who have demonstrated the ability to work together in reaching an agreement to merge will have the opportunity to shape the future of the new council and to serve their community until the end of their current term.

It is up to each council to ensure that their communities are informed and that they know about the benefits they will forgo if they do not merge. Members on this side of the House are clear about reform and the benefits of having stronger councils in this State. What happened in Tamworth in 2004 is a good example of a council that grew. The council was expanded to include Manilla Shire Council, which had a 1940s water infrastructure backlog that it could not address. The larger entity was able to attract funding and water was supplied to that area. The \$30 million Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre was also established. A smaller council would not have been able to deliver that.

Bathurst City Council and Evans Shire Council in my electorate were also merged. The Labor Government turned its back on local government in New South Wales and offered no support or funding

for the process. However, the men and women of the local government sector got on with the job of supporting their communities. Councils received rural funding of \$5,000, and larger councils were eligible to receive about \$250,000, which meant that communities were building much-needed halls and playgrounds. This made them stronger and the Government also ensured that all roads to the villages were sealed.

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal report demonstrated that there would be a \$2 billion windfall to invest in more services and infrastructure across the State. Just last week Marrickville Council released a report indicating that a merger with Leichhardt and Ashfield councils would result in a \$100 million windfall for the community. That money could be ploughed back into more services and infrastructure. The alternative proposed by many councils and the Opposition was to increase rates. Surprise, surprise! Members opposite want to increase the rates paid by the mums, dads and families across this State. That is because they have no solution. They are trying to take the easy way out. This Government is doing the hard work and ensuring that we have strong reform in local government.

Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: One minute members opposite support rate pegging and the next they are against it. Communities deserve better, and members on this side of the House will ensure that they have safeguards. A large proportion of the community is demonstrating support for local government reform. A *NewsLocal Digital Edition* survey indicated that last week 64 per cent of respondents agreed that Sydney has too many councils, and almost two-thirds of respondents agreed that mergers and reducing costs was the best way for councils to balance their budgets. The *NewsLocal Digital Edition* states:

While there are many vocal opponents of council mergers in the media and local government, the public appears to have accepted the rationale for rationalising councils carefully spelt out by the Government.

This Government is building sustainable councils for the future. We are ensuring that councils are stronger and can meet the needs of their different communities. We are creating councils that are able to manage regional facilities and provide the services and infrastructure that communities need. We are giving councils and communities a fresh start.

Question time concluded at 3.20 p.m.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Tabling of Papers

Motion by Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS agreed to:

That, for the remainder of the 2015 sittings, standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide:

- (1) The tabling of papers by Ministers may be effected by an announcement in the House without handing up copies of such papers.
- (2) Any papers tabled by announcement shall be lodged with the Table Office prior to their announcement in the House.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Order of Business

Motion by Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS agreed to:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended on Thursday 12 November 2015 to provide:

- (1) For the following routine of business from 11.40 a.m.:
 - (a) at 11.40 a.m., private members' statements;
 - (b) at 1.00 p.m., consideration of tabled committee reports concluding at 1.30 p.m., at which time the Speaker shall leave the Chair; and
 - (c) the Speaker to resume the Chair at 2.45 p.m.
- (2) That from 11.40 a.m. until 1.30 p.m. no divisions be conducted or quorums be called.

DATES AND TIMES OF SITTINGS

Motion by Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS agreed to:

That unless otherwise ordered, the House meet during the 2016 autumn and spring sittings as follows:

Autumn Sittings: February 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25;
March 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23;
May 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 31;
June 1, 2, 21, 22, 23.

Spring Sittings: August 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 23, 24, 25;
September 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22;
October 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20;
November 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17 and November 22, 23, 24 as a potential reserve week.

INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSION

Report

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to section 39 of the Government Information (Information Commissioner) Act 2009 and section 61D of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, of the report of the Information and Privacy Commission for the year ended 30 June 2015, incorporating the report of the Privacy Commissioner, received on 30 October 2015.

Ordered to be printed.

ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Report

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to section 35 of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014, of the report of the Advocate for Children and Young People for the period 9 January to 30 June 2015, received on 30 October 2015.

Ordered to be printed.

NSW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DEATH REVIEW TEAM

Report

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to section 101K of the Coroners Act 2009, of the report of the NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team for the period July 2013 to 30 June 2015, received on 30 October 2015.

Ordered to be printed.

INSPECTOR OF THE POLICE INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Report

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to section 103 of the Police Integrity Commission Act 1996, of the report of the Inspector of the Police Integrity Commission for the year ended 30 June 2015, received on 30 October 2015.

Ordered to be printed.

INSPECTOR OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Report

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to section 78 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, of the report of the Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption for the year ended 30 June 2015, received on 30 October 2015.

Ordered to be printed.

TRUSTEES OF THE ANZAC MEMORIAL BUILDING

Report

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 11 of the Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984, of the report of the Trustees of the ANZAC Memorial Building for the year ended 30 June 2015, received out of session on 30 October 2015 and authorised to be printed.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, of the performance audit report of the Auditor-General entitled "Activity Based Funding Data Quality: NSW Health", dated October 2015, received out of session on 4 November 2015 and authorised to be printed.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE REGULATION OF BROTHELS

Report

Mr Alister Henskens, as Chair, tabled the report entitled "Inquiry into the Regulation of Brothels", Report 1/56, dated November 2015.

Ordered to be printed on motion by Mr Alister Henskens.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report

Mr Michael Johnsen, as Chair, tabled the report entitled "Legislation Review Digest No. 10/56", dated 10 November 2015, together with the minutes of the committee meeting regarding Legislation Review Digest No. 9/56, dated 27 October 2015.

Report ordered to be printed on motion by Mr Michael Johnsen.

PETITIONS

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

Powerhouse Museum Ultimo

Petition requesting the retention of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo and the expansion of museum services to other parts of New South Wales, 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**.

Mental Health Services

Petition requesting increased mental health support for people with a mental illness who are tenants of Housing NSW and community housing, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Pet Shops

Petition opposing the sale of animals in pet shops, 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**.

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

Rubbish Odour Removal

Petition requesting the removal of odours in Erskine Park, St Clair and surrounding suburbs and the rejection of the construction of tip or transfer centres in the area, received from **Mrs Tanya Davies**.

The Clerk announced that the following Ministers had lodged responses to petitions signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Dominic Perrottet—Belmont Motor Registry—lodged 13 October 2015 (Ms Yasmin Catley)

The Hon. Dominic Perrottet—Ingleburn Motor Registry—lodged 13 October 2015 (Mr Anoulack

Chanthivong)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Business Lapsed

General Business Order of the Day No. 1 and General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) Nos 21, 26, 28 and 30 lapsed pursuant to Standing Order 105 (3).

CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO BE ACCORDED PRIORITY

State Infrastructure

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) [3.26 p.m.]: My motion must be accorded priority because the Parliament must signal very clearly to the people of New South Wales that only through a strong economy can we build the infrastructure that this State deserves. We must signal to the people of New South Wales that the Parliament understands that only through a strong economy can we continue to improve services for the people of this State. This House has no choice but to note that Labor, after 16 years in government and close to five years in opposition—a period of almost two decades—and Luke Foley still have no plan for New South Wales. The people of New South Wales deserve a Parliament that calls out ineffectiveness, indecision and incompetence when they rear their head.

Mr David Harris: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! It was agreed that points of order would not be taken because of the limited time available to speakers when giving reasons as to why their motions should be accorded priority.

Mr David Harris: I seek clarification in relation to Standing Order 75. The motion refers to the Leader of the Opposition by his name and the member for Seven Hills just referred to him by name. Is the motion in order?

The SPEAKER: No it is not, but I am sure the member will amend the motion accordingly. I thank the member for Wyong for raising that point.

Mr MARK TAYLOR: This House must recognise that only under a Liberal and Nationals Government can New South Wales remain number one. While this Coalition Government has been in office our great State has gone from dead last on every key performance indicator to leading the nation. The Opposition should debate this motion as a matter of priority. This Government is willing to debate its record—a record that already has surpassed Labor's 16 wasteful years in office. I say to those opposite, let us have a debate on this Government's record. They will not want to accord this motion priority because they know that the Baird-Grant reformist Government is the infrastructure government of our time. It has built up the New South Wales economy to its strongest position in decades. It has improved services so efficiently and in a timely manner that people can hardly recognise the State from the grim days when those opposite were in power.

In those 16 years in government, the Opposition wasted taxpayers' money and hung the people of New South Wales out to dry. It left the people of New South Wales hanging like three-day-old washing left out on the Hills rotary hoist, fading and shrivelling in the sun, left out for so long that the kelpie came out of its dog box and ripped it off the line, tearing it to tatters. It left our economy, our infrastructure, our health system, and our schools in tatters. Under Labor we had a dried up and faded economy. My motion must be accorded priority because it is in the interests of the people of this State that this Parliament recognises the utter incompetence of those opposite and that, in stark contrast, this Government is making life better for the people of New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Government Performance

Ms LINDA BURNEY (Canterbury) [3.29 p.m.]: I will paint a picture of the reasons my motion deserves priority. We have heard reports of a toxic battle of power between Ministers in this Government. The Deputy Premier is actively undermining the Attorney General; they are barely on speaking terms. We have heard reports that The Nationals are going to drop the Minister for Education for the hapless, struggling Minister for Skills.

Mr Andrew Fraser: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members that speakers seeking priority for their motions are limited to only three minutes. By agreement, there are to be no interruptions or points of order taken during this time.

Mr Andrew Fraser: My point of order is that the member for Canterbury is attacking the Deputy Premier of this State. If she wishes to do so, she should do so by way of substantive motion and not during a motion seeking priority.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Canterbury is entitled to do so as members from both sides of the Chamber have previously done in their motions seeking priority. There will be no further interruptions.

Ms LINDA BURNEY: The hospital system is under enormous pressure and overstretched. Patients have to wait in ambulances and emergency departments for hospital beds. Almost half of the patients in Western Sydney wait for more than four hours in emergency departments. Ambulances are lined up 13 deep at Liverpool hospital and 11 deep at Wyong and Gosford hospitals. TAFE as we know it is being completely destroyed by the Baird Government. Youth unemployment is at more than 12 per cent, yet fewer than 80,000 students are enrolled in TAFE, 11,500 fewer students with a disability and 3,000 fewer Aboriginal students. This year the Government botched the introduction of the new computer system at TAFE with the result that students could not enrol or graduate. Our TAFE campuses are being sold off.

The learning management and business reform [LMBR] project is another reason for my motion to be accorded priority. The LMBR impacts on every administrative process from enrolments to the payment of teachers. The project is \$90 million over budget and its delivery is months late, with no end in sight. To date, the Government has repeatedly refused requests to release any information on the total cost of the project. The Treasurer will not provide enhancement funding, so schools will have to raid their budgets to pay for this debacle.

In relation to transport, every month an average of 120 train stops are skipped. The Government has failed to repair the Hawkesbury River railway bridge and the cost of vandalism on the rail network has blown out to more than \$30 million. Transport NSW staff costs have blown out and the cost of private consultants is now at \$23.2 million. Let us look at the prison system, which the Minister for Corrections attempted to explain today. Prisons, including Kirkconnell and Grafton, have been closed and downsized. There is rampant overcrowding with triple bunking of prisoners and constant escapes. The corrections system is on its knees. For those reasons my motion deserves priority. There is a human story to be told about the failings of this Government. [*Time expired.*]

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

The House divided.

Ayes, 50

Mr Aplin
Mr Ayres
Mr Baird
Mr Barilaro
Ms Berejikian
Mr Brookes
Mr Conolly
Mr Constance
Mr Coure
Mr Crouch
Mrs Davies
Mr Dominello
Mr Elliott
Mr Evans
Mr Fraser
Mr Gee
Ms Gibbons

Ms Goward
Mr Grant
Mr Gulaptis
Mr Hazzard
Mr Henskens
Ms Hodgkinson
Mr Humphries
Mr Johnsen
Mr Kean
Dr Lee
Mr Maguire
Mr Marshall
Mr Notley-Smith
Mr O'Dea
Mrs Pavey
Mr Perrottet
Ms Petinos

Mr Piccoli
Mr Provest
Mr Rowell
Mr Sidoti
Mrs Skinner
Mr Speakman
Mr Stokes
Mr Taylor
Mr Toole
Mr Tudehope
Ms Upton
Mr Ward
Mr Williams
Mrs Williams
Tellers,
Mr Bromhead
Mr Patterson

Noes, 33

Ms Aitchison
Mr Barr
Ms Burney
Ms Car
Ms Catley
Mr Chanthivong
Mr Crakanthorp
Mr Dib
Ms Finn
Mr Foley
Mr Harris
Ms Harrison

Ms Hay
Ms Haylen
Mr Hoenig
Ms Hornery
Mr Kamper
Ms Leong
Mr Lynch
Dr McDermott
Ms McKay
Mr Mehan
Mr Minns
Mr Park

Mr Piper
Mr Robertson
Ms K. Smith
Ms T. Smith
Ms Washington
Ms Watson
Mr Zangari

Tellers,
Mr Lalich
Mr Warren

Pairs

Mr Anderson
Mr Roberts

Mr Atalla
Ms Doyle

Question resolved in the affirmative.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) [3.40 p.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that only with a strong economy can you build infrastructure and improve services across New South Wales.
- (2) Notes that after 16 years in Government and close to five years in Opposition, Labor and the Leader of the Opposition still have no plan for New South Wales.
- (3) Recognises that only a Liberals and Nationals Government can keep New South Wales number one.

The Coalition Government is investing billions of dollars in infrastructure over the next four years to cater for today's needs and to accommodate the opportunities of tomorrow's Sydney. If we look at WestConnex we see 33 kilometres of new and upgraded roads; with stage one to open to traffic in 2019. If we look at NorthConnex, which will open to traffic in 2019, we see the unclogging of Pennant Hills Road—labelled Australia's most congested traffic corridor. These great investments in road infrastructure are vital to improving the lives of working families in Western Sydney. If we can get parents home to their children even half an hour earlier every night we will be doing our job, because these are the tangible differences in the lives of everyday people that this Government is always looking to achieve in every policy that it adopts.

We are only able to undertake important investments such as these as a result of the strong budget that was handed down by Treasurer Berejiklian in June—because the foundation for any government expenditure is a strong economy that is thriving. We have already begun investment in roadworks to support the new Western Sydney airport. That is part of our commitment not just to building the airport that our city and region needs but also to building infrastructure to sustain it. Perhaps this Government's crowning achievement in infrastructure investment is the \$8.3 billion of expenditure going into the Sydney Metro Northwest. Around 80 per cent of tunnelling is complete and the construction of Skytrain is underway. Labor promised this in the 1990s. Labor promised it again in the 2000s.

Again, in the dying days of a government on its last legs, Labor promised it in 2010. To its credit, the Labor Government was very good at making promises—promises it did not fulfil. The Labor Government had no problem making a promise—policy on the run—if the Premier of the week thought Labor could win a vote on the back of it. The problem, though, was that Labor was very short on delivery. It has taken this Coalition Government, which has made New South Wales number one and which is intent on keeping it there, to deliver this vital infrastructure that will change the lives of so many people in the greater Western Sydney region, the north-western Sydney region and across this great State.

Nowhere has this Government changed lives more for the better than in the area of health under the leadership of the greatest health Minister that New South Wales has ever had—Jillian "The Builder" Skinner. More than \$5 billion of investment in health infrastructure is planned for this term alone, bringing total spending to \$10 billion over our two terms in government. At the centre of this is the \$900 million upgrade of Westmead Hospital. Just recently, I joined Premier Baird and Minister Skinner to reveal the new concept design behind stage one of the \$900 million Westmead Hospital redevelopment. It was great once again to visit the award-winning Westmead Millennium Institute for Medical Research, to view the overall design for the future Westmead Hospital precinct. As the Premier said:

The redevelopment will deliver a world-class health city that the growing population in Western Sydney deserves.

The new-look Westmead Hospital will start with the \$900 million stage one acute services building, which will house complex and critical-care services in a multistorey facility, including new state-of-the-art operating theatres, extra inpatient beds and a new emergency department. It will cater for adult and paediatric patients. More than 12,000 people work in or visit Westmead Hospital daily, and each one will benefit from this Government's investment. The first works are now underway on site, with critical

upgrades to power, water, gas and other essential services, and work will soon begin on the first stage of new car parking for patients, visitors and staff. Let us look at the alternative. Let us look at what Labor would rather have. Labor has opposed, at every step of the way, this Government's approach to building our city, to building our State. The Opposition opposed Rebuilding NSW. Perhaps the Opposition does have a plan. It just might. Its plan, in contrast to making New South Wales number one, is probably to make New South Wales number eight. Is there any wonder that the *Sydney Morning Herald* labelled Luke Foley's plan "embarrassingly inadequate"?

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) [3.45 p.m.]: On behalf of the Opposition I oppose this motion. I will start by pointing out some truths. The member for Seven Hills made some points which were untrue. When Labor left office in 2011, New South Wales had a triple-A credit rating. Between 1995 and 2011, the Labor Government continually handed down budget surpluses. In our last year of government alone, Labor created 108,000 jobs. In March 1995, when Labor came to government, the New South Wales unemployment rate was 8.2 per cent. When Labor left office in March 2011, the unemployment rate had gone down to 5 per cent. Labor got the unemployment rate as low as 4.5 per cent in January 2008. I bet this Government would love that unemployment rate.

As recently as September 2015, the New South Wales unemployment rate under this Government, which has been crowing about its supposed economic management skills, was 5.9 per cent. When Labor come to office the unemployment rate was 8.2 per cent; the rate went as low as 4.5 per cent under Labor, but now, under the Baird Government, the unemployment rate is 5.9 per cent. Youth unemployment across New South Wales is 12.8 per cent. In the areas around my electorate—in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie—the unemployment rate is 13.8 per cent. Across the Hunter Valley youth unemployment is 21.2 per cent. How the Government can claim that this makes the State number one, I have no idea.

This Government has cut \$1.7 billion from education and TAFE. It has no plan for good public transport. I will tell the House about Labor's track record on plans for public transport. Public transport projects that Labor completed include the Chatswood to Epping rail link, the Olympic Park rail link, and the Inner West Light Rail—Central to Lilyfield. Labor initiated the Dulwich Hill extension, the Rail Clearways project, the Parramatta to Rouse Hill T-way, the Parramatta to Liverpool T-way, and the Millennium and Waratah carriages. Labor introduced Metrobus services and cleaner compressed natural gas [CNG] vehicles in the bus fleet, and it commenced the south-west rail line, or the Sydney Metro City and Southwest rail line. We also completed the airport rail line. Although Mr Fahey decided he wanted to take the glory, Labor completed the airport rail line.

I now turn to what has been happening in the Hunter. Last week there was an announcement—a deceitful plan—to privatise Newcastle's public transport services. I will call it for what it is: The New South Wales Government will hand over control of Newcastle's buses, ferries and light rail to private operators. The Baird Government is walking away from a State-owned and managed integrated transport system in New South Wales' second city. The Baird Government uses the term "New South Wales' second city" to describe Newcastle. The Baird Government simply has thrown its hands in the air and said, "We just cannot do it. It is just too hard for us. It is too difficult for us as a government to do this, so we will just flog it off to a private operator for them to do whatever they want to do with it."

Part of last Thursday's announcement was that the plan was supposed to benefit the Hunter by creating integrated planning for transport. That is really good to hear from the Government because Labor announced a Hunter transport authority as part of its policy commitments during the March 2015 election. The Government can take the glory for Labor's policy announcements. That is fabulous: But it would have been nice if the Government had taken the policy to the election itself, rather than taking the glory for Labor's policy. The Government said nothing about privatising Hunter transport in the lead-up to the March 2015 election—absolutely nothing.

The Baird Government has pulled the wool over the eyes of the people who live in the Hunter. In

response to this Government's suggestion that it is "keeping New South Wales number one", everything I have said gives the lie to that suggestion. The Government's record compares unfavourably to Labor's economic track record, its unemployment levels, and the public transport that Labor built when in government for 16 years. What the current New South Wales Government has done in the past week is simply disgusting.

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) [3.50 p.m.]: What a load of codswallop we just heard from the member for Charlestown, if we believe everything that she said. The Labor Government had 16 years to deliver everything that Labor members claim to have done. The member for Charlestown referred to the south-west rail link being started on Labor's watch, but I was there and not a single centimetre of track was delivered by Labor whereas within two short years the Baird Government not only announced the Sydney Metro City and Southwest but also delivered it on time and under budget—something that Labor failed to do. For 16 years New South Wales was bogged down under the yoke of a stale and besmirched State Government. Those are the facts about Labor.

The Labor Government had no initiative, no ambition and no drive to make New South Wales a more efficient and business friendly State. I am pleased to commend to the House the motion for priority moved by the member for Seven Hills because the members of the Baird-Grant Government are the only ones who can deliver a strong budget, a thriving economy and infrastructure to get our State back on its feet and fighting. Over the last decade of Labor rule in New South Wales, our State experienced the lowest and most sluggish growth rates of any major State. New South Wales bore the burden of having the lowest job growth rates of any mainland State in the Commonwealth, the lowest business confidence of the mainland States and the slowest housing growth across the whole country. What infrastructure can be delivered when businesses are too afraid to come to our State? What infrastructure can be delivered if allowance cannot be made for sufficient homes to be built?

When Labor was removed from office in 2011, the Coalition marched in and fixed Labor's \$5.2 billion gap in the budget across the forward estimates. The Grant-Baird Government has achieved a lot and has got on with the job. Over the past year alone, the current Government fought to provide a budget surplus of \$2.9 billion and has provided budget surpluses for each year ahead in the forward estimates. That has resulted in consumer confidence in New South Wales being ranked in excess of the national average for 12 of the past 13 months. New South Wales has achieved retail sales growth above the national average for the past 25 months in a row, and the State's unemployment rate has been below the national rate of unemployment for the past 23 consecutive months.

All that this Government has done has resulted in the creation since 2011 of 250,000 jobs—which Labor members want to destroy—and 61,057 building approvals across our State. The Opposition has not presented any alternatives to managing the State's economy but merely makes unsubstantiated claims over and over during question time and during debates such as this, and wants to play backdoor politics. The current New South Wales Government wants to get on with the job. The Premier, the Deputy Premier and the State's fantastic Cabinet team are getting on with the job of delivering for our communities. That is what good governments do. That is what our communities expect, and that is what our communities deserve.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) [3.53 p.m.]: What a disgrace—what an absolute disgrace! In my community, youth unemployment is more than 21 per cent yet this lot of grinning goons has the temerity to exhibit a disgraceful lack of any integrity by talking about infrastructure and a strong economy—as if they would know anything at all about it. They are a disgrace. After five years of this Government, this lot has failed to deliver in my electorate. The hospital would have created more jobs if it had been commenced by now, and not just jobs in the Government's stupid Cran-O-Meter but jobs in building; actual jobs, and on-the-ground, long-term ongoing jobs. That is what Government members are ruining. The Cran-O-Meter you guys need to do is measure your brain cells because it seems you have none. You have no ideas and no plans.

All this Government has done is send Minister Constance up to the Hunter to destroy the region's public transport with his fake integration plan. How can the Government achieve integration when heavy rail is not included in it? The plan shows no integration with heavy rail, private bus operators in the region, the public or with any kind of transport service. The plan is all about a Newcastle-centric solution, which is a private solution. You guys should be ashamed of yourselves for letting Minister Constance loose in the Hunter. We all know that he is doing one of those little "look over here" tricks that Minister Constance is so good at. Take for example the mobility lift at the East Maitland station. The day that the Government approved the plan to cut the rail line, Minister Constance was saying, "Look at me, look at me instead! We're going to give you a lift for the disabled", just like Berejiklian and Robyn Parker said. This is what you guys are all about, is it not—just smoke and mirrors? "Look over here! Don't see that we're selling off your public transport." It is an absolute disgrace.

Mr Ray Williams: Point of order: The member for Maitland should refer to members by their correct titles.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! I am having difficulty hearing the member for Castle Hill. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Ray Williams: My point of order is that the member for Maitland should refer to members by their appropriate titles.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! I uphold the point of order.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: My apologies. The former Minister for Transport, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, and the former member for Maitland, the Hon. Robyn Parker, promised the installation of a lift for disabled people on previous occasions, and that is exactly the same as what happened recently. The Hunter public transport authority will be the Newcastle public transport authority. It will not serve the people of the Hunter. There are people in my electorate who cannot afford to buy a car and they will not be able to afford public transport under the Government's plan. That is a disgrace!

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! I respect that some members have not been members of this House for very long. However, I ask the member for Maitland to ensure that on the next occasion she makes a contribution to debate in this House she directs her comments through the Chair. Not once during her contribution did she recognise the Chair or direct her comments through the Chair; rather, her comments were made to members directly across the Chamber, which usually provokes more interjecting than occurred on this occasion. I ask the member for Maitland to remember to direct her comments through the Chair on the next occasion she contributes to debate.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) [3.57 p.m.], in reply: First, I thank the member for Wollondilly for his contribution. I also thank the member for Charlestown for her contribution and the member for Maitland for her passionate contribution. Lest I leave the House in any doubt as to why I commend this motion I will list the endorsements given to the Leader of the Opposition by all parts of the media spectrum. The member for Wollondilly and I need not tell people that the member for Auburn and Labor have absolutely no plan for New South Wales. Let us take an objective assessment. A *Sydney Morning Herald* editorial on WestConnex on 2 March 2015 stated:

—in an embarrassingly inadequate response—Labor will not be drawn on where those tunnels should emerge. Refusing to engage on the detail is a fudge Sydney residents know too well.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* on 20 February 2015 stated:

There is nothing in the positions unveiled by Opposition Leader Luke Foley to suggest the party has spent much of the past four years giving serious thought to how to make Sydney or NSW better places to move around. ... What was Labor's vision? Less of the same.

The *Daily Telegraph* editorial on 20 February 2015 stated:

To call the Foley policy Swiss cheese was an insult to dairy products. ... It's difficult to see how the L-plater leader can sell this lemon with any authority for the next six weeks.

The *Australian* on 20 February 2015 stated:

[Foley's announcement] turned into a train wreck. ... Luke Foley looked like an opposition leader on training wheels as he was caught short on detail. ... Foley looked a lot like old Labor except he's shortcutting process—he's cancelling the projects upfront.

The people of New South Wales deserve a strong economy so their State Government can make critical investments in key infrastructure projects. I commend the motion to the House.

Question—That the motion be agreed to—put.

The House divided.

Ayes, 48

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

Noes, 32

Ms Aitchison	Ms Hay	Mr Robertson
Mr Barr	Ms Haylen	Ms K. Smith
Ms Burney	Mr Hoenig	Ms T. F. Smith
Ms Car	Ms Hornery	Ms Washington
Ms Catley	Mr Kamper	Ms Watson
Mr Chanthivong	Ms Leong	Mr Zangari
Mr Crakanthorp	Mr Lynch	
Mr Dib	Dr McDermott	
Ms Finn	Ms McKay	
Mr Greenwich	Mr Mehan	<i>Tellers,</i>

Mr Harris
Ms Harrison

Mr Minns
Mr Park

Mr Lulich
Mr Warren

Pairs

Mr Anderson
Mr Roberts
Mr Sidoti

Mr Atalla
Mr Daley
Mr Foley

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Motion agreed to.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): I welcome to the gallery the Kingwills from Adjungbilly, guests of the Parliamentary Secretary and member for Cootamundra.

Pursuant to sessional order Government business proceeded with.

CONVEYANCING AMENDMENT (SUNSET CLAUSES) BILL 2015

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Victor Dominello, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) [4.08 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Conveyancing Amendment (Sunset Clauses) Bill 2015. This bill has been introduced on an urgent basis to counter the conduct of some developers using the sunset clause in off the plan contracts to disadvantage purchasers. The growth and strength of the New South Wales economy in the past four years has led to an increase in demand for housing, particularly in Sydney. This has caused a marked rise in the number of off the plan contracts. An off the plan contract is one where the parcel of land or the unit being sold does not exist at the time the contract is entered into. Land can be sold before the developer has finished constructing roads and installing services. Contracts for the sale of a strata unit can be exchanged before the building is completed, well before the strata plan is drawn, approved and registered. In these cases the purchaser is not buying an asset that can be seen and inspected. Instead, the purchaser is buying an idea that relies on the terms of the contract, and the goodwill and expertise of the developer to complete.

To guarantee the sale the purchaser will pay a deposit, which is normally 10 per cent of the purchase price. The purchaser then waits for the unit to be constructed or the land to be developed. An important feature of most off the plan contracts is the sunset clause, which allows either the vendor or purchaser to rescind and terminate their contractual obligations if the development is not completed by a specified date. The sunset clause has important benefits for both parties. It prevents a purchaser being tied to the contract indefinitely and allows a developer to end the arrangement if they cannot proceed due to factors beyond their control. However, the rise in the property market has seen increased reports of developers using the clause to obtain an unjust enrichment at the expense of homebuyers.

There has been an increased incidence of developers delaying projects until the sunset date is

reached. The developer can then rescind the contract and resell the property, sometimes for hundreds of thousands of dollars more. The purchaser will eventually have their deposit returned, but they lose any capital appreciation their lot has accrued. In addition, they are prevented from purchasing another property while their funds are tied up in the developer's hands. Whether a developer is entitled to rescind the contract will depend on the contract terms, the reason for the delay and the extent to which the developer has acted reasonably. But to test these factors the purchaser must take court action.

As well as being costly and time consuming, the purchaser must prove the delay was unreasonable based on facts they are not able to access readily. The prospect of protracted litigation is often too daunting for purchasers so the actions of the developer remain unchallenged. I have heard from many people affected by this practice whose dream of home ownership is now out of reach. The rise in property prices since their original purchase, combined with legal costs, has meant raising another deposit is no longer possible. I recently met with a group of purchasers of off the plan apartments in Wollie Creek who had their contracts rescinded. Many of these people were first home buyers who have spent more than five years waiting and fighting in court for their homes.

To fully understand the magnitude of this problem the Government launched an online survey on off the plan sales in September. Some 639 responses were received, which equated to more than 30 every day. That is a record for this type of survey. During this process it became clear that urgent action was required and that the solution must assist purchasers in current contracts under immediate threat of losing their home. Following this consultation I held a roundtable with industry and other stakeholders to develop a solution. I thank all those involved in this process, including: the Australian Bankers Association; the Estate Agents Co-operative; the Housing Industry Association [HIA]; the Owners Corporation Network [OCN]; the Australian Institute of Conveyancers; the Property Council; the Real Estate Institute of NSW; the Law Society; the Urban Taskforce; and the Urban Development Institute of Australia [UDIA]. Their participation has allowed for the swift introduction of this bill, providing certainty and confidence to homebuyers and the housing sector.

This bill will protect purchasers by allowing developers to rescind a contract only when the sunset date is reached and requiring the Supreme Court to review the circumstances to make sure the rescission is just and equitable in all the circumstances. The bill inserts a new provision in the Conveyancing Act 1919, which, with its attendant regulations, is the main piece of legislation governing conveyancing in New South Wales. "Off the plan contract" is defined as a contract for the sale of a residential lot that has not been created at the time the contract is entered into. A lot is created when the plan that defines the lot has been lodged and registered by the Registrar General.

A sunset clause is a provision in a contract that allows the contract to be rescinded if the lot being sold has not been created by a specified date. The legislation will apply to residential property only. It will be applicable to the sale of both strata units and lots in a proposed land subdivision. New section 66ZL lists the circumstances under which a vendor can use a sunset clause to rescind a contract and sets the procedure that must be followed. Before any proposed rescission the vendor must serve a notice on the purchaser that sets out the reasons and provides an explanation for the delay. The notice must be given at least 28 days before the proposed rescission. This notice period gives purchasers time to consider their position. It will provide information that will help them assess whether the vendor has acted reasonably or whether the vendor's actions have been arbitrary and capricious.

The vendor will only be entitled to rescind an off the plan contract under a sunset clause if the purchasers give their consent or if the rescission was required because of a reason set out in the regulations. In any other circumstance the vendor will have to approach the Supreme Court for an order that will be made only if the court is satisfied that the rescission is just and equitable in all the circumstances. What the court is to take into account when deciding whether the rescission was just and equitable is set out in new section 66ZL (7). These include: the terms of the contract, whether the vendor has acted unreasonably or in bad faith, the reason for the delay, the likely date that the plan will be registered and the lot created, whether the lot has increased in value—and I stress the importance of this

feature in the legislation—the effect on the purchaser of the rescission, and any other matter that the court deems relevant or that may be prescribed by the regulations.

This new regime does not arbitrarily intrude into existing contractual arrangements or impose an unusual obligation on vendors. Rather, it reinforces existing consumer law as well as accepted common law and equitable principles. At the centre of this bill is our resolve to prevent a developer from manufacturing delays to obtain an unjust benefit. This reform will ensure that developers are unable to benefit unjustly at the expense of homebuyers through the use of a sunset clause. It is accepted that in seeking to rescind a contract a vendor must not act arbitrarily or capriciously or unreasonably. New section 66ZL supports these equitable principles by removing any incentive a vendor may have to manipulate the progress of a development, in a manner not available to the purchaser, to take advantage of windfall profits in a rising market.

Importantly, the court will consider any rise in value of the lot from the original purchase price. If the value of the lot has increased significantly, the exercise of the sunset clause is prima facie unfair. In these cases the developer has received an unjust benefit in the form of the lot's capital appreciation at the expense of the purchaser. This is an important measure to prevent developers using manufactured or false delays to justify an intention to rescind to the court. The notice provisions and the need to obtain a purchaser's consent will also encourage better communication between the parties. If it is clear that a development will not be finalised or will take significantly longer to complete than predicted, purchasers are unlikely to want to remain tied to the contract with their deposit lying dormant.

If the developer has acted reasonably, rescission of a contract in these circumstances should be in the interests of both parties. The consent of the purchaser should be obtained easily. It is only where the rescission is dubious that a need should arise for court action. Under this legislation, in these questionable cases it is the vendor who will be required to go to court to justify their actions rather than the purchaser being forced to take action to prevent an injustice. To further even the balance of power between the parties, the vendor developer will be liable to pay the purchaser's costs of the proceedings unless it can be shown that the purchaser's refusal to consent to the rescission was unreasonable.

It is important to note that this bill does not affect any rights of the purchaser. The purchaser will be able to exercise whatever rescission rights they had under their existing contract. One final important feature of the bill is the date on which it will take effect. The bill will apply to any rescission purported to have been made from the date that I announced this legislation would be brought before Parliament. That date was 2 November 2015. The effects of the bill's transitional provisions mean that no rescission made by a vendor on or after 2 November 2015 will have been made in accordance with the contract unless the required notice was served on the purchaser and the rescission otherwise complied with new section 66ZL.

This retrospective provision is the strongest protection the Government can provide for homebuyers. It prevents any developers from rushing to use a sunset clause on existing contracts to obtain an unjust benefit over purchasers. It is for this reason I bring this bill to the House as a matter of urgency. We have heard about the plight of homebuyers, consulted with industry and responded to this matter swiftly and strongly. This bill provides purchasers with the utmost confidence to buy land or property off the plan in New South Wales. It will also ensure that developers doing the right thing can access the finance they need to get projects off the ground. The response I have received to this bill has been overwhelming. I recently met with Simon Hill, who, along with a group of other purchasers, had his contract for a land package in Kellyville rescinded. Upon hearing the announcement, Mr Hill wrote to me and said:

I cannot thank you enough for acting so quickly on this. My wife and I had resolved to the fact that we were going to lose our dream as we could not afford a lengthy court battle, you have given us hope.

The Owners Corporation Network, the peak body representing residential strata owners and residents, has expressed its support and said:

The Owners Corporation Network is delighted that off-the-plan purchasers in NSW will soon be afforded protection against profiteering developers.

The broader development industry has also endorsed this important reform. Stephen Albin, Chief Executive Officer of the Urban Development Institute of Australia, stated:

We are pleased to see the Minister has been swift in his efforts to close this loophole as the behaviour of a few unethical developers needs to be stopped.

This bill is a strong first step in tackling the off the plan property market, but it is not the last. There have been reports of developers substantially altering a proposed development after contracts have been exchanged. One-bedroom apartments have become studios, and lot sizes have been reduced substantially so that more units can be squeezed onto the site. There have also been complaints about the length of contracts and the one-sided terms that unfairly favour developers. In the rush to exchange contracts, there is often no time for a purchaser to consider the contract properly and negotiate more favourable terms. The Government fully recognises these concerns. This bill does not end the Government's resolve to improve this important sector of the market.

Off the plan contracts are critical for our construction industry to thrive and for our record housing starts to continue. They allow developers to commence projects and provide our State with the housing we need. It is the entrepreneurial developers that help to accommodate our expanding population and keep the economy generating jobs and opportunity. Therefore, next year the Government will look at issues like disclosure, standard terms and cooling-off periods to provide both clarity and certainty in the marketplace. This legislation will give certainty to the conveyancing process and operate as a consumer protection for purchasers in the increasingly crowded residential property market.

This bill is a great example of the Government, community and industry coming together to bring enduring benefits to New South Wales. I am confident this reform will protect homebuyers and deliver a stronger, more sustainable development industry. I thank the affected purchasers, industry members and other stakeholders for bringing this issue to the Government's attention and for working together to develop a solution. I also thank Leanne Hughes and Tony Booth from Land and Property Information, and Matt Dawson and Martin Gray from my office for their efforts in developing this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

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

CENTENARY OF ANZAC

Debate resumed from 29 October 2015.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) [4.24 p.m.]: It is an honour to speak about the centenary of Anzac. In 2013 I had the great pleasure of visiting Fromelles, the site of a terrible battle, and the local war cemetery. Thoughts of the difficulties faced by those who fought still haunt me. Young men from across New South Wales—some only 14 or 15 years old—embarked on ships and sailed across the seas not knowing what was ahead of them. They had minimal training; they were thrown a rifle and a backpack and sent off to one of the bloodiest battles ever fought. I recall hearing about naked mole-rats, which are the size of a large rat, gnawing on soldiers. The bodies of fallen soldiers were lying in the trenches beside the live soldiers and these creatures would help themselves to both the living and the dead. The soldiers were up to their knees in mud and were fighting, eating and sleeping in atrocious conditions.

We owe these people a huge debt. We sent our young from villages, towns and cities across Australia to fight in the First World War, which was supposed to be the war to end all wars. Unfortunately, as history tells us, it was not the last conflict. Young Australians bravely went across the seas to fight for King and country. Some of them marched a long way to recruitment centres. Illawarra men marched from as far south as Nowra to Sydney, and congregated at a camp in Sutherland, in my electorate, prior to marching to the city and off to war. There is a marked difference in the attitude of the young people of today. Unlike our young forebears, who blindly marched off to war, not many of today's 14-year-olds would volunteer to leave mum and dad for an unknown war zone. It was a simpler time, but war now has no allure. Of course, those young men came from far and wide, having left their mums, dads and families, to fight for Australia and to make it a better place.

Our commemoration of the centenary of the First World War has focused our minds on what our forebears went through. I have also been involved in commemorating the contribution that the teachers of this State made to the war effort. About 350 teachers from Sydney were lost in the First World War. I went to Bridge Street with a constituent of mine who has been trying to compile a history of teachers who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the war. We lost some of our brightest, though not necessarily the youngest, teachers, including TAFE teachers; people who were teaching our youth.

They left our shores—signed up and went to war without question. We are also trying to have a proper commemoration board erected at Ultimo TAFE to recognise these brave souls. Although Bridge Street has several commemoration boards, TAFE teachers did not get a memorial board so we are attempting to have one erected and also to make a special place of commemoration at Ultimo TAFE. I could speak all day on this subject, and I would love at some stage to reiterate my comments on the people from my electorate who gave their lives, but I will leave it there.

Debate adjourned, by leave, on motion by Mr Lee Evans and set down as an order of the day for a later hour.

CRIMES AMENDMENT (OFF-ROAD FATAL ACCIDENTS) BILL 2015

Second Reading

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Attorney General) [4.30 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015 is to ensure that police have adequate powers to arrest drivers to collect evidence of intoxication where a motor vehicle accident results in a fatality or a near fatality and where the accident took place off-road. Members of this House will remember the tragic deaths of Eliza Wannan and William Dalton-Brown in a motor vehicle accident on 27 January 2010. The accident occurred in a paddock on private property near Molong. The deaths of Eliza and William are a tragedy for their families and their community. The report of the Deputy State Coroner into their deaths did not make formal recommendations, but highlighted the limitations of the current law where a fatal motor vehicle incident occurs on private property.

The Wannan, Brown and Dalton families have suffered immense grief and loss due to the deaths of these wonderful young people. This Government takes the issues raised by these incidents very seriously. In response to the limitations raised by the Deputy State Coroner in her report, the Government had the current laws reviewed by the Hon. William Windeyer, an eminent former Justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Mr Windeyer was asked to review the offences that apply when a fatality results from a motor vehicle accident on private property and to advise on whether current laws should be reformed.

The review undertaken by Mr Windeyer is a matter that I have been considering closely since

being appointed Attorney General in April this year. After receiving the report from Justice Windeyer, I have had several meetings with him to discuss his recommendations. Having undertaken a comprehensive review of the current offences, speaking to key stakeholders and family members—including during my visit to Orange some weeks ago—and considering the laws in other States and Territories, Mr Windeyer concluded, as I have, that no new offence should be created here in New South Wales.

Recently I have continued to be in contact with and, as I said, met with family members who have been affected by this tragic accident that took place a number of years ago. The circumstances in which these young peoples' deaths occurred are truly sad. To sit and talk with those families was a humbling experience. Their families have suffered the indescribable loss of their young children who had limitless potential and sparkles in their eyes, who were of a similar age to the children of many members of this House. Eliza and William having had their lives—their prospects, their opportunity and their optimism—taken from them in the prime of their youth is a tragedy.

While Mr Windeyer did not recommend the creation of a new offence as part of his review, as noted by the Deputy State Coroner, there are limitations with the existing laws. Currently under the Road Transport Act 2013 police powers to arrest accident participants for alcohol and drug testing following a fatal motor accident are limited to accidents that occur on a "road". In that Act a reference to a "road" also includes a "road related area". A "road related area" includes areas near roads, such as footpaths or median strips, or areas open to or used by the public, such as a car park. A "road" and "road related area" generally does not include private property. It is not always obvious whether a motor vehicle accident site is on a road or road-related area at the time of a fatal accident. Therefore, it may be unclear whether blood and urine samples can be taken under the Road Transport Act. To remove this uncertainty, the Government is proposing to amend the law.

The amendment bill will change the law so that police will have the power to arrest a driver involved in a fatal or likely to be fatal motor vehicle accident to require drug and alcohol testing, regardless of where that accident occurs—both on a road or road-related area and off road, including private property. This is a significant improvement to the current system as it removes any issues for police arising from uncertainty about the road status at the site of a motor vehicle incident that has resulted in or is likely to result in a fatality. The change will provide police with the power to arrest drivers involved in a fatality or likely fatality so that samples are able to be collected, which may then be used as evidence if the driver is charged with dangerous driving occasioning death.

Let me be clear to the House that this amendment is a measured approach—after great consideration on my part—that will give police clearer investigative powers in relation to fatal accidents occurring on private property, enabling police to gather crucial evidence without having to turn their mind to whether the accident occurred on a road. This amendment bill does not introduce any new offences or additional powers of entry for police. Similarly, this bill does not change the existing random breath testing or roadside drug testing powers. Those powers will continue to be exercised only on a "road" or "road related area". The amendments in this bill will apply in cases where there is tragic loss of life. This amendment will give police the power to arrest drivers and require samples to be collected from those drivers involved in accidents that result in a fatality, or are likely to result in a fatality, regardless of whether the crash occurs on a road or any other place.

I turn to the details of the bill. Schedule 1 amends the Crimes Act 1900. Items [1] and [2] of schedule 1 make amendments to section 52AA of the Crimes Act 1900 that deals with procedural matters concerning the dangerous driving offences. The amendments will remove the definition of "road" and the term "occurring at a place that is not a road" as these will no longer be required as a result of the related amendments proposed to be made by schedule 2. Schedule 2 amends the Road Transport Act 2013. Item [1] makes a consequential amendment. Item [2] inserts a definition of "accident" and "accident participant" after clause 12 (5) in schedule 3. This will remove the existing distinction between on-road and off-road fatal accidents in relation to police powers to arrest a driver for drug and alcohol testing. This

is an important amendment that provides greater certainty to police when investigating fatal motor accidents off road. The Government and all members of this House offer our deepest sympathies and condolences and our heartfelt wishes to the families of Eliza Wannan and William Dalton-Brown. I trust that members of this House will lend their support to this important bill.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) [4.40 p.m.]: I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015. I assure the Attorney General that the Opposition does not oppose the bill. As the Attorney General said, it is important to remember the circumstances that have led to the bill coming before the House. In January 2010 Eliza Wannan and William Dalton-Brown were sleeping in a swag when they were killed by a 17-year-old L-plate driver who accidentally reversed over them in a paddock near Orange in the State's Central West. As I speak to the bill, my thoughts and those of Opposition members are with the family and friends of Eliza and William. While the bill may not bring them closure, I hope that, in part, it gives them a sense that things have been made right.

I attempted to access the Deputy State Coroner's findings on their deaths but the Coroner's Court website link was not working. I will do my best to paraphrase Deputy Coroner Sharon Freund's findings on this matter. In summary, she found that 17-year-old Rhys Colefax was an unattended L-plate driver who was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the accident. She also found that in order for Colefax to be charged with driving offences the accident had to occur on a road or road-related area. He did not face prosecution because the accident occurred in a paddock or on a rural property. The bill seeks to amend that anomaly. The Attorney General and the Minister in the other place have captured well the events that have led to this bill. The bill, as the Attorney General outlined, amends the Road Transport Act and the Crimes Act to enable police to arrest a driver involved in a fatal or likely to be fatal motor accident and to test the driver for drug and alcohol use regardless of where the accident occurs. The object of the bill is:

- (a) to extend the existing powers of police to arrest and test any participant in a fatal road accident for alcohol and drug use (which currently apply only to accidents on roads) to motor vehicle accidents that occur off-road,
- (b) to make related amendments to the procedural provisions dealing with the evidence of intoxication in proceedings for dangerous driving offences under the *Crimes Act 1900*.

As we have heard, police powers to arrest drivers for alcohol and drug testing following a fatal motor vehicle accident are limited to accidents that occur on a road or road-related area. As the Attorney General has outlined, there is confusion as to what "road or road-related area" means. The Government has not sought to change the existing random breath or roadside drug testing powers. The Opposition supports the Government in that regard. In addressing the House on the bill, it is timely to mention the terrible number of road accident deaths in New South Wales. Whatever the Government is doing it is not working. This year there has been a 13 per cent increase in the number of deaths on our roads.

Passenger deaths have increased by 53 per cent and the most dramatic increase has been amongst men, who accounted for 22 additional deaths between 2014 and 2015 compared with the previous year. While the bill will not change that situation, it is an important peripheral change in the law. The events of 2010 tragically impacted on three families. I extend my sincere condolences and those of Opposition members to the families of Eliza and William and I recognise the life-changing impact of this tragedy on Rhys Colefax. He made a terrible decision, which he will carry for the rest of his life. There is only sadness in this story. I acknowledge the member for Orange, Andrew Gee, who has advocated for these changes. I thank him for representing his community. The Opposition does not oppose the bill.

Mr ANDREW GEE (Orange—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.44 p.m.]: I support the Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015. As has been noted, the purpose of the bill is to ensure that police have adequate powers to collect evidence relating to alcohol and drug use in motor vehicle crashes that result in a fatality, no matter where the crash has occurred. The legislation arises following

the shocking and tragic deaths of Eliza Wannan and Will Dalton-Brown on 27 January 2010. The incident that took their lives occurred on a property near Molong in the Orange electorate. Will and Eliza were much loved by their families, friends and communities. They were young people, 19 years of age, with their whole lives in front of them. In her report, the deputy coroner stated that existing legislation does not currently create an offence for negligent driving that occurs on a road or a road-related area, which is basically private property.

Retired Supreme Court Justice the Hon. Mr Windeyer was commissioned by the Government to review the legislation, and he did so in a thorough fashion. He concluded that no new offence should be created. His reasons are set out clearly in his report. I acknowledge the compassion and sensitivity he showed when preparing his report. This legislation aims to remove any ambiguity that may exist about the powers of police to test drivers for alcohol and drugs following a fatal car accident. The ambiguity concerns what is a "road or road-related area", which encapsulates the current scope of the power to carry out a drug or alcohol test under the Road Transport Act 2013. To remove any real or perceived ambiguity, the bill will enable police to arrest a driver for the purpose of drug or alcohol testing wherever a motor vehicle accident occurs if the accident is fatal or likely to be fatal.

Eliza's parents, Mr and Mrs Wannan, and Will's mother, Leigh Dalton, reside in the Orange area. Will's father resides in south-western New South Wales. Mr and Mrs Wannan and Ms Dalton are highly respected members of the Orange community. I have been moved by their dignity and the way in which they have conducted themselves in the aftermath of this shocking tragedy. I support this legislation. Mr Wannan has also expressed to me that clarifying any real or perceived ambiguity in the existing law relating to drug or alcohol testing is a positive contribution in these circumstances. Ms Dalton, a highly regarded solicitor, does not feel there is a need for law reform and that all that is warranted is having the existing law applied properly.

I have spoken to both families and the passing of this legislation does not represent a closure for them. The feelings of grief, devastation and loss arising from the passing of Will and Eliza remain to this day. I do not think they will ever be diminished. Their parents nurtured these young adults for 19 years. Will and Eliza had completed school and were about to commence the next phase of their young lives. They were lives filled with the hope and optimism of youth and they were undertaking that journey with the love and support of their parents and families. All of that was taken away in the most tragic, shocking and appalling circumstances on 26 January 2010. I know the grief that Will and Eliza's families feel is a heavy weight and is still raw.

While the two families may have differing opinions on the necessity of this legislation, one issue unites them. The Hon. Mr Windeyer set out in section 6 of his report that both families continue to ask how it is that two young people could be killed in these awful circumstances without there being any apparent consequences at law. A great deal of consideration and work has gone into the drafting of this bill. I thank all the relevant Ministers and their staff for their efforts over an extended period. I particularly thank the Hon. Duncan Gay and his office for their hard work. I also thank all members of this House and the other place for their bipartisan support of this legislation. While I commend this bill to the House, it is with a profound sense of sadness that I do so.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) [4.49 p.m.]: On behalf of The Greens, I indicate our support for the Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015. I commend the Government, the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and the member for Orange. There would not be a member in this or in the other place whose heart does not go out to the two families of Eliza and William, who died as a result of a tragic accident. The Greens note the objects of the bill. Following careful legal discussion about the best way to resolve this matter, this legislation will ensure that in the future no-one will avoid prosecution because of ambiguity in the law.

As the Minister made clear in his second reading speech and as the Opposition noted, this bill comes about as a result of a tragedy. Mr Jeremy Buckingham, a Greens member in the other place, was

a long-term resident of Orange and was acquainted with the Wannan and Dalton-Brown families. As someone who has lived in remote and rural New South Wales and elsewhere in Australia, I know that such a tragedy affects many people. I am sure it is the wish of all members of this Parliament that if a person is killed as a result of a motor vehicle accident or it is likely that a person will die within 30 days of an accident police should be able to access blood alcohol and drug samples to test whether the driver was impaired, and if impairment is found to charge the driver with dangerous driving occasioning death. Police should have that power. I am glad the Government has introduced this bill. The Greens commend the bill to the House.

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) [4.51 p.m.]: I support the Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015. The bill amends the Crimes Act 1900 and the Road Transport Act 2003 to provide police with the power to arrest a driver for the purpose of undertaking an alcohol or drug test where there is a fatal motor vehicle accident, or the accident is likely to result in a fatality, that has occurred on or off road, including on private property. This is an extremely important step forward in road safety. Our Parliament must stand behind and support our police as they protect our drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. This bill is about empowering police and allowing them to make tough judgement decisions in protecting our roads. The impact of this bill will be enormous.

In circumstances where a motor vehicle accident results in a fatality or likely fatality on private property, police will have the power to arrest the driver in order to test for drug and alcohol use, the evidence of which may be used to support a prosecution if the driver has been charged with dangerous driving under the Crimes Act. Currently, the Road Transport Act restricts the power of arrest to drivers of vehicles that are driven on a road. The existing law necessitates a court order to test the driver for alcohol or drug use. The amendments in the bill are to section 12 of schedule 3 to the Road Transport Act 2013 to insert a new definition of "accident" and "accident participant", as well as to section 52AA of the Crimes Act 1900, which deals with procedural matters concerning dangerous driving offences. The bill is necessary in order to both curb the number of death on our roads and empower police so that they can adequately protect our roads and drivers.

In January 2010 two young people tragically lost their lives in a motor vehicle accident on a private property near Orange. The member for Orange spoke in detail about the accident. The driver was not charged with any offence under the Road Transport Act or the Crimes Act. The Deputy State Coroner noted that there were significant limitations to the current law where fatal motor vehicle accidents occur on private property. To explore and better understand these cases of tragic and avoidable loss of life, the Government appointed former Justice Windeyer to review the sufficiency of existing offences relating to fatal car accidents on private land. Mr Windeyer did not recommend the creation of a new offence for motor vehicle accidents that occurred on private land. However, it is the Government's intention to make it clear that police have the power to test motor vehicle drivers on private land where a fatal accident has occurred or a fatality is likely occur.

The Government proposes to amend the Road Transport Act and the Crimes Act to enable police to arrest a driver in an accident on or off road to test for drug and alcohol usage. The intention is for this legislation to further dissuade the public from driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol, and to protect our State's roads. According to Transport NSW, about 30 people a day in New South Wales are hospitalised as a result of car accidents. From 2005 to 2013, more than 104,000 people were seriously injured in car crashes in New South Wales. In 2013 alone, road fatalities cost our community \$2.4 billion, while serious injuries cost \$3.4 billion. Both our State and Federal governments have achieved a great deal in reducing fatalities on our roads. We have reduced road deaths from 28.9 per 100,000 in 1970 to 4.1 deaths per 100,000 in 2014. This is an amazing achievement. We now have fewer deaths on our roads per capita than we did in 1908. Our Government is committed to driving down the number of deaths even further. The Government is committed to safe roads, and I am proud to be a member of a Coalition Government that has achieved so much in road safety. In order to continue this amazing decline in annual road deaths we must look further afield, and that is why the Government has introduced this bill.

It would be remiss of me if I did not remind the House of an event that is held each year, the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. I represent an electorate of approximately 3,500 square kilometres and two shires, Wollondilly shire and Wingecarribee shire. In Wollondilly shire there are 800 kilometres of roads, 700 kilometres sealed and 100 kilometres unsealed. An unfortunate part of my job is to be informed of all road fatalities, and there have been far too many over the past decade or so. The New South Wales Government has got on with the job and upgraded many roads in my electorate and has provided assistance to councils for roadworks. The Government has spent \$52 million to upgrade Picton Road and many millions of dollars have been spent on the Appin Road. The Government has just announced funding of \$5 million to install six sets of traffic lights at the intersection of the Hume Highway and Picton Road. Unfortunately, deaths have occurred at this intersection on a regular basis—in fact, there have been 45 crash incidents in the past couple of years. That is far too many.

Every year in Wollondilly we commemorate the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims at Picton Botanical Gardens. It is an event that brings our community together. We support one another; we are a very caring community. The event reminds us of the fragility of life, the importance of road safety and the impact of the loss of lives. Each year I meet some amazing families, but I do so in unfortunate circumstances. I meet parents who have lost their children in car accidents. I met one young gentleman who had been in a car accident. Luckily, he survived but he will never be able to walk again. The accident has had a great impact on the life of that 20-year-old man, but he is inspiring. He visits all the high schools in Wollondilly shire to talk to teenagers about the importance of driving safely and that they must not drink and drive. He relates to them his experience of his injuries. I know that he has had a great impact on the young people in the Wollondilly shire.

The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims is commemorated on the third Sunday of November every year to remember the many millions killed and injured on the world's roads as well as their families and friends and many others who are also affected. It also serves as a day on which we thank the emergency services. We reflect on the tremendous burden and cost of this daily, continuing disaster to families, communities and countries and on ways to halt the devastation. Road deaths and injuries are sudden, violent, traumatic events. The impact is long lasting and often permanent. Each year millions of newly injured and aggrieved people from every corner of the world are added to the countless millions who suffer already. The cumulative toll is truly tremendous.

The grief and distress experienced by that huge number of people are all the greater because many of the victims are young and because many of the crashes should have been, and could have been, prevented. Governments need to respond to that. I encourage anybody who may be listening to this debate or who is present in the Chamber, including all members of Parliament who take this issue seriously, to attend awareness-raising events and get to know the families who contribute so much while bearing their grief and loss. Those families assist greatly in preventing accidents. The Government's work and this bill are truly important. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) [5.00 p.m.]: The object of the Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015 is to amend the Road Transport Act and the Crimes Act to provide the NSW Police Force with the necessary powers to arrest drivers and collect evidence of intoxication relating to alcohol and drugs when a motor vehicle crash results in a fatality. Presently, the police have powers only to arrest and collect evidence of intoxication relating to alcohol and drugs when an accident occurs on a public road. This legislation will confer power upon the police to take the appropriate action no matter where an accident takes place.

Many members will recall that in January 2010 17-year-old Rhys Colefax accidentally reversed over two 19-year-olds, Eliza Wannan and William Dalton-Brown, on a private property while driving unattended as a L-plate driver and while under the influence of alcohol. Due to loopholes within the legislation, Colefax could not be prosecuted for the tragic deaths of Eliza and William Dalton-Brown. The Director of Public Prosecutions noted that that loophole does not exist in Queensland and Victoria. Given that the accident occurred on private property, no charges could be laid. Due to that anomaly in the law,

no formal recommendations could be made in relation to the incident.

At present under New South Wales law driving offences can be pursued by the police only if they occur on a road-related area or on a public road. This legislation aims to plug this loophole and give our police the necessary powers to ensure that the Colefax case is not repeated. The Wannan and Dalton-Brown families have suffered through a terrible tragedy. Due to a loophole in the legislation, justice could not be served. I commend the amendments introduced in this bill and trust that they will enable justice to be delivered, if and when required. Regardless of whether a person is on a public road or on private property, when they get behind the wheel of a car they must be fully aware that they are solely responsible for their actions and for the safety of others. The bill's amendments make sense and will close an unfortunate loophole in the legislation. For the reasons I have stated, I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) [5.03 p.m.]: I support the Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015. I pay tribute to the member for Orange who, as a local member, has been a tireless advocate for reform in this aspect of legislation and who is a great local member for the Central West of New South Wales. The people of the Central West should be very proud to have a member who identifies issues such as this, brings proposals to the political party and makes representations to the Government for legislative reform—all of which is reflected in the bill before the House. The bill states:

... this Bill is to amend the Crimes Act 1900 and the Road Transport Act 2013 as follows:

- (a) to extend the existing powers of police to arrest and test any participant in a fatal road accident for alcohol and drug use (which currently apply only to accidents on roads) to motor vehicle accidents that occur off-road,
- (b) to make related amendments to the procedural provisions dealing with evidence of intoxication in proceedings for dangerous driving offences under the Crimes Act 1900.

This bill will address uncertainty for the police when they attend a fatal motor vehicle accident that has occurred on private property. The Government has identified that New South Wales law could be strengthened when a death occurs as a result of a tragic motor vehicle accident by making it abundantly clear that the police have power to arrest a driver and gather evidence of alcohol and drugs intoxication, regardless of where the accident occurs. This legislation follows an accident that occurred in 2010 when two young people tragically died as a result of a motor vehicle accident in a paddock on private property. Police were uncertain whether the accident occurred on a road or a road-related area within the meaning of the Road Transport Act, an issue that subsequently was highlighted by the Deputy State Coroner in her report. The Deputy State Coroner noted the limitations of the current law, which led to the driver not being charged with any offence.

Following the report of the Deputy State Coroner, the former Attorney General established a judicial review of existing offences relating to fatal car accidents on private land. The review was conducted by Justice Windeyer, who recommended it be made clear that motor vehicle drivers on private land can be tested for drugs and alcohol when there is, or is likely to be, a fatal accident. Justice Windeyer did not recommend the creation of a new offence but, rather, recommended that the factors constituting the offence be made abundantly clear. When a motor vehicle accident on private property results in a fatality, or is likely to result in a fatality, the police will have powers of arrest and to test a driver. The evidence gathered may support a prosecution if the driver is charged with dangerous driving under the Crimes Act.

The bill amends section 12 in schedule 3 of the Road Transport Act 2013 to remove current restrictions on police powers under the Road Transport Act and to enable police to arrest drivers and collect samples for drug and alcohol testing following fatal accidents off road. When a motor vehicle accident results in a fatality or a likely fatality, the police will have power under the Road Transport Act

2013 to arrest a driver for alcohol and drug testing, regardless of where the accident occurs. The evidence can be used to support a potential prosecution of dangerous driving occasioning death under the Crimes Act. A person may be found guilty of the offence of dangerous driving occasioning death if the prosecution can prove the driver was under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of the accident. This amending bill will help to ensure that the police have the tools they need to gather evidence of alcohol or drug intoxication following a fatal off-road accident.

The bill is consistent with this Government's strong commitment to reducing drink- and drug-driving fatalities. The loophole in the current legislation has been a matter of concern for police officers over many years. When I was a member of the Police Force and accidents occurred on private properties, it was very difficult to deal with those accidents. Although there are offences within the Crimes Act relating to negligence causing death, other than by motor vehicle accident, which can be used, this bill will make it abundantly clear that the police have the power, as they should, to arrest and test a driver to obtain evidence and to use that evidence against an offending driver. For the reasons I have stated, I commend the bill to the House.

The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): I welcome to the Parliament members of the public who are attending A Little Night Sitting, a program conducted by the Parliamentary Education unit. I congratulate the Parliamentary Education unit on the great job it does attracting members of the public to the Parliament and educating them about the parliamentary processes.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) [5.08 p.m.]: I speak in debate on the Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015. I endorse the remarks made by the member for Strathfield and the member for Fairfield. This bill has come about following a tragic case. I listened intently to the contribution of the member for Orange as I know he has been involved with constituents and has undergone the trauma of counselling them on the issue of law reform. I have read the Minister's second reading speech and I obtained the findings in the Coroner's Court of Magistrate Sharon Freund, the Deputy State Coroner, on the inquest into the deaths of Eliza Wannan and William Dalton-Brown. Something about the conduct of this matter troubles me. It is quite clear that Magistrate Freund terminated the inquest under section 78 (1) (b) of the Coroners Act, as she stated:

... inter-alia that the evidence I heard was capable of satisfying a jury beyond doubt that the driver of the motor vehicle that ran over and crushed both Eliza and William was guilty of the indictable offence of drive in a manner dangerous causing death.

It then took some nine months for the papers to go to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who opted not to proceed with an indictable offence. Clearly, one matter for consideration was whether driving in a manner dangerous causing death, negligent driving causing death, reckless or furious driving causing death or driving intoxicated while not on a public road was a problem in terms of those statutory offences. This bill is designed to repair those statutory offences. There was an inter-department examination of the legislation and former Justice Windeyer reported to the Government earlier this year in regard to proposed changes. What particularly troubles me is that I cannot expressly see whether the offence of manslaughter or involuntary manslaughter was ever considered. It was not a matter for former Justice Windeyer to review decisions by the Director of Public Prosecutions, or anyone else, and sometimes in the criminal justice system matters may escape careful consideration. The facts in Magistrate Freund's finding were:

It was the Australia Day long weekend 2010, and a group of between 60 and 100 friends and acquaintances from the local area, the majority of whom were between 17 and 19 years of age, many of which had returned to town after completing their first year at University, gathered at the shearing sheds of the property at Belgravia Road, Molong known as "Ridgeview" to catch up, socialise and party. Many drove and parked their cars at the property and intended to spend the night. Alcohol was available and food was provided by Mrs Christopherson during the evening. But for Eliza Wannan and William Dalton-Brown and their respective families this evening of joy

was to become a tragedy, when the swag which they shared that night was run over and they were crushed by a vehicle driven by Rhys Colefax.

The Coroner made these findings of uncontroversial fact:

1. Rhys Colefax was the owner and driver of motor vehicle registration number XRZ-611 (NSW) that ran over and crushed both Eliza and William at about 5:00am on 26 January 2010;
2. at the time he was the holder of a Learner's licence and was unaccompanied when driving the vehicle when the vehicle ran over Eliza and William;
- ...
4. he had been drinking the night of the party to some unknown extent;

There are other relevant findings but those are the significant ones. The authority for the definition of "involuntary manslaughter" is contained in *Nydam v R* [1977] VR 430 at 445. That definition is when an accused, by intentional act or omission, causes the death of a person in circumstances which involve a great shortfall of the standard of care a reasonable person would have exercised and which involve such a high degree of risk of death or grievous bodily harm that doing the act merits criminal punishment. The issue is whether or not a 17-year-old driver holding a learner's permit, having drunk alcohol and driving across a paddock knowing there could be 60 to 100 people sleeping in the paddock had acted as defined in *Nydam v R*.

Whether or not that act constitutes manslaughter seems to me to be a question for a jury. The member for Orange made reference to talking with a parent of one of the deceased victims who maintained that there is nothing wrong with the existing law. That parent might be right. I have been involved in the criminal justice system for most of my working life and believe that sometimes things slip through the cracks. It may be that indicting someone for manslaughter five years later would result in proceedings being stayed. It might be too late to plug the crack. Whether or not someone is guilty of culpable driving or manslaughter—and it cannot be culpable driving or dangerous driving causing death because of the state of the legislation—the tests are not dissimilar.

Perhaps the Attorney General might indicate whether she is prepared to exercise her authority, make a determination or obtain advice as to whether a case of manslaughter was considered and should have been preferred. I have read a lot of material on this case, including former Justice Windeyer's report and the Coroner's findings, and I have not seen that manslaughter was considered. Bearing in mind the facts are reasonably simple, although terribly tragic, and at the risk of opening up wounds for the family of the deceased victims, whether that person should have been brought to justice for his conduct is an issue that needs to be considered by the Attorney.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Kevin Conolly and set down as an order of the day for a later hour.

Pursuant to sessional order private members statements' proceeded with.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HUNTER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) [5.19 p.m.]: I speak about the Government's unplanned announcement to the people of Newcastle on Thursday morning of a Hunter transport authority that will effectively privatise Newcastle's public transport. The Government has decided that Newcastle should be

the test case for taking the public out of transport services. Novocastrians are starting to think that they are being punished, given Labor won seven seats in the Hunter at the last election. First the Government sold off the port, then it sold off the poles and wires network, it is privatising disability services in New South Wales and now it has decided to flog off Newcastle's public transport network. Shame on those opposite.

The title "Hunter transport authority" may sound familiar to those who live in the Hunter and the reason is that this was one of Labor's key election proposals. After so many kneejerk reactions, including the cutting of the rail line with no replacement in place and a number of different transport agencies working on separate parts of the plan in silos, it became clear to me that the best way to get the Newcastle transport mix right was to have a transport authority based in the Hunter and working on transport in the Hunter for the people of the Hunter. During the March election I proposed this authority as a way to integrate services across the Newcastle and Hunter regions. The plan this Government is proposing is nothing more than privatisation of public transport. Despite the plan not featuring anywhere in its election campaign, the Government has announced it will hand over bus, ferry and proposed light rail to private operators.

The Baird Government has decided that providing high-quality services for Newcastle is simply too hard so it has raised the white flag and surrendered. It is much easier to hand it over to the private sector. The Minister for Transport's media release states the Government cannot provide "a world-class transport system for Newcastle". Therefore, the Government has chosen to outsource and privatise it. It did not consult with the public but expects Newcastle residents to be happy about it. I can tell the Government, the residents of Newcastle are not happy about it and they are letting me know. I have received comments on social media from constituents, including: "Constance: Con by name and con by nature" and "The Liberal party of NSW: Putting the Con into Constance."

Do they sound like grateful customers to members opposite? One day after the announcement the *Newcastle Herald* published the results of a poll that asked the question, "Do you support the Government's privatisation of buses, ferries and light rail in Newcastle?" In response, 80.56 per cent of people said "no". Is that enough feedback from Newcastle residents about the Government's plan? The Minister for Transport has the gall to say that he is saving Newcastle from falling ferry services and poor service levels, but they are all of his own making. The Government cut the rail line and this led to a mix of results: ferry passengers are now dropped off at Queens Wharf with nowhere to go and the train terminates at Hamilton with buses provided for the balance of the journey to Newcastle. Here is the kicker: people do not need a ticket or an Opal card to board those buses; it is free. If the Government is unable to register usage, of course the numbers will fall. The Minister for Transport may have conned Newcastle, but he is not the only conman.

On 5 March, during the election campaign, the Treasurer said that if re-elected the Baird Government had no plans, beyond what it had already announced, to privatise transport services. Minister Berejiklian stated in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that there were no plans for further transport privatisation. Shame! At a ceremony to mark the latest milestone for the North West Rail Link, the Treasurer said she was not looking at any proposals to privatise bus or rail services. It has no plans or proposals, yet Newcastle has never in its history had so many plans to privatise being thrown at it. The worst part is that the people of New South Wales second biggest city were not consulted on this plan, not a skerrick of information was sought.

On Thursday morning the Minister for Transport made the announcement to a waiting media pack and then fled—even before the bus drivers of Newcastle were told. Those public servants found out via the media that their jobs and future were now in danger. It was not until midday that Transport NSW decided to address the 342 drivers and other associated employees. The hardest part is that the people who use the transport are the disadvantaged in our society. They include students, pensioners and the disabled. They are now being forced onto a private operator where the bottom line is king. This means that bus routes that may not be profitable will be cut, service frequency will be reduced and extensions to

existing services, such as Newcastle to Swansea, will no longer be realised. Why is New South Wales second largest city treated like a second-rate citizen? Shame! [*Time expired.*]

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.24 p.m.]: I commend the Government for its role in investing hundreds of millions of dollars into the Hunter region. It has improved the lives of people across the Hunter and Newcastle. The lease of the ports in that area is providing the opportunity for greater investment, economic growth, the expansion of universities and, in particular, public transport. I remind the House of a *Newcastle Herald* front-page headline which stated "It is our time". That followed the announcement of this Government's investment of hundreds of millions dollars into Newcastle. Everybody can recognise the benefits to Newcastle, apart from the member for Newcastle. The member says one thing in this House and another as a Newcastle councillor. I think he quietly believes that Newcastle is benefiting like never before under the Baird-Grant Government.

FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVING PROGRAM AND CURRAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) [5.25 p.m.]: Bernard Edmonds wrote:

To dream anything you want to dream, that is the beauty of the human mind.
To do anything you want to do, that is the strength of the human will.
To trust yourself, to test your limits, that is the courage to succeed.

And so the wonderful students of Curran Public School have done. It is often said that champions are made, not born. To be a champion requires hard work, determination and self-belief. It also takes courage: courage to take a chance despite the odds; courage to test your limits; and courage to succeed knowing that life may never be the same again. Being a champion starts with a dream. Winning is not everything, it is more about how you play the game, but the taste of victory sure is sweet. It is this vision that students and staff of Curran Public School in Macquarie Fields had when they set out to take part in the National Future Problem Solving Program championships in Brisbane in October. The team of 12 students from year 5 and year 6 had the support of the whole community and they certainly made us proud by returning home crowned National Junior Future Problem Solving champions.

The students won the junior division and were formally recognised for their creation of a care package to assist local preschool children in their transition to primary school. The care package includes a variety of useful school supplies, as well as a host of educational resources. The development of the care package showcases the skills and ability of our local students. By giving prospective kindergarten students the best opportunities to learn and grow before they embark on their journey to big school the students demonstrated how much they care about the local community.

The Future Problem Solving Program is an international initiative that is open to students of all ages. It focuses on giving young people the tools to learn how to think, not what to think. The program not only challenges young people to tap into their imagination to find plausible strategies to help solve problems, it also encourages students to think outside the box. The transition to primary school is one of the most significant moments in a child's life. While it can be met with trepidation, it can also be an exciting time full of anticipation. Initiatives that seek to enhance the start of school experience are a worthwhile and smart investment in setting the tone for a student's lifelong learning journey.

Using Osborn and Parnes' six-step creative thinking process, students at Curran Public School discovered a low level of academic skills among children starting kindergarten. This research led them to discover that the knowledge of basic sounds, numbers and reading sight words in preschool children were at low levels. The care package is a fantastic resource to boost school readiness for incoming kindergarten students. The children at Curran Public School are certainly to be congratulated on their fantastic result at the competition, but more importantly on having the foresight to be socially conscious at such a young age. I also acknowledge the wonderful work of the teaching staff, led by principal Mr Michael Strahan.

The care package is a legacy that will keep on giving for many years to come. The students have demonstrated a commitment to improving their community and highlighted the value of kids helping kids. It is a very powerful project for the students to be involved in and one in which they can help make a difference and give kindergarten kids the best possible start to their school journey. Now that they are national champions, students at Curran Public School are set to take on the world. The school is currently raising money and seeking the community's support to send the students to the international finals to be held in the United States in June 2016. As a community we are incredibly proud of the students' achievements. They are an inspiration and true champions in every sense of the word.

This is more than just about winning. It is about breaking down stereotypes and giving hope to kids who may never have had the opportunity to dream big, let alone the chance to make their dreams a reality. I am confident our students at Curran Public School will be excellent ambassadors for Macquarie Fields and Australia and will show the world the immense talent that exists in our local community. With such socially conscious youngsters making a difference to the lives of other children in their community, the future is certainly bright. I look forward to hearing more about the students' achievements as they continue on their journey in school and in life.

JUNEE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

Ms KATRINA HODGKINSON (Cootamundra—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.29 p.m.]: I recently visited the Junee Correctional Centre, the largest jail outside the metropolitan area and one of two privately owned and operated correctional facilities in New South Wales managed by the GEO Group Australia Pty Limited. The jail's capacity is 853 inmates, with 840 inmates currently incarcerated. Junee is in the southern region of the Cootamundra electorate, and has traditionally been supported by the surrounding agricultural farmlands, which produce bountiful crops, beautiful merino wool and world-renowned fat lambs. The Junee Correctional Centre [JCC] was built by GEO Group Australia around 20 years ago. Since then, the JCC has made a huge, positive contribution to the local economy and community.

Unfortunately, corrections is a growing industry. I understand there are currently around 12,100 inmates in New South Wales. Junee Correctional Centre's management and staff are playing a valuable role in discouraging young local people from embarking on a life of incarceration by actively engaging with students in local high schools through a young offenders DVD. This DVD contains interviews with JCC inmates who talk openly, realistically and honestly about the impact that coming into the corrections system has had on their lives and the lives of their families. The DVD aims to encourage young people to focus on consequential thinking, and has been approved by Corrective Services.

One of the purposes of JCC is to deliver better corrections and, in doing so, create safer communities. Its overall aim is to enable and encourage inmates to achieve clear and defined goals through the system to provide reintegration into society. Education through NSW TAFE Riverina's onsite campus at the facility is one of the successful rehabilitation interventions available. Up to 30 different courses are available to inmates, including IT, literacy, numeracy, English as a second language and year 10 maths. Vocational education and training in building and construction, motor trades, welding, spray-painting, hospitality and a very popular certificate IV in horticulture and agriculture are also on offer. The jail has its own productive farm with crops and vegetable areas, as well as a successful lamb breeding program, and the gardens, which are all tended by the inmates, are well kept and very neat.

The volume and display of completed articles packed up and ready to ship out in the timber and metal fabrication building were impressive. Inmates make wooden toys, boats, rocking horses and doll houses for local charities, as well as possum boxes for Landcare. These products and more are made from second-grade timber donated by mills near Tumut. Inmates learning metal fabrication produce cattle freight trailer components, mobile shearing machines, mobile sheep panels, trailers and heaters. It is like a men's shed for inmates. I saw the wonderful artwork in the jail's cultural centre. About 23 per cent to 25

per cent of the inmates are of Indigenous background. The jail also has a large islander population.

Cultural connection and identification are encouraged at JCC through cultural events and artwork, which inspire a sense of identity and belonging. I am proud to say that Junee Correctional Centre's owner, GEO Group Australia, together with the TAFE NSW—Riverina Institute were finalists in the 2015 Premier's Awards for Public Service for providing better support and opportunities to the vulnerable through their program Transforming Lives: Inside and Out. It is an excellent achievement and one to be commended. The jail's annual payroll is \$21.6 million; food purchases are \$2 million annually; the TAFE contract contributes \$1.5 million per annum; and maintenance purchases are around \$500,000 annually. During the 2014-15 financial year, the centre contributed \$116,317 to community organisations through donations, sponsorships, scholarships and fundraising.

The Ganmain Public School, Junee High School, Junee Meals on Wheels, Junee Bowling Club, Junee Lawson House, Cooina Court, Wagga Wagga Legacy and Junee Junior Netball all benefited from sponsorships or the donation of goods that were made in the facility. It is a win-win situation because reparation through charity work gives inmates a sense of pride and encourages ties with the local community. The Junee Correctional Centre makes a welcome contribution to the electorate. In times of drought and low commodity prices, the jail provides an economic, season-proof buffer through employment and spending in the local community and its sponsorship and charity programs. The JCC provides economic benefits through employment, spending and education, engaging with the community, and contributing by supporting local charities and community organisations.

The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): I acknowledge in the gallery William and Patrick Giang, who are guests of the member for Hornsby. If they have any influence on the member, I suggest that they buy him a razor.

ASQUITH MAGPIES RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.35 p.m.]: Despite sporting this horrible thing on my face, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Asquith Magpies Rugby League Club on a stand-out season in which they narrowly missed out on winning a maiden A grade premiership in the Ron Massey Cup. Asquith Magpies super coach Simon Clarke and his squad, led by captain Aaron Groom, can hold their heads up high knowing that the 2015 Ron Massey Cup campaign is the club's most successful season on record. Twelve wins from 22 games saw the Magpies finish the regular season in third place behind minor premiers Mounties and the Wentworthville Magpies. The Asquith Magpies lost their opening qualifying finals to Wentworthville but were given a second life when Concord-Burwood and Guildford failed to win.

Asquith made the most of the second chance with Mick Pearsall leading the charge with two tries in a 38-14 semifinal win against Blacktown Workers Junior Rugby League Club. This was followed up by a nail-biting 32-30 preliminary final win over the Windsor Wolves. Fullback Jack Hawkins was outstanding throughout the sudden-death match-scoring two tries and kicking a perfect six from six conversions. He is a rare talent and a player to watch. These victories set up a maiden grand final appearance for Asquith in the top A grade Ron Massey Cup. Winning their way through to the grand final is a huge achievement for the Magpies, who rejoined A-grade from the lower grade Manly-Norths competition only in 2013.

Playing in their first grand final since 2012, Asquith got off to a nervous start, with the Mounties dominating the early exchanges and with multiple try-scoring opportunities before eventually crossing in the twentieth minute. Asquith showed plenty of spirit and resilience to hit back, with five-eighth Brad Wall setting up a flying Mick Pearsall for a length-of-the-field try. Mounties showed their strength and class in the second half to run in several tries to extend their lead. Despite trailing on the scoreboard, Asquith again showed plenty of fight to score another two tries of their own, by Greg Davis and Jeco Makatoa, before time ran out with the Mounties winning 30-14. Asquith might have missed out on winning the Ron Massey trophy, but our community is proud of their gallant efforts. I congratulate coach Simon Clarke and

his backroom staff Ben Shaw, Glen Worne and Peter Kirby on an outstanding job. These guys may not play in the first team themselves but are a huge part of Asquith's success and breakthrough grand final appearance this season.

Following the grand final was the Magpies end of season presentation night at which the best players for 2015 were recognised for their on-field performances throughout the season. Francis Tuigamala, better known as the Beast, took out this year's best and fairest gong, and Jeco Makatoa won the players' player award. Individual awards were given to Tayler McCann as the best rookie, and a shared award was given to Joel Latham and Brendan Hurd as the best forwards. Brendan Hurd is a pretty good bloke, too. Winger Mick Pearsall picked up the award for the best back and was the top try scorer with 31 tries overall. The Asquith Rugby League Club has a great squad on the field, but it is made up of many dedicated volunteers off the field who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make the Magpies such a great community club.

I will mention a few of the volunteers who every winter put their heart and soul into the club to help make it a success. Community clubs of any kind cannot operate without tireless volunteers—like Michelle Kelly who holds multiple positions within the club—and are always helping out on game day. Michelle is an inspirational woman. She volunteers as the club's social-fundraising manager, welfare and development officer, sports trainers' coordinator, canteen coordinator and North Sydney Junior Rugby League delegate. Michelle was recently recognised with the Ray Stellar club person of the year award. I am sure the players and coaching staff will agree with me when I say that Michelle is one of the Asquith Magpies' unsung heroes.

Asquith Magpies Rugby League Club's general manager Ray Agostino and club president Mike Mercer both deserve a big rap for their hard work behind the scenes to keep the club running smoothly. They are expertly supported by club secretary Martyn Heath, junior registrar Michael Hiskic, coaching mentor Scott Schoenmaker, and team managing coordinator Lisa Habkouk. Special mention must also be made of Asquith's most loyal and devoted fan, Tony Dosen. Every Saturday Tony is down on the sideline calling the game for our community radio station Triple H. Tony's love for the game and his dedication to promoting it is unrivalled in the local area. Many local residents who cannot attend matches tune into his program each weekend.

All of these volunteers have continued the proud Magpies rugby league tradition in the Hornsby area, which stretches back to 1952 when Graham "Grubber" Jordison formed the Asquith Sports Club with some friends. The Magpies changed their name to the Asquith Rugby League Club in 1958 before Asquith Leagues Club was later formed in 1979 to support the growing rugby league community. Asquith's founder "Grubber" Jordison sadly passed away in 2009, but his legacy lives on with the Asquith Magpies now stronger than at any stage in the club's history. The club has a proud history of developing junior rugby league talent, with current Manly and New Zealand star five-eighth Kieran Foran one of the best players to come through the Magpies ranks.

Success at junior level is now being matched at senior A grade level. Since making their return to A grade, the Magpies have impressed with two top eight finishes in three years. Simon Clarke and former coach Paul Pollard have done a tremendous job in developing the next generation of stars. The future looks bright for our beloved Magpies with the club attracting some big names: Scotland international hooker Ben Fisher and former Canterbury Bulldogs representative and captain Aaron Groom are leading the way. Let us hope that the Magpies can go one game better next season and lift the Ron Massey Cup. I look forward to joining my good friends Peter O'Brien, George Fretus, Bob Bell, Bill Ryan and Pat Buckety on the sidelines to cheer on the Maggies. I am very proud to be the club patron.

NEWCASTLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) [5.40 p.m.]: I speak today about Transport for Newcastle, the new regional authority announced by the transport Minister last week. First, I point out that the idea of a

regional transport authority for Newcastle and the Hunter is not new. Regional leaders and forward-thinking people in our community have supported the principle for many years. I have long been of the belief that local autonomy in public transport planning and delivery could only be beneficial. Indeed, the Hunter Independent Public Transport Inquiry called for it in 2011 after having consulted broadly with the community, transport and urban planners, and specific industry bodies. Local Labor colleagues in this place took a similar policy into the last election.

It has been patently obvious for many years that the public transport system does not serve its Lower Hunter customers well, which is one of the reasons only 4 per cent of the region's population opts for public transport over other forms of transportation. No-one—and I think I can speak generally here—is averse to the idea of a transport authority that operates in the region for the commuters of the region. What had never come into reckoning in the past, however, was the idea that this transport authority would be privately operated. A private authority would not be my starting point for such a solution, but I am willing to keep an open mind on these things.

I realise there are other places in the world where private authorities manage integrated public transport systems very well and there is no reason from a logistics point of view that it could not work in the Lower Hunter. It will take time to consider all the ramifications of this proposal, but the immediately obvious one is the likely significant impact on jobs. I understand that the Rail, Tram and Bus Union is very concerned—as, no doubt, are its members and families—particularly as I understand that they will be excluded from being able to put forward an expression of interest or a tender. State Transit in any guise will be specifically excluded, thus ruling out the recommendation from the Hunter Independent Public Transport Inquiry for an independent but public authority.

Another issue that will be of concern to the local community is the likelihood of intense pressure to minimise investment in, or even withdraw from, more costly routes. Let us face it, none of the transport options—be it bus, rail or ferry—is a money earner, but some routes, despite being costly, are extremely valuable, particularly for those who are heavily reliant on public transport. Students, pensioners and people of low income frequently have little choice but to use public transport, and any reduction in functionality of the system will disproportionately impact on them.

Public transport needs to be a real option and appeal to everyone. To do that it needs to be timely, comfortable, safe and functional to encourage people away from their cars. This was certainly the goal of those who participated in the Hunter Independent Public Transport Inquiry and I am sure that no-one would argue against those principles. Governments struggle with the recurrent operational costs of running our public transport system, let alone the constant need for new infrastructure, so I understand why the Government might want to look "outside the box", as the Minister stated. A system that could deliver public transport more cheaply and effectively would also allow for its expansion. That would be a good thing.

However, the Minister's announcement last week was yet another example from this Government of policy by decree. I understand that the Government has no electorates within the Lower Hunter, but that is not a reason to dump announcements of such magnitude on the local community without any consultation with them. Perhaps this is an opportunity for the Government to change the paradigm and engage with local members regardless of party. This would also require affected non-government members to step up and participate at least in the early discussions in a non-partisan way. The community has a lot of questions about this proposal for a privatised transport authority and it deserves to know the answers. People want to know who will represent their interests to this new body, what controls will be placed on fare prices, who the privatised authority will be answerable to, and how the bus, ferry and light rail routes will be integrated with other services such as inter-regional rail.

Understandably, this Government likes to talk about its spend on infrastructure. Whether or not individuals support the projects, it would be disingenuous not to acknowledge the significant amount of infrastructure planned and underway in New South Wales. However, by making announcements such as

this before having undertaken public consultation or even testing the concept in the private market, the Government has created a climate of uncertainty and concern. It would do better to honour its claim to being a government of the people by making genuine efforts to involve the Hunter community in such important decisions before they become a foregone conclusion. I trust that it is not too late for the Minister to do that.

Private members' statements concluded.

Pursuant to sessional order matter of public importance proceeded with.

NATIONAL RECYCLING WEEK

Matter of Public Importance

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) [5.45 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to speak on this matter of public importance during National Recycling Week, championed by Planet Ark. The New South Wales Government shares Planet Ark's goal of reducing waste to landfill through better recycling practices at home and at work. Each year, some 17 million tonnes of material enters the New South Wales waste management system and just over 60 percent of this material is recycled and returned back to the productive economy. Improving this recycling rate is the foundation for the New South Wales Government's \$465.7 million investment in Waste Less, Recycle More, the largest waste and recycling program ever undertaken in Australia. This program is designed to achieve an ambitious target: recycling 75 per cent of the waste that goes to landfill within five years.

To achieve this target the Government have been giving businesses, local government and charities the support they need to invest in the transformation of waste and recycling in New South Wales. Waste Less, Recycle More is only halfway through its five-year program and has already achieved so much, recycling one million extra tonnes of waste and creating more than 600 new jobs in the recycling sector, and it is set to achieve much, much more. Programs include the establishment of a statewide network of 86 community recycling centres at which householders can drop off their problem wastes including paints, oils, gas bottles, batteries, fluorescent globes and smoke detectors free of charge. Community recycling centres make it easier for householders to responsibly dispose of common problem wastes all year round while complementing the existing Household Chemical CleanOut program, which runs periodic collection events for the more toxic household chemicals.

This Government is committed to boosting food and organics recycling, aiming to reduce the estimated one million tonnes of food waste going to landfill each year. Already 443,000 organics recycling bins and kitchen caddies are being used by New South Wales householders to recycle organics at the kerbside; \$1.4 million has been awarded to food donation projects, rescuing good food and providing meals to those in need; and \$66.9 million has been awarded to business and industry through the Waste and Recycling Infrastructure Fund, which is designed to accelerate and stimulate investment in infrastructure to increase processing capacity.

Business also benefits from a range of grant programs specifically aimed at helping them improve production and save money. More than 11,000 small and medium-sized businesses have had free waste assessments through the Bin Trim program. Participation is proven to improve business recycling from 36 per cent to 49 per cent on average. Businesses completing the program have already saved more than \$1.1 million in waste management costs. Circulate, the NSW Environment Protection Authority's industrial ecology program, is working with larger businesses to find business-to-business solutions for waste products. Under this program, 4,040 tonnes of timber pallets have been recycled. Importantly, the Government has also committed to a cost-effective container deposit scheme in New South Wales by 1 July 2017.

The design of the scheme will be based on available evidence to create a solution that is both

environmentally effective and economically responsible. It is estimated that more than two billion plastic bottles are littered every year in New South Wales. The cost to the community goes well beyond the visual pollution. The estimated total cost to the community nationally each year is between \$300 million to \$350 million. This Government has committed to a comprehensive community consultation process on the design of the container deposit scheme, which will be announced in 2016. By making it easier for business and householders to manage their waste, we are not only reducing potential incidents of illegal dumping but also increasing the State's capacity to capture and reuse recycling materials which will prevent valuable resources going into landfill.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) [5.50 p.m.]: I support the matter of public importance recognising Planet Ark's National Recycling Week, which is an important week to bring a national focus to the environmental benefits of recycling. Planet Ark founded National Recycling Week in November 1996 and it is now in its twentieth year. It is an established and well-regarded annual campaign that continues to educate and stimulate behaviour change. One methodology by which that is done is by promoting kerbside industrial and community recycling initiatives, as well as giving people the tools they need to minimise waste and manage material resources responsibly at home, at work and at school. The overall aim of National Recycling Week is to increase the environmental benefits, including greater tonnage and less contamination of kerbside, industrial and community recycling programs.

As the Mayor of the City of Lake Macquarie and the member for Charlestown I especially recognise the importance of recycling. It plays a crucial role in keeping Lake Macquarie and the beaches near my electorate beautiful and makes them great places to live. As a consequence of the real demand on Lake Macquarie's landfill site at Awaba, it is estimated that it has only a couple of more years of life left. It is great to see that students are engaging in National Recycling Week and learning about the environmental benefits of recycling through the Schools Recycle Right challenge. National Recycling Week is increasing the number of businesses and workplaces involved in recycling principally through the promotion of the Friday File Fling. National Recycling Week is also promoting community reuse and recycling initiatives through the promotion of council, school and workplace-based swap parties. The improved understanding of kerbside recycling is an aspect of National Recycling Week and so is increasing access to accurate recycling information through the Recycling Near You website.

Recycling reduces and can potentially eliminate the need to extract raw materials from the earth, therefore saving limited natural resources. For example, 75 per cent of all aluminium ever produced is still in use today because it can be recycled infinitely. It is not just the planet that benefits from our recycling efforts. Businesses and people also profit from recycling. The process of recycling and composting creates more jobs than incineration and landfill. There are 9.2 jobs in recycling for every 2.8 jobs in landfill. In addition, a study of almost 24,000 individuals across 27 countries found a significant positive relationship between recycling and life satisfaction. The result was linked with the positive emotions associated with altruistic behaviour and doing the right thing. Recycling makes us feel good.

However, we are still making mistakes. A new report from Planet Ark entitled *All Sorted: Answering the Big Recycling Questions*, which was commissioned for National Recycling Week, includes the top mistakes and the main contaminants that confuse people. Planet Ark surveyed 115 councils across Australia and asked what were the three most common recycling mistakes made by its residents. Nine out of 10 councils said that placing plastic bags and soft plastics in recycling bins is one of the most common mistakes made by residents. Nearly half of the councils reported residents mistakenly placed kerbside recyclables into general waste bins and food contamination of recyclables was the third most common mistake highlighted by 23 per cent of councils. In 2013 audits were conducted in my local government area of general waste collected from kerbside bins. In Lake Macquarie, food waste made up 23 per cent of waste in general bins, garden organics made up 7 per cent, other compostable organics made up 11 per cent, and residual waste made up only 30 per cent of waste that went into bins. National Recycling Week brings recycling to the forefront of people's thinking.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) [5.55 p.m.]: National Recycling Week provides an

opportunity for us all to focus on the amount of waste we generate each year, what happens to it and how we can be more proactive in reducing our environmental footprint. The New South Wales Government is currently delivering the most ambitious recycling program in Australian history with \$465.7 million in funding to support recycling through the Waste Less, Recycle More initiative. The Government is tackling waste on every front and it is finding solutions that will enable this State to divert 75 per cent of all waste from its landfill by 2021. A number of reasons exist for doing this. As our population grows, the quantity of waste we generate also grows. Most of it is a valuable resource that can be recovered, reused and returned to the productive economy.

Each year in this State people dump 17 million tonnes of waste in landfill, a million tonnes of which is food and an estimated 75 per cent of which never makes it to the plate. They are terrible statistics. Through Waste Less, Recycle More, the Government is helping to address that problem from every angle. It is providing funding for councils such as Inverell in the Northern Tablelands to collect more food and garden waste from kerbsides. So far 31 councils are introducing new and improved collection services for more than 200,000 households, which is recovering 100,000 tonnes more food and garden waste each year to be recycled into compost and then reused.

The Government is funding a \$43 million infrastructure program that will invest in new infrastructure to process the extra supply at major processing facilities and new equipment to process food waste on site for organisations that generate a lot of waste, such as hospitals, aged care facilities and hotels. The Government is also funding vans, fridges and other equipment to help food rescue agencies to collect and redistribute surplus food to people in need. This is a form of recycling where the benefits are obvious, immediate and potentially lifesaving. National Recycling Week is an opportunity to reflect on those achievements, to take stock of where we are and to consider where we go next.

The Government is currently tracking at a 60 per cent recovery rate for waste in New South Wales, which is great, but it still has a fair way to go to reach its target of 75 per cent. We all have a role to play to reduce waste and improve recycling through Waste Less, Recycle More. The Government is committed to working with business, local government, charities, and the community sector to achieve this goal. Twenty-one community recycling centres are now open across New South Wales with many more to come. In my electorate of Northern Tablelands we have centres up and running in Armidale, Glen Innes, Uralla, Inverell and Moree. Grants of more than \$1.1 million have ensured those facilities get off the ground to receive food, recyclables, oils and paints and all sorts of things that would usually be in the waste stream. I am pleased to support National Recycling Week.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) [5.58 p.m.], by leave: National Recycling Week is an initiative that emphasises the importance of recycling. I commend the Government for all the strategies it is implementing in New South Wales. The Greens are keen for those strategies to continue and we look forward to the implementation of the Premier's container deposit scheme. However, we would also like to see the banning of single-use plastic bags. The Greens congratulate Planet Ark on introducing National Recycling Week. Planet Ark surveyed 115 councils across Australia and asked them what were the three most common recycling mistakes made by residents. Nine out of 10 councils said that plastic bags and soft plastics in the recycling bin are the most common mistakes made by residents.

Nearly half the councils reported residents mistakenly placing kerbside recyclables into the general waste bin. Food contamination of recyclables was the third most common mistake, as highlighted by 23 per cent of councils. It is interesting to note that in my electorate of Ballina, Byron Shire Council has introduced a novel idea: giving people a recycling rating. We have new, green organic bins and the council gives people a rating on how they are going with their recycling. That is a great technique to encourage people to change their behaviour, and we are certainly seeing a change in behaviour. We know that recycling reduces, or even eliminates, the need to extract raw materials, which saves money for councils and benefits the planet.

Businesses and people profit too. The process of recycling and composting creates more jobs

than incineration and landfill, with 9.2 jobs in recycling for every 2.8 jobs in landfill. The Greens commend National Recycling Week and, as others have done here today, encourage everyone to play their part. I was at a Junior Leadership Forum in my electorate last night. I commend Minister Dominello for introducing the Youth Frontiers leadership scheme. Most of the student projects were on recycling. It is wonderful to see the next generation understanding that we should spend the time to clean containers and separate them because it will benefit the planet. It will also reduce costs for councils and therefore reduce our rates.

The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): Before calling the member for Heathcote in reply, I note that because of the limit on the number of speakers who can contribute to this debate, the member for Strathfield and the member for Wyong, who are very supportive of recycling, were unable to make a contribution.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) [6.01 p.m.], in reply: I thank the member for Charlestown, the member for Northern Tablelands and the member for Ballina for their support for National Recycling Week. While we have come a long way in recycling in New South Wales we still have a long way to go. Initiatives like Planet Ark's National Recycling Week will help us get there. Planet Ark is a strong band that is trusted by the New South Wales community. Its work has provided crucial support for the Government's policy platforms and programs for better waste management systems in New South Wales. The Government has set ambitious targets for recycling which reflect the Government's commitment to environmental protection and innovation and for establishing modern, efficient systems that will position New South Wales well for the challenges of the future.

The Government is working to introduce a container deposit scheme by July 2017, which will reduce drink bottle litter. The investment the Government is making to increase recycling capacity will continue to benefit the people of New South Wales for many years. The Government began its tenure with a commitment to transform our waste management system and to put in place the services and infrastructure needed to recycle more and waste less. We are just over halfway through a program that is changing the way we in New South Wales think about waste, the way we manage waste and the way we make the most of our valuable resources.

New South Wales is marking National Recycling Week this year by being a jurisdiction that has identified innovative ways to assist people to recycle paints, oils, batteries and other problem waste for free. New South Wales is also a jurisdiction that has invested \$226 million in 421 new waste and recycling projects which, together, will divert more than a million tonnes of waste from landfill each year. Supporting all of this is a highly engaged and committed community. None of this would be possible without the support of those who are championing these issues and doing the right thing. The Government looks forward to that continuing support as we roll out new initiatives, including further grant funding, a container deposit scheme and programs to help people understand how and what to recycle. I commend Planet Ark and National Recycling Week for the opportunity to showcase these recycling achievements and acknowledge the significant contribution of our householders and businesses towards meeting them.

Discussion concluded.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 6.04 p.m. until
Wednesday 11 November at 2.15 p.m.**
