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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 16 February 2016

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 order private members' statements proceeded with.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Parliamentary Secretary) [12.12 p.m.]: Today, on the first sitting day for 2016, it is my great privilege as the member for Mulgoa to make the first private member's statement of the year. Today I acknowledge and commend the recipients in the Nepean region who were awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 2016 Australia Day honours list, in particular the extraordinary efforts of John Farragher, OAM; Rodney Watson, OAM; David Trist, OAM; and Christopher Holden, OAM. The character, selflessness and passion for the community of each of those individuals have led to this well-deserved recognition. In the Australian honours system appointments to the Order of Australia signify the highest recognition for outstanding achievement and service. Undoubtedly, the noteworthy and substantial contribution individuals make to the development, progress and advancement of local communities helps to bind us together as a nation. Indeed, much of this is informed by community-orientated disposition and ingrained selflessness and sacrifice, which makes them standouts for all to emulate.

I turn now to each of the five Nepean region locals awarded the 2016 Medal of the Order of Australia. First, Mr John Farragher, OAM. At 21 years of age John's promising future as a first grade rugby league player for the Penrith Panthers was dramatically cut short when he suffered a severe spinal injury in a scrum collapse. This on-field injury left him a quadriplegic, but John's spirit could not be defeated. Since then he has been a pivotal figure in the growth of grassroots rugby league in the Penrith region. John is renowned in the community as a public relations greeter for the Penrith Panthers Leagues Club. Widely cited as the "face of Panthers", locals rightly refer to him as an institution. That is reflective of the extent to which John has immersed himself in the region and the way in which his friendly and warm character has resonated with those he has come into contact with over the past several decades.

Secondly, Mr Rodney Watson, OAM. Mr Watson was recognised with this prestigious honour for his ongoing contribution to the Penrith community, which has been manifested in his involvement in the Penrith District Netball Association and the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation. Through decades of work and service in these two sporting organisations Mr Watson has been able to shape and recast the sporting landscape in the region and thus provide enhanced opportunities for individuals to participate in sport. Mr Watson has single-handedly developed the best netball fields in New South Wales through his passionate and convincing advocacy over many years to all levels of government. I note that the Minister

and member for Penrith who is seated at the table has been very supportive of Mr Watson's passion for the sport. Funding grants have been received for floodlighting as well as upgrades to the courts and meeting rooms. Thank you, Minister.

Thirdly, Mr David Trist, OAM. David has been involved in Nepean Legacy for more than five decades. That extraordinary effort is illustrative of the care and commitment he shows for the widows and children of our nation's ex-servicemen. Mr Trist was also named the 2003 Penrith Senior Citizen of the Year and unsurprisingly he has received various other notable local awards in acknowledgement of his community service. Fourthly, Mrs Norma Thorburn, OAM. Mrs Thorburn was recognised for her tireless and dogged commitment to community integration, cohesion and spirit. This is clearly displayed by Mrs Thorburn's passionate advocacy and promotion of the St Marys community. Mrs Thorburn, a budding local St Marys historian, has joyfully been involved the St Marys and District Historical Society. This is also complemented by her ongoing support for the annual St Marys Spring Festival. Mrs Thorburn was also named the 2005 Citizen of the Year. I could not be more delighted that Mrs Thorburn has now been recognised with a Medal of the Order of Australia. Norma Thorburn and her gorgeous, gentleman husband, Tom, have more energy to give daily to their local community than a group of young children left in a lolly shop without supervision. Their enthusiasm and undaunted spirit is something to be admired.

Fifthly, Mr Christopher Holden, OAM. Mr Holden's engagement over the past 47 years in Rotary is a strong example of the essence of what constitutes a servant of the community. I note his contribution to the board of the Nepean Medical Research Foundation and the establishment of Hope Cottage at Nepean Hospital. I congratulate all these exemplary people from the Nepean region.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events, and Minister for Sport) [12.17 p.m.]: I thank the member for Mulgoa for bringing to the attention of the House the people from Western Sydney, particularly in the Mulgoa, St Marys and Penrith communities who were recognised in the 2016 Australia Day honours list: John Farragher, David Trist, Rodney Watson, Norma Thorburn and Christopher Holden. These people typify salt of the earth Australians who make our communities stronger through their small but nonetheless significant and important contributions. I take a brief moment to talk about John Farragher. This man has shown everyone that no matter what happens in life one has the capacity to continue to contribute to one's community. John is confined to a wheelchair but always has a smile on his face. He epitomises what it means to be an Australian.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) [12.18 p.m.]: I thought that following the announcements to be made on 18 December I would have had an opportunity to praise this Government, but alas that is not the case. A number of weeks ago I joined hundreds of Bankstown residents at a public inquiry into the forced merger between Bankstown and Canterbury councils. At that meeting a strong message was sent to the Baird Government that the proposal to merge those councils was resoundingly rejected. I spoke on this issue last November. At that time I was delighted to inform the House that the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal had assessed Bankstown City Council as having the scale, capacity and financial stability to remain a standalone entity.

Despite the fact that the original independent local government review also stated that the preferred option for Bankstown would be to stand alone—despite both reports indicating that—the Government has chosen to disregard the sheer size, the distance and the lack of shared identity and community interests between the two distinct regions and has pressed ahead and proposed to amalgamate Bankstown City Council with Canterbury. This Government has really underestimated the community's angst and opposition to a forced, unnecessary merger between the two councils.

As I have said, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal deemed Bankstown council to be financially fit and able to be a standalone council. Significantly, Bankstown council's own improvement plan clearly indicates that more savings can be made if Bankstown remains as an independent entity

rather than as a merged entity. That is a difficult issue for the Government to overcome and possibly a difficult issue for the delegate in assessing whether this merger should proceed. The numbers do not stack up. The compensation the Government proposes for the merger does not compare with the savings that Bankstown can make as an independent entity and Bankstown should ultimately remain as a standalone council.

I also raise the issue of the sheer size of the council. The current projection is that it will have a population of 350,000 should it merge. Projected population growth by 2031 is more than 420,000 but that projection fails to take into consideration some of the recent rezonings that have been considered by both councils. It also fails to take into account the Government's announcement at the end of last year of the Sydney to Bankstown rail corridor urban renewal strategy, which has projections of adding potentially 100,000 people along that rail corridor. I hope that some common sense will eventually prevail, that the population projection figures are corrected and that the Government has a good look at the financial situation into which it is placing Bankstown.

Irrespective of whether the merger proceeds, we know it is likely that special rate variations will have to be considered. That is a no-brainer. The member for East Hills has finally declared his hand and is reported in the paper as saying that he supports the merger. He said that he did so because otherwise there would be an extreme rate rise, which is a fabrication. If the member for East Hills chooses to support this merger he should tell us what the benefits will be of combining two councils with divergent interests and no community links whatsoever, and stretching resources. He has not given consideration to the distance, to the size of the councils, to the fact that Bankstown is a south-western Sydney council and Canterbury is an inner city council, to the fact that we are in two different health districts and to the reality that the bus network that services Bankstown does not have an interconnecting service to Canterbury. The KPMG report fails to address any of these issues. I hope that the Government has a long, hard look at whether it is worth pushing ahead with a merger that simply does not stack up.

MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) [12.23 p.m.]: I inform the House that on Australia Day ceremonies were conducted throughout the Myall Lakes electorate. Two great residents of the Manning area, of Koorainghat in particular, and two great friends of mine, Lyn Iverson, OAM, and Peter Iverson, OAM, each received a Medal of the Order of Australia, announced that day. The citation for the awards recognised their years of service in volunteering and working with children with cancer and their families, as volunteers and family camp leaders for Camp Quality for more than 30 years. Lyn and Peter have many stories to tell about the courage, resilience and friendship of the children and their families who have attended the camps, which they often attended with their three youngest children. There they learnt the importance of volunteering and accepting everyone, no matter their circumstances.

During the day there were ceremonies at Taree, Wingham, Great Lakes and Old Bar. I had the privilege of attending the ceremonies at Taree and Great Lakes. In Taree a number of citizens were recognised. The joint citizens of the year were Jill and Rod Illidge for their community work with Camp Memories, where they would open up their property to allow Camp Quality and others—young children suffering from cancer or experiencing other issues—to camp on their property. The young citizen of the year was Mitchell Brown for his contribution to the local music industry. Sports star was Sam Mudford for hockey. The community event of the year was the Taree Park Run, organised by Janelle Jefferies and Marg Lewis. Marg Lewis is also involved in riding for the disabled, as is her mother.

At Wingham the citizen of the year was Barbara Waters for community work, especially with the Wingham Historical Society. The Wingham Historical Society is one of the best in regional New South Wales, with one of the best museums in all of New South Wales. Much of that is to do with Barbara and her team. Sportsperson of the year was Scott Brown, who is a local motorcycle champion. Young achievers were Grace Gallagher and Jai Harrison, the Wingham High School captains, who also form a fantastic singing duo that performs around the valley for Rotary and other organisations. The Rotary pride

of workmanship award went to Amanda Brookes, who was a mature age medical student and is now a GP in Wingham.

At Great Lakes the citizen of the year was Julie Brady, chairman of the Great Lakes Women's Shelter who also works with the neighbourhood centre. I am very pleased that the women's shelter got up and going recently after receiving funding from the Minister, with Community Building Partnership grants totalling \$30,000. The young citizen of the year was Ruby Keys, who is assisting the homeless. Sports person of the year was Dane Jeffrey, a local swimming champion. Local champion of the arts was the Lakeside Festival for producing a festival that brings the community together. The artist of the year was Stephanie Holm for appreciation of the beauty of the natural world. Junior artist of the year was Nicholas Parsons, a trumpet player with the Great Lakes Band and Sinfonia. The band performed the national anthem and other pieces. Young Nicholas was called out of the band to receive his award.

At Old Bar the citizen of the year was Mark Searles, the president of the Old Bar Festival, which is conducted during the October long weekend and attracts 35,000 tourists to the valley for that weekend. That has much to do with Mark and his community. He is also with the chamber of commerce. The Old Bar Festival was assisted by Destination NSW event funding over the past four years. It has been very lucky to have that flagship funding. At the Taree ceremony we welcomed some new citizens to Australia. At the Great Lakes ceremony there were 17 new citizens, which is phenomenal in these small communities. It was great to be there to welcome these new citizens and to see the joy in their faces. It is amazing how appreciative these people are of the opportunities given by New South Wales and Australia and how they are adopted and taken into our communities. The ceremony was in many ways very moving. I commend all the award recipients, particularly our newest OAMs, Peter and Lyn Iverson.

CAMDEN ELECTORATE AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) [12.28 p.m.]: The member for Myall Lakes will be ecstatic to know that Australia Day was not only celebrated in Myall Lakes but also in Camden—and around the country, I suspect. I speak about Australia Day celebrations held in Camden this year. Our ambassadors for Camden were the Special Olympics Dance Performance Group. The dance group was formed in April 2006 with only six dancers. It now has more than 15 groups and 150 dancers. It has performed for many famous stars such as Rhonda Birchmore, Maria Venuti and Deni Hines, to name a few. The Special Olympics is an international organisation that was established in the mid-1950s by Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Eunice established the Special Olympics to give all people with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to find joy, confidence and fulfilment through sport. In New South Wales there are almost 1,500 Special Olympics athletes, and each year that number grows. Today almost two million athletes in 175 countries compete.

Out of the Special Olympics the Special Olympics Dance Performance Group was formed. We were privileged to have nine performers from the group at the Australia Day event. Their spokesperson Melissa Eustace gave a speech which, quite frankly, left us all in awe of her. Her conviction, passion and eloquence were unbelievable. Mel had all those in attendance, about 500, in complete awe of her public speaking skills; she had the room in the palm of her hand. Mel said that the group members were very proud Australians who used their abilities, passion and drive to live life to the fullest.

Mel spoke of the campaign Don't DIS my ABILITY and asked everyone to accept her and her friends as they are and to acknowledge that they are able to live their life as everyone else does. The dance group has managed to raise \$1 million in support of Special Olympics Australia. In 2011 Mel returned home from the Special Olympics World Summer Games with a bronze medal in softball. Mel and all the other dancers showed us that anything is possible; you just have to have a go. The group performed the Peter Allen song *I Still Call Australia Home* and they were absolutely fantastic. Camden Council has had some very special ambassadors over the years but I can say emphatically that the Special Olympics Dance Performance Group has been the best ever. The group had all of Camden captivated and its interaction with the public was refreshing. I thank the performers for making a

difference to our lives.

I thank Melissa Eustace, Sally Ferris, Olivia Clark, Athena Hookway, Caitlin Tuynman, Stewart Abbott, Shaun Bender, Nathaniel Quan and Lachlan Tekema. They certainly won our hearts. The group had three carers with them: Fran Eustace, Sarah Palmer and Jo Abbott. The carers are very proud of their charges and spoke about how these young people are capable of doing so much more than many people think they can. I encourage everyone to go to the group's website at www.specialdancers.com and view footage of their performances.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all those in Camden who were nominated for an award at the Australia Day ceremonies. They were all very worthy nominees. In Camden we are always spoilt for choice when it comes to selecting outstanding citizens for awards. The nominees for Citizen of the Year were Keith Maddock, Val Stewart and Bob Lester; for Young Citizen of the Year, Sophia Thorn, Kirilly White, Karni Woods; for Sportsperson of the Year, Janine Mladin, Mark Szalajko, Katie Lewis, David Gorman and Patricia Lewis; and for Young Sportsperson of the Year, Gabrielle Plain, Jessica McCormack, Jessica Graydon and Hannah Trethewy. The nominees for Community Event of the Year were Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, the Sydney Welsh Choir concert, Anzac Centenary Celebrations, the Discobility event, Camden Play Links, the 2015 Camden Show and Light Up Camden. I congratulate the winners: Keith Maddock, Kirilly White, Janine Mladin, Mark Szalajko, Gabrielle Pain and Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. Picking a winner out of all those outstanding people and groups would have been a very difficult task. The Camden 2016 Australia Day celebrations were the best we have ever had and the town is still buzzing from the excitement.

PELICAN MARINA

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) [12.33 p.m.]: Today I raise some alarming concerns surrounding the partial collapse of the Pelican Marina into Lake Macquarie, which occurred in the Swansea electorate on Monday 8 February this year. We now know that, to the detriment of my community, this collapse signalled the end of the marina. Due to obvious and significant safety concerns, the marina is now in the preliminary stages of demolition. The Pelican Marina, situated in a picturesque location on the shores of Lake Macquarie, until recently was a major drawcard for people visiting the Swansea electorate. It also happened to be situated on Crown land.

It has been a traumatic few weeks for the people whose livelihoods rely on the marina—businesses, workers and residents alike. They appear to have lost everything, with government officials advising that little in the way of property or personal effects have been retrievable during the demolition process. The demolition of the marina is an enormous loss to our community. In particular, the iconic Milano's on the Lake restaurant symbolises the loss of the marina to our community. Just last year I ran into Mike Whitney when he was doing a feature on Milano's for *Sydney Weekender*. Little did he know that less than a year later the building would collapse and be demolished.

The tragedy is that the loss of the Pelican Marina may have been avoidable. Almost as soon as the marina began to slip into Lake Macquarie shocking evidence began to surface about just how little action the State Government had taken to address community concerns about the state of disrepair of the marina. To say that the Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Lands and Water, the Hon. Niall Blair, had dropped the ball in his handling of this matter is an understatement. Ambivalence and inaction certainly categorise the Minister's reaction to the collapse and to the subsequent need to demolish the marina. This description also holds true for the Minister's response to concerns that were raised about the marina for more than 12 months prior to its collapse. It is fair to say that the Minister had due warning that the state of the marina had tenants and business owners very worried, to say the least.

When I was elected in March 2015, one of the first meetings I held was with constituents who were concerned about the condition of the marina. I visited the marina to see its condition firsthand and I was alarmed. One resident who lived upstairs on the marina told me that she had been advised not to

use her verandah; and the pier was recently closed to the public because of safety concerns. The marina was showing signs of serious dilapidation. I immediately wrote to Minister Blair to advise him of the community's and my concerns. Little in the way of a substantial response to the concerns about the condition of the marina was received. On top of my representations, a Lake Macquarie City Council report recommended in September 2014, some 16 months before the collapse, that millions of dollars needed to be spent retrofitting and replacing infrastructure along the marina due to existing and future hazards. Various actions to address the problem were recommended within the report; however, "full implementation" of those actions could not begin until the State Government signed off on the draft. It would appear that the Government sat on its hands yet again.

Given the enormity of this incident and the fact that the Lands department of the Department of Primary Industries was handed back responsibility for the marina in December 2015, I call on the Government to finally take action to address the ongoing concerns of my community. I call on the Government to release the independent structural report that was undertaken in December, which allegedly did not adequately advise the Government of structural concerns. I understand that in September WorkCover inspected the site and delivered a scathing safety report on the marina's condition. I call on the Government to release the WorkCover report in the interest of public good. The community wants the Minister to come to the party.

I again call on the Minister to visit the Swansea electorate and meet with those who have been affected firsthand by the collapse. It is simply not good enough to let bureaucrats take the heat for this incident. At the end of the day, the buck stops with the Minister. Right now people want answers and they want them from the person in charge; that is, Minister Blair. Finally, I call on the Government to outline what assistance it will provide to those who have lost their livelihoods and homes as a result of the collapse. While I believe that ultimately this entire disaster could have been avoided, we need to move forward with swift and tangible action to ensure that those affected will be no worse off because of the inaction of the Baird Liberal Government. I look forward to the Minister's response.

OXLEY ELECTORATE AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

DANCE 4 DROUGHT 2016

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) [12.38 p.m.]: Today I recognise the eminent constituents of the Oxley electorate who received awards on Australia Day 2016. I was able to attend only two of the four events in my electorate because they were held at the same time. I was particularly saddened not to attend the Bellinger Valley announcement of Marie Rowe as Citizen of the Year. Marie Rowe is a compassionate community champion who, over very many years, has stood up for the underdog within the Bellinger Valley. She has also been a champion of women entering politics and participating in community roles. She is very much a cherished part of the Bellinger Rotary Club and I sing Marie's praises.

Similarly, Nambucca Valley Citizen of the Year Ian Flarrey of the Nambucca Valley Band is continuing a tradition of music and entertainment in the Nambucca Valley. I saw him perform at the Macksville Public School presentation in December. I applaud him for his efforts in ensuring that music is taught and celebrated in the area. I congratulate him on his award. My friend Mark Morrison, Macleay Citizen of the Year, is another community champion at Macleay Vocational College. He works with the most vulnerable people in his community to give them a chance to do their best in the education system as well as beyond in life. Mark's wife, Lisa, is as much a part of this award recognition. They are citizens deserving of this award and I congratulate and salute them. Hastings Senior Citizen of the Year Jeanette Rainbow is a champion in her community and has been recognised for her work with the Hastings Valley Miniature Railway Society and other community work. Her award is in recognition of her wonderful achievements.

I acknowledge my friend and former employee Richard Thackery, who works at the Kempsey

Macleay RSL Club. Richard was nominated for Kempsey Citizen of the Year for his outstanding fundraising efforts. It makes me feel good that this fellow—who, as manager of the Kempsey Macleay RSL Club, would wash dishes in the café—lives with his wife and two beautiful children at South West Rocks. I acknowledge the many other category winners of the Australia Day awards in the Oxley electorate, including Mark Thurgood, Macleay Young Citizen of the Year; the Dhungatti Language Group, Macleay Community Group of the Year; Mrs May Harris, Nambucca Senior Citizen of the Year; Mr Connor Hoban, Junior Citizen of the Year; and Blake Cutler, Bellinger Young Citizen of the Year. The Community Group of the Year award was presented to the Northbank Community Garden, which does magnificent work.

On Saturday 6 February I had the pleasure of attending the Dance 4 Drought 2016 event held by the Footprints in Ag committee at the Wauchope Showground hall. It was profoundly inspiring. For a group of young people from the Agricultural Show Societies of the Mid North Coast to conceive, develop, arrange, host and accomplish such an event with poise, passion and professionalism reflects splendidly on their capacity and commitment. I was delighted to move around the hall and speak with many of the 200 people who attended the sellout event. It is truly impressive to see people within our valleys rolling up their sleeves, working hard and succeeding in agriculture. The committee office bearers are president Ashley Olsen, vice-president Darcy Argue, secretary Isabelle Kanturek, publicity officer Andrew Carroll and treasurer David Olsen. The Wauchope Show Society Ladies Auxiliary more than satisfied the crowd with a delicious two-course meal. I am told the Footprints in Ag initiative began in 2015 as a way to bring together young people who already were involved in our local agricultural shows and to encourage those who wanted to get involved.

The aim of Footprints in Ag is to secure the future of our agricultural shows on a regional level by promoting our local agricultural industries and our country show movements. It is a wonderful goal and one that I am happy to support into the future. Aussie Helpers has been operating for 14 years and is the only charity of its kind supporting farmers affected by drought, fire and other natural disasters. As well as providing on-farm practical help and labour, it also assists with care packages and counselling services as required. Astonishingly, it has raised more than \$14 million since 2001. The Footprints in Ag event at Wauchope raised more than \$5,000 for Aussie Helpers. I give a big shout out to the local businesses that supported the event by providing awards and packages. It was wonderful to see Bennett Steel and Cassegrain digging deep with their support. I will end my statement with a phrase that I am sure we will hear more of over time. Dance 4 Drought host Ashley Olsen said, "While Port Macquarie kicks off its thongs, Wauchope rolls up its sleeves."

POWERHOUSE MUSEUM ULTIMO

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) [12.43 p.m.]: I draw to the attention of members that it is 12 months since the Premier and Deputy Premier announced that the Powerhouse Museum building in Ultimo, which is located on the border of my electorate, would be sold to developers and that the museum would be moved to a site in Parramatta. There was no commitment to recurrent funding and no proposal as to how to pay for the project. I understand that KPMG has been engaged and the Government has allocated \$10 million for the development of a business case. The process is wrong. The broader community together with the artistic, museum and curatorial community should be part of a discussion as to how to best deal with a museum of this calibre and scale, rather than the Government making an announcement and then playing catch-up on a project that may well cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Members of my community are significantly concerned about this proposal. Next week in this place the House will debate a petition signed by more than 10,000 people from Ultimo, the inner city of Sydney and beyond. Their many concerns include the lack of consultation on this issue, the lack of policy on collecting and exhibiting institutions in New South Wales, and the diminution of the significant collection at the Powerhouse Museum. The community is concerned that Western Sydney will be short-changed by the introduction of an inferior institution and about the economic and cultural impacts of removing the museum from Ultimo. In the lead-up to the State election there was a great deal of

discussion on this issue. The view of The Greens is that this is more about a real estate deal and less about cultural improvement for the people of New South Wales.

Yesterday I hosted a summit which included eminent museum professionals, academics, historians and representatives, including small business owners, from Western Sydney and Parramatta. Together with the member for Sydney, we reached a consensus position on how this proposal could be improved for the long-term benefit of everyone in New South Wales. It starts with reviewing and then reversing the decision to move the Powerhouse Museum. It is important to note that representatives from the Parramatta area were keen to see a world-class institution built in Parramatta. We are 100 per cent behind a new, locally distinctive, world-class museum in Parramatta.

The increase in funding for cultural infrastructure in Western Sydney is commendable. But the proposal to move the Powerhouse Museum from a purpose-built, award-winning, iconic site, which has an important historic and contemporary presence, will destroy the museum's identity for wide audiences. People can more readily access the museum in the Sydney central business district. Relocating the museum will put its extensive collections at risk. The people of Greater Western Sydney deserve a world-class, major cultural institution, but there are a number of worthy, viable and visionary alternatives to transplanting the Powerhouse Museum to a yet-to-be-determined site at Parramatta.

The Powerhouse Museum is a vital part of the historic fabric and economic and cultural life of Ultimo. As a destination, it is part of the "cultural ribbon" promoted by the City of Sydney, and it now has improved access as a result of the fabulous Goods Line project. The Powerhouse Museum serves the growing population of inner Sydney as well as broader New South Wales. It is an integral part of a technological, educational, entrepreneurial and design hub. When the former Ultimo Power Station was transformed to become the principal location of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in 1988, the redevelopment was awarded the Sir John Sulman Medal for architectural merit, recognising the significance of the adaptive reuse design. The museum has been refurbished in the past five years at a cost of more than \$25 million, yet the Government is proposing to sell and demolish the buildings.

The summit participants agreed as one to commit to working with the Government, the Minister and the community to explore and develop options for an exceptional museum that will deliver a lasting legacy while safeguarding the true home of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo. As a result of our discussions, we are determined to see a better outcome for everyone. It is disappointing that the Government, after consulting with Infrastructure NSW, has decided that the Powerhouse Museum should be sold. Even if this site generates, as has been suggested, an income of \$150 million, we know that building a world-class institution in Western Sydney will cost hundreds of millions of dollars more. We have seen this happen with similar projects and buildings. The Government has not thought through this commitment. It has allocated \$10 million and appointed KPMG to develop a business case but it has not consulted with the wider community, local members, or the museum and curatorial profession. I call on the Government to seriously review its decision and to recognise the important role of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo, and to ensure that Western Sydney is not provided an inferior institution but one that is born out of cooperation and support.

HOLSWORTHY ELECTORATE STORM DAMAGE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) [12.48 p.m.]: First, I wish to say that I am proud of emergency service workers in the Holsworthy electorate and across the State. I am continually amazed by the amount of work they do in our local area, especially volunteer work in times of natural crises. Throughout January, Sydney was impacted by multiple large storm cells. The Liverpool area and other suburbs of Sydney were especially hit hard by the storm cells and many Sydney residents and motorists were affected. The storms were the worst to hit the Liverpool area since 2000.

On Thursday 14 January, Liverpool suffered a 41-degree day until about 2.40 in the afternoon when there were gusts of wind between 96 and 122 kilometres an hour. Reports were made of roofs

blown off houses and sheds deposited in neighbouring blocks, while heavy rain and thunderstorms rolled across the Liverpool local area. The storm was one of the most aggressive and fastest forming storm cells I have seen in recent times. Residents described the local area as a war zone, particularly Newbridge and Nuwarra Roads in Chipping Norton, where powerlines came down. There were tree branches strewn everywhere, large trees fallen onto roads and into houses and flooding across streets. Heathcote Road was also impacted heavily by the storm with a tree falling on the road near Holsworthy train station and cutting off traffic in both directions. Local residents were caught in a stressful situation of attempting, after a long day at work, to get home to their families in the midst of the storm.

Power outages were experienced across Moorebank, Liverpool, Holsworthy, Hammondville, Wattle Grove and Chipping Norton. My office was without power that afternoon due to powerlines being severed by falling trees. Many residents had power restored by mid-Friday morning, but approximately 1,300 properties across the Liverpool area were without power until the weekend. Endeavour Energy recorded 128 affected streets in Moorebank, 105 in Chipping Norton, and dozens more across the rest of the electorate, including Lurnea.

The day after the storm my office received a call from a local Chipping Norton resident who had extensive storm damage to his house. I visited Joe and Ramona at their home to see if there was anything I could do to help. When I drove up to their home, it was heartbreaking to see the damage to their home. The roots of a massive tree had come out of the ground and the tree had fallen onto their home. It was difficult to see where the house began and the tree ended. Fortunately, Joe and Ramona were not home when the storm hit and the tree fell onto their home. They were lucky to have left only 10 minutes earlier. Unfortunately, a large amount of damage was caused to their home, which Joe had built. His prized possession, a car that he had been working on with his children since the 1970s, had been flattened by a tree. It was his pride and joy but it could barely be seen under that big tree. While I was there, I was relieved to see workers turn up to remove some of the debris around their house and later that evening I understand State Emergency Service [SES] workers assisted by placing a tarpaulin over their roof to avoid any further damage.

I have just talked about some of the negative impacts the storm had on our community. But it is good to see during our darkest times that people selflessly assist others. Through their efforts, they help to create our wonderful community. People from the local area and around the State give up their time and come out in droves to help others. The 50 volunteers from within the Liverpool State Emergency Service unit were assisted by teams from Campbelltown, Wollongong, Bungendore, Yass, Crookwell, Sutton, Queanbeyan and Goulburn. The Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue also helped with the clean-up across the area. Without the dedication of these champions, that urgent work could not have been carried out so quickly.

I must mention Endeavour Energy, which worked very fast to restore power. Many people were without power across the weekend—a horrible thing to experience—but Endeavour Energy was very quick in getting the power back on. By the Monday after the storm, 95 per cent of the jobs that were reported had been completed. That is a monumental achievement. It meant that families and residents would be safe once again in their own homes. I reiterate my pride in our police, SES, Endeavour Energy and all our emergency services workers who assisted in a time of need for many local residents. I also thank Bunnings at Hoxton Park, which provided eskies and water to the State Emergency Service workers, and others who assisted in similar ways. These simple acts of kindness helped to maintain the spirit of our emergency service workers.

NEWCASTLE COURT COMPLEX AND TRANSPORT

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) [12.53 p.m.]: Yesterday I had the privilege of being present at the opening of the Newcastle court complex. In June 2010 the then member for Newcastle, Jodi McKay—whose presence in the House I acknowledge—announced a \$94 million justice precinct, which would be the biggest court complex outside Sydney and would replace the run-down courthouse in

Church Street. I congratulate the former Labor Government on its great initiative to build the Newcastle courthouse and the current Government for continuing that commitment. I urge the Government to return any profits from the sale of the old courthouse straight back into Newcastle. Those funds could be used to fix problem areas such as the Adamstown rail crossing. That would be a wonderful initiative.

However, the question on the lips of many people yesterday, as we looked down from the sixth floor of that magnificent building, was: How will people travel to the new court complex and where will they park? As we looked from level 6 of the building we could see across the road the forlorn and barricaded Civic railway station. The station, now shut down by the Government, would have assisted in moving people efficiently and effectively into the city, dropping them opposite the new law courts and close to the new university campus that will cater for 5,000 students.

I have strongly advocated for public transport since winning the by-election in 2014. On Friday, at what was to be a relatively quiet Hunter Property Council lunch, this issue was brought back into the spotlight. Laurent Offroy, Keolis Downer's Newcastle project director—and project director for future transport proposals—surprised many at the luncheon when he said that he was not completely convinced that light rail was the best solution for Newcastle and that a fleet of buses would do a better job. Later, in a taped interview, he reinforced his statement by saying that light rail was suitable for cities larger than Newcastle. His statement has caused a furore in Newcastle and has intensified the controversy that surrounds the Government's handling of the Newcastle rail saga. Whether or not Mr Offroy was reflecting the official policy of his employer, the genie is now well and truly out of the bottle. Joanne Jay from Cooks Hill wrote in yesterday's *Newcastle Herald*:

The Baird Government ripped up our train line and now, months later, an employee of the company hoping to run the city's transport system says the city may not be big enough to justify a light rail network ...

Our rail gets ripped out, then we get the crumbs Mr Baird decides to throw our way. I am disgusted with the State Government and the total lack of regard given to this region.

Hear, hear, Joanne! Peter Sansom of Kahibah stated:

The rumblings that we may not in fact see light rail in Newcastle do not come as a surprise.

When we were first told the railway would close we were told that light rail was not viable. Then all of a sudden, it was said light rail would replace the heavy rail. I wonder how many really believed the light rail would actually be built. If light rail is to be viable then it needs to run out to the outer suburbs.

One good thing stated by Keolis Downer is that experience shows that a 2.5 kilometre tramline is very short. Passengers arriving at Wickham, for instance, by train or bus would then get a connection that would take them just another couple of stations down the track. The Government should acknowledge that the light rail network needs to be expanded. The problem is not a lack of funds because in the dirty deal done with the Shooters and Fishers Party the Government got \$50 million. Newcastle has not seen that money and does not know what it is earmarked for. It is time the Government came clean and told us what that \$50 million will be used for. It must be used on expanding the light rail network, and expanding it much further than the Government proposal.

I call on the transport Minister to come to Newcastle and talk to the employees who may lose their jobs as a result of privatisation of the public transport system. I ask the Government to clarify its position on light rail and commit to an expansion. Now that the genie is out of the bottle I call on Premier Mike Baird to do three things: clarify the Government's position; address the concerns that this highly qualified insider has raised; and have serious discussions about expanding the proposed light rail to make sure it is part of a seamless Hunter public transport system.

TEYS TAMWORTH FITNESS AND CONDITIONING CENTRE

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) [12.58 p.m.]: I inform the New South Wales Parliament of an initiative of Teys Australia at its Tamworth meat processing facility. The Teys facility employs more than 450 employees at Tamworth, contributing \$47 million to household income and \$104 million to the New South Wales gross domestic product. Including flow-on effects, it is responsible for over 850 full-time equivalent positions across the Tamworth electorate.

On Thursday 11 February, I officially opened the Teys fitness and conditioning centre at the Teys Tamworth processing plant. The new fitness and conditioning centre was built as part of the Insurance & Care NSW—icare—Retro Paid Loss scheme. Allianz also contributed to the funding of the project. I recognise and congratulate Lachlan Teys, general manager, and Tony Dean, the work health and safety manager at the Teys Tamworth facility on their efforts in supporting their workers. The fitness centre serves as a hub for physios and therapists to assist workers in their ongoing health needs by giving advice, and providing exercise and routine plans and onsite rehabilitation programs. These are all offered in the new state-of-the-art facility boasting the latest in gym and rehabilitation equipment.

With more than a third of Australia's entire economic output coming from New South Wales, the work we do to make workplaces safe is very important. Initiatives such as the Teys fitness and conditioning centre take a preventative approach to workplace health and safety, aiming for a happier, healthier workforce, with fewer injuries, less downtime and greater productivity. This is great, not just for the employer but for the whole State, as individual businesses look to contribute to society through employee welfare.

Teys Australia believes that this pilot program in Tamworth will have a long-term future across many of its business units by supporting employees and educating them in their wellbeing, by promoting health and fitness and reducing, or perhaps even eliminating, injury in the workplace. This is a company that cares for its employees. I commend Teys Australia for showing initiative, leadership and commitment, not only to the business's productivity but to the Tamworth electorate and, more importantly, to its employees' welfare.

HMAS ADELAIDE MEMORIAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) [1.02 p.m.]: I take members back to Wednesday 13 April 2011. At 11.48 a.m., the ex-HMAS *Adelaide* was sunk some 1.8 kilometres off the coast of Terrigal-Avoca, before a crowd of some 18,000 onlookers. At the time of the planned scuttling at 10.30 a.m. a pod of friendly dolphins bobbed past to take a look at the action, delaying the scuttling of the vessel by about 48 minutes. After planning and hard work over almost 11 years to get the vessel to a point off the beach, the ship took two minutes to submerge.

This project was conceived in 2000 by a local community group, aptly named the Central Coast Artificial Reef Project [CCARP], which was formed in Central Coast dive clubs and by dive operators. The committee worked hard to lobby all levels of government to secure the ex-HMAS *Adelaide*, once she was decommissioned, to become an artificial reef. Once she was secured, in February 2007, HMAS *Adelaide* was gifted to the New South Wales State Government and for the next four years the working committee focused on having her sunk off the coast of Terrigal-Avoca.

The planning approval process was extensive, with consultants engaged to assess and map the physical, environmental and operational constraints and to recommend a suitable location. International guidelines for the best management practices and clean-up standards for preparing ships to create artificial reefs were followed stringently. HMAS *Adelaide* underwent extensive preparations to enable the vessel to provide a safe dive site. This work was undertaken at Sydney's Glebe Island and White Bay before the vessel was towed to the Central Coast. The towing and scuttling events were a major logistical

exercise involving the NSW Police Force, Roads and Maritime Services, the Port Authority of New South Wales Harbour Master, the Transport Management Centre, Busways, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Ambulance Service of NSW and Gosford City Council as well as volunteers from the NSW State Emergency Service, Surf Life Saving NSW and local service clubs.

This beautiful ship joins four other former naval vessels that have been transformed into artificial reefs. They have been wonderful dive sites in waters off Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland and Victoria since 1997, and now in New South Wales. The beauty of using these former warships is that they are not sold off for scrap metal, nor do they lie somewhere as junk; they become living reefs which provide a permanent environment and a food source as visiting organisms and marine life develop on the surface of the ship. The structure creates a habitat in and around which marine life can develop and breed. It is a joy for retired servicemen and servicewomen who once lived and worked on these ships to see their former homes become homes for very different species.

HMAS *Adelaide* was built in the United States and was commissioned in 1980. She was the first of six Adelaide-class guided missile frigates to be delivered to the Australian Navy. The long-range escort frigate's roles included air defence, antisubmarine warfare, surveillance and reconnaissance. The ship participated in the 1990-91 Gulf War. She was in peacekeeping operations in East Timor in 1999 and was deployed to the Arabian Gulf in 2001 and 2004. HMAS *Adelaide* was also involved in high-profile search and rescue missions.

I turn now to the present. Last week, I was proud to announce to the public that in honour of the many who have sailed on HMAS *Adelaide*, and in recognition of our Royal Australian Navy, I am endeavouring to have the mast of the ex-HMAS *Adelaide* restored and installed as a memorial at a prominent location which can be seen from land and sea at Terrigal Haven on the beautiful Central Coast. After the scuttling of the ship in 2011 the mast of the ex-HMAS *Adelaide* was gifted to Gosford City Council by the State Government for it to be installed at Terrigal. It has been in storage for the past four years.

The proposed memorial is an exciting project that is supported by our local community and the State Government. It is also supported by Crown Lands and Gosford City Council. It has the full support of the former crew of HMAS *Adelaide*. The project also has the support of RSL clubs, Marine Rescue NSW and local surf clubs. It will be a magnificent tribute to the former servicemen and servicewomen of HMAS *Adelaide*. To date, over 11,000 diver licences have been issued for our dive site, with tour operators confirming a significant increase in dive tourism compared to visitation figures prior to the scuttling. The proposed location for the mast is in close proximity to the Terrigal Marine Rescue Centre. It is proposed that surveillance cameras be installed on the mast, protecting the marine park around the vessel from illegal fishing.

The Fleet Support Unit of the Navy's Engineering Division has provided a report, giving us assistance and advice on restoring the mast. The first stage of restoration is to have the mast sandblasted, which is being undertaken by Central Coast Metal Protectives. To date, we have secured in-kind design work from local consultants, who will prepare the geotechnical studies and the structural engineering design of the plinth. Our local consultants are Brent Kerry from Douglas Partners and Stuart Eddy from Eddy Consulting. Last week, the New South Wales Government and the Ettalong Diggers club offered in-kind support. Gosford City Council is presently preparing the applications and our local RSL clubs are coming together next week to discuss ways they can support our fundraising efforts. This is truly a community event, delivered by the community for the community, and I am very proud to be a part of it.

HURLSTONE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) [1.07 p.m.]: John Edmondson, VC, Mark Binskin, John Kerin, Sir William Keys and Professor Alan Trounson are renowned for their valuable contributions to Australia and the world across a range of disciplines. It is less well known, perhaps, that

they are all alumni of one of New South Wales's finest schools, Hurlstone Agricultural High School at Glenfield. It is no coincidence that a school steeped so proudly in tradition and academic excellence has seen so many of its alumni achieve greatness. Hurlstone Agricultural High School consistently ranks among our country's top-performing schools and is the only fully selective, coeducational agricultural high school in south-west Sydney and is a flagship public school for the region. Given Hurlstone's unique history, including its strong ties with the Anzacs through its very own memorial forest, the school is undoubtedly a national treasure that must be preserved in its current form for future generations.

Since the 1920s, Hurlstone Agricultural High School's home has been at Glenfield, and the school has been at the heart of our community. The Hurlstone farm is iconic in our region and its 180 hectares of valuable open green space is vital to the future sustainability of the region. All of Hurlstone's history, heritage and educational opportunities for south-west Sydney are now under threat because of Minister Piccoli's decision to develop the area and destroy Hurlstone at Glenfield. Hurlstone's history and heritage—and indeed its future—should always remain at Glenfield. The irony of moving a wonderful school like Hurlstone, with an enviable reputation built over years, to a part of Sydney that already has its quota of high-achieving State schools, is not lost on me. Baulkham Hills High School and James Ruse Agricultural High School are, for example, not far away. What about south-west Sydney, Minister? The south-west does count in terms of education excellence. I see excellence all the time, not least when I attend school presentation days. I see it at James Meehan High School in Macquarie Fields and I see it at Sarah Redfern High School at Minto. This form of excellence is not measured in terms of school rankings. But it exists in spades, and it is real.

What is not lost on me is the breathtaking hypocrisy of the Baird Liberal Government, which has done a backflip on this issue. The Hurlstone Agricultural High School Site Bill 2009 was introduced by the then Opposition, now Government, to protect the Hurlstone school site at Glenfield forever. Guess who voted for that bill to save Hurlstone from being sold or developed and to ensure that its land was used only for educational purposes? You guessed it: Adrian Piccoli, the then shadow Minister for Education. The same man is now, as Minister for Education, lining up to sell the site and sell out the local school community. In 2009, in his role as shadow Minister for Education and leading advocate to save Hurlstone and its farm from being sold to developers, Mr Piccoli said:

It would be a real shame to let them do this just because the land has development value.

Yes, it is a great shame that the Minister is selling this valuable school to developers when he once clearly strongly opposed it. It is an even greater shame that the Minister cannot keep his word to the Hurlstone students and parents of south-west Sydney.

I could not agree more with the Minister's words—the commitment to ensuring that Hurlstone and its farm remain at Glenfield, where it has been since 1926. It seems that commitment means nothing to the Minister for Education because he is now calling for the bulldozers to carve up Hurlstone's farm for developers. So much for it being "a real shame" to sell this land because of its development value. It seems this Minister has no shame in turning his back on the community of south-west Sydney. He has no shame in going back on his word. It is inconceivable that this could be done without any regard to the future young people of our region, who will not be going to the school when it moves to the Hawkesbury campus.

The campaign to save Hurlstone did not stop there. On 1 April 2009 there was a picture in the local paper showing Mr Piccoli walking along, looking determined, with fellow Nationals Mr Stoner, the member for Lismore, the member for Barwon and the member for Clarence. The photo caption read: "Nationals say no!" and referred to the selling of the Hurlstone school land. That was a joke played on the people of south-west Sydney. It was political opportunism, a photo opportunity used to trick the local community into thinking the Government was committed to saving Hurlstone and its farm from developers. The Minister may think it was an April fool's joke, but the people of my community are not laughing. The Minister can spin the sale however he wants to but, to paraphrase an aphorism of

Nietzsche, the people are upset because from now on they cannot believe anything he says. That is right, Minister: People will not believe anything you say.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS

BANKSTOWN CITY COUNCIL AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Mr GLENN BROOKES (East Hills) [1.12 p.m.]: I begin by clarifying my position on the Bankstown City Council amalgamation, which was mentioned earlier by the member for Bankstown. Despite what was written in the local paper, I do not support the forced amalgamation of Canterbury and Bankstown councils. I fully support the recommendations put by council, which were: to stand alone, as the council is fit for the future; to merge with Strathfield Council; and to merge with Canterbury City Council.

Ms Jodi McKay: It is not merging with Strathfield.

Mr GLENN BROOKES: I know that. That is my position, and I am glad to have had the opportunity to clarify it for the House.

Ms Noreen Hay: Point of order: I would like to clarify whether that was a personal explanation.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Bruce Notley-Smith): Order! The member for East Hills is making a private member's statement. His comments are in order. There is no point of order.

Ms Noreen Hay: So it is a normal private member's statement.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Bruce Notley-Smith): Order! This is a private member's statement and the member for East Hills is in order.

Mr GLENN BROOKES: The strength of the community of East Hills comes from the people within it. I am always hearing stories of local residents who go above and beyond to make the lives of others in the community better. Each year on Australia Day many local residents are honoured for their contributions to the community through Bankstown City Council's Australia Day Awards. The awards are broken down into a number of categories: Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Sportsperson of the Year, Community Organisation, Arts and Culture, and Volunteer of the Year.

I inform the House that the Citizen of the Year in this year's Bankstown City Council Awards was Frank Davies. The Young Citizen of the Year was Matthew Masetto, and the Bankstown Volunteer of the Year award went to Graham Williams. Jake Hodgetts was named Sportsperson of the Year. The community organisation award went to Meals on Wheels, and the arts and culture prize was awarded to Bankstown Youth Development Service. I will focus on the recipient of the Young Citizen of the Year award, Matthew Masetto. Matthew is only 17 years old and lives in Padstow. This is not the first significant award for Matthew. In 2014 he was awarded a trip to Gallipoli for displaying his incredible creative ability in Bankstown council's Anzac Centenary creative competition. Further to this, Matthew's artwork for the Higher School Certificate was last year displayed in the ARTEXPRESS exhibition, making the top 200 of more than 9,000 artworks. That was a tremendous achievement.

Matthew also displays tremendous leadership ability. In 2013 Matthew received the Long Tan Youth Leadership and Teamwork Award for displaying strong values and initiative, and last year Matthew was also the Anzac Centenary Local Youth Ambassador. These achievements, together with Matthew's dedication to all aspects of his life, make him an excellent role model for youth in the East Hills community. I thank Bankstown City Council for hosting the awards and congratulate all award recipients, as well as all who were nominated. The characteristics displayed by those who were nominated are the strengths that this nation is built on. They are the characteristics that make Australia and the seat of East Hills great. I am extremely pleased that we could honour these achievements on Australia Day. I wish the

award recipients all the best as they continue to contribute to our community.

TRIBUTE TO MR VINCE O'FARRELL

Ms NOREEN HAY (Wollongong) [1.17 p.m.]: It is with a great sadness that I inform the House of the passing of Mr Vince O'Farrell. Vince, who passed away on Sunday 20 December 2015, was an illustrious political cartoonist with the *Illawarra Mercury*. He began working with the *Illawarra Mercury* in 1986. His passion for cartooning saw his work published in the *Best Australian Political Cartoons* each year since its inception in 2003, rendering him one of the nation's best. His satirical pieces earned him more than 20 national and State awards.

Vince's work also gained prominence abroad. Vince's cartoon depicting a tear-stained Statue of Liberty, shortly after the World Trade Centre attacks, reached a global audience and touched the hearts of many. The quality of Vince's cartooning saw him receive lucrative offers from the United States, most notably from Disney. He decided to relinquish those opportunities to pursue and cement his interest in news cartooning. Vince was also a regular contributor to hundreds of North American, British and Irish newspapers.

The subjects of his satire appreciated his wicked sense of humour. No less an authority than former New South Wales Premier Bob Carr is said to have considered Vince O'Farrell to be the best political cartoonist in Australia. There is no doubt that politicians were his prize targets. Former Prime Ministers John Howard, Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard featured in his work regularly during their respective terms in office. As the member for Wollongong, I was far from immune to being the subject of his craft. I have cartoons by Mr O'Farrell displayed on all four walls of my office, which were drawn in great humour. I have the utmost respect for his work. During his tenure at the *Illawarra Mercury*, Mr O'Farrell battled bipolar disorder. In an interview with the *Illawarra Mercury* he said that while he found the illness debilitating, it had also provided him with inspiration that was compatible with his trade.

"Bipolar disorder is something that can make your mind very foggy," he said.

"But at the same time ... the dark side of an illness like that, that's where I always found the poison pen could come out in satire.

"I was able to look at things in a dark kind of way which works well with satire rather than doing squeaky clean kind of American cartoons."

Members will have heard me speak in the past about bipolar disorder and the kind of darkness that descends on not just the person suffering from bipolar but also their families and their loved ones, who struggle along with them. So for Vince to have risen to the heights of his profession, whilst struggling with such a debilitating illness, is a real credit to him. He leaves behind his wife, Josie, children Luke and Jessie, family, friends and an overabundance of followers. There are few in politics, certainly in the Illawarra, who can claim to have avoided Vince's cartoons. When I was a union official, many years ago—and I was very proud to be a union official, by the way—my clerk at the time, Irene Arrowsmith, used to say to me, "Noreen, when you make it into the cartoon you know you have really hit the big time."

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wollongong must have hit the big time a few times.

Ms NOREEN HAY: I can say that my walls are not big enough for me to have hit the big time many more times with those cartoons. It just goes to show that Vince O'Farrell will be very sadly missed. He could really destroy your image in his cartoons, and you could love him for it—that is a skill that few people have. I have one cartoon out of all of those hanging on my walls, and I am not going to say which one it is, that brings a huge smile to my face every time I look at it. I just find his cartoons hilarious. He will be very difficult to replace, not just for us politicians but also for the community, for politics as a whole and for his family and loved ones. I place on record my thanks for the contribution he made to our society.

The SPEAKER: Indeed, I acknowledge his contribution also.

PORN HARMS KIDS SYMPOSIUM

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) [1.22 p.m.]: Several of my constituents have made submissions to an ongoing Senate inquiry which is currently underway in the Federal Parliament. The inquiry will investigate the harmful effects which pornography is having on young people. As a parent myself, this issue struck a chord with me, and it is definitely something we need to be more aware of and to debate in this place. As a result, last week I attended the porn harms kids symposium at the University of New South Wales. The symposium brought together academics, child development experts and mental health professionals to speak openly and candidly about their research into this important issue.

Guest speakers included Dr Michael Flood, Dr Joe Tucci, Susan McLean, Melinda Tankard Reist and Dr Helen Pringle, along with several other experts. I was not able to hear all the speakers but I heard enough to become convinced that something needs to be done to protect our children from the effects of pornography. We are living in an age in which technology allows us to enjoy unprecedented levels of convenience. Instant access to information and shared knowledge is quite literally at our fingertips. Unfortunately, so is pornography. Our lifestyle in 2016 is in many ways unprecedented. We take for granted as the norm now in technology what would have seemed like science fiction 20 years ago. Almost every child seems to have a smartphone or a tablet device. How do parents protect children from inappropriate and harmful content when the opportunity to access it is everywhere and is virtually unrestricted?

Another problem is that the content that children can access is far more graphic than what previous generations ever had access to. The most popular content on the internet is content that aims to push boundaries and give the viewer something they perhaps have not seen before. It is certainly a far cry from the magazines of Hugh Hefner and Larry Flynt that people of my generation would associate with mainstream pornography. It is clear that part of the problem, and the reason this is becoming such a harmful epidemic, is that extreme is now mainstream in the world of pornography. Recent studies of some of the most popular pornographic content on the internet found that over 80 per cent of scenes included physical or verbal aggression, which was almost always directed towards women.

Maree Crabbe, one speaker whose work in this field is well known, made the observation that pornography has become the most prominent sexual educator for young people. She pointed to a study conducted in 2006 that found for children aged 13 to 16 years, 90 per cent of boys and 60 per cent of girls had been exposed to some form of pornography. This is truly shocking. Contemporary mainstream pornography misrepresents reality—it gives young people the false impression that this is how consenting adults relate to each other. It sends the message to young men in particular that women respond positively to aggressive or degrading behaviour, and that they like it.

So what is the solution? How should we respond? There were some suggestions that we bring in sex education much earlier so as to educate young people before they are exposed to pornography. In my view this would be a defeat rather than a victory. It is also very much a decision for parents to make as to when they want to raise the issue with their children and we ought not to deprive parents of this important right.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members who wish to have private conversations should do so outside the Chamber.

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: There is scope for the Federal Government to work in partnership with internet service providers. We already have very robust measures in place to restrict the sale of alcohol online and prove the purchaser is of legal age. Perhaps we ought to be doing something similar in relation to accessing pornography. At a State government level our schools have some great systems in place

with internet filters and school rules in relation to mobile devices, and even in this place the internet filters are extremely effective. But perhaps we could be doing more in that space.

A great deal of money and time has been spent on the highly controversial and divisive Safe Schools program. That money and time could just as well be directed to a program which aims to educate young people on appropriate use of technology and online safety. Certainly parents need to take a more active role in what their children are watching and accessing—especially given that they are providing the device and paying the bills. We are depriving a generation of young people of their childhood, and it is a social tragedy for which we have not yet paid the price.

HORNSBY LIONS CLUB

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.27 p.m.]: I sincerely thank the many dedicated men and women from the Hornsby Lions Club who volunteered over the Christmas and January holiday period to raise funds for charity. These hardworking volunteers took valuable time out away from their families to roll up their sleeves and lend a hand to raise funds for local charities such as the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter, Hornsby Connect and the Cancer Council NSW. The Lions club members raised the bulk of their funds by braving the summer heat outside Westfield Hornsby in December to sell their much-sought-after Christmas cakes and puddings, which have become an annual Lions club fundraising tradition across the country. I bought a pudding just prior to Christmas and I can say that it was one of the best puddings I have ever tried. I encourage all members of Parliament to get behind their local Lions clubs and support this important cause.

I congratulate the volunteers who manned the Lions club stall, and Ted Henebery and Barry Thompson, who delivered puddings to businesses across the Hornsby shire. Ted and Barry are two of Hornsby Lions Club's most dedicated volunteers. They share the prestigious honour of having had a Melvin Jones Fellowship awarded to them. Volunteers like Ted and Barry are the backbone of our community. They always put others before themselves. I am told that between them Ted and Barry managed to deliver cakes and puddings to 82 different outlets. This is a great achievement by the pair. I make special mention of Barry as he is also Hornsby Lions Club's longest serving member at 81 years of age. He is a credit to the Lions movement and the Hornsby community. Barry and his family are so dedicated to the Lions cause that Barry's daughter Janette Fraser is also a regular volunteer. She collects gold coin donations for the Hornsby club.

A fundraising drive like this of course takes a team effort. There were a number of volunteers who manned the Lions club stall, including Bill Newbold, Caroline Tasik, Pat Mason, Pauline Henebery, Robert Tasik, Rossy Champion, Teresa Ashton, Jane Li and Steven Su. Between them they clocked up a combined 495 hours of service to raise \$8,000 for charity. Contributions like this are vital to our local charities that rely on community funding to continue operating and help those most in need—charities like the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter, which helps dozens of women who are either homeless or fleeing domestic violence. Organisations like the women's shelter are reliant on funding from groups like the Hornsby Lions Club to continue their outstanding efforts for those in need, who often have nowhere else to turn. I am so proud of all the Hornsby Lions Club members. They continue to help and lead the community wherever and whenever possible.

Just last month I saw the Hornsby Lions Club members hard at work again, on Australia Day, when the volunteers rolled up their sleeves behind the barbecue to cook hundreds of sausage sandwiches for all the local residents to enjoy. I would like to thank some of the volunteers—Andy Tasik, Caroline Tasik, Karen Hardy, Kevin Tasik, Pat Mason, Sudeep Sahdeva, Steve Hopwood, John Lockyer and Allen Fraser—for their time and efforts to serve the community on Australia Day. I am proud to say that this year we also had extra volunteers from some of our local schools and community clubs on hand to help the Hornsby Lions Club members to cook the barbecue and set up the marquee. A big thank you to Sudeep Sahdeva's two children, Ebbani Sahdeva, from Hornsby Girls High School, and Aniya Sahdeva, from St Leo's Catholic College, Wahroonga, who helped alongside Richard Frewin from

Berowra Apex, Janette Fraser from the Lions Club of West Pennant Hills-Cherrybrook, Julian Baez from Hornsby Connect and Jay Ikin from the Hive Church with a bread delivery of 145 loaves.

Cooking barbecues on Australia Day and selling Christmas puddings are only a fraction of the countless hours of volunteer work that the Hornsby Lions do every year to help make our community a better place to work and live. Over the years the Hornsby Lions Club has supported a wide range of charitable initiatives and contributed to the lives of members of our community through its advocacy work in setting up an eating disorder clinic based in Hornsby for individuals struggling to battle conditions such as anorexia. Mrs Flanagan drew on her experience as a nurse to educate the community on the need for local facilities like this, and then set about raising \$4,500 to assist with start-up costs. Mrs Flanagan's story is not unique. Many of her fellow Lions club members have similar accomplishments and are making a great contribution, either at home or abroad.

Barry Palmer is a name that most Lions club members will be familiar with. He has given decades of service to the Lions movement to climb the ranks to become the Lions Clubs International president—not bad for a resident of Berowra. Mr Palmer has many achievements that he should be very proud of, including a cricket initiative he launched to help street children in India. Mr Palmer teamed up with Hornsby Heights Sports Club to gather cricket gear, including bats, balls, shirts and gloves, to send to an orphanage for street children in Chennai. I also acknowledge some of the other charity drives that the Hornsby Lions have assisted with. Donna Warren from the Sydney Sewing Centre in Pennant Hills teamed up with Hornsby Lions to auction off quilts that the group had made to help support the Boxing Day tsunami victims in Banda Aceh. Lions club members have also gathered donations for earthquake victims in Haiti and assisted drought-stricken farmers who are doing it tough in outback Australia.

The Hornsby Lions Club's efforts and innovative ideas to better work with the community have been recognised on the global stage, with Ray Phillipson, Pauline Henebery and Anne Palmer presented with the Melvin Jones Fellowship honour for their humanitarian work. I am also proud to say that my good friend Pauline Henebery was included on the 2006 International Women's Day Honour Roll. The Hornsby Lions Club has come a long way since its inception in September 1958. The faces may have changed over the years, but the club's commitment to assisting community activities, projects and charitable causes has remained resolutely strong. In the early days the original Hornsby Lions Club members laid strong social justice foundations through their work in purchasing blankets for children at John Williams Hospital, assisting with outings for special needs children and purchasing a bus for blind students at St Edmund's Private Hospital.

I am proud to say that the current Lions club members, including Graham Hosking, Bill Bradley, David Kerr, Keith Murray, William Newbold and Zoe O'Rourke, have continued this great Lions legacy by supporting Hornsby hospital through the purchase of new machines, raising money for the Cancer Council on days such as Daffodil Day, helping bushfire victims in Victoria and organising charity cycling events. I thank all the Hornsby Lions Club members for the terrific work they continue to do in supporting charitable causes. As the local member it is a real honour to be one of many who help to support the group as it continues to make a positive contribution to our local community.

Private members' statements concluded.

[The Speaker left the chair at 1.32 p.m. The House resumed at 2.15 p.m.]

CENTENARY OF FIRST WORLD WAR

The SPEAKER: The year 1916 marked the emergence of the concept of total war, which tragically was to become all too familiar to nations, those who fought and their families. It was the first year to see the tank as a major battlefield weapon and the extensive use of poison gas as a weapon against individuals. The first eight months of 1916 saw casualties on the Western Front exceed the total losses of the previous year. The great battles of Verdun and the Somme dominated the year and those

battle-hardened Anzacs who had served at Gallipoli were to find themselves fighting a very different war on the Western Front. One of the great tragedies of young Australia's history is that so many who escaped from the shores of Turkey were to be left behind in the fields of Flanders.

In 1916 the British Empire established ultimate control of the high seas after the Battle of Jutland; Irish nationalism erupted in the Easter Rebellion, causing the polity of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland to fracture irrevocably; and the first fatal cracks appeared in the monolith that was the Russian Empire. The foundation for many of the tragedies playing out in the Middle East today, including Syria, was laid by two obscure diplomats, Sykes and Picot. They drew lines on a map in the belief that colonial powers could do as they pleased without reference to the people whose lives they were arranging. In 2016 we mark the centenary of the year which gave shape to the world in which we live today. Lest we forget.

RETIREMENT OF DR GARETH GRIFFITH, MANAGER, PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH SERVICE

The SPEAKER: I take this opportunity to inform the House of the retirement of Dr Gareth Griffith, Manager, Parliamentary Research Service, Parliamentary Library on 12 February 2016. Many of the members know and are very fond of Dr Griffith. In 1993 Dr Gareth Griffith commenced working in Parliament as one of the first members of the newly formed Parliamentary Library Research Service. He has managed the research service since 2010. Over the past 23 years Dr Griffith has provided extensive research assistance to parliamentary staff and members from all political parties. To help inform debate in the Parliament and community he has published briefing papers on a wide range of issues, primarily in the areas of law and government. Dr Griffiths has made an outstanding contribution to scholarship on Parliament as co-author of the book *Decision and Deliberation: The Parliament of New South Wales 1856-2003*.

PARLIAMENTARY GYMNASIUM BATHROOMS

The SPEAKER: I take this opportunity to thank members of both Chambers and across party lines for facilitating what is now known as the loo coup. That is, the swapping of the men's and women's gym change rooms on level two of Parliament House. It is an important symbolic gesture that shows Parliament is an inclusive workplace for both men and women. In particular, members will note that those changes will take place from 7.00 a.m. tomorrow. I take this matter very seriously. The member for Castle Hill will come to order. The member should never try to beat me in a gender war. I thank the member for Oxley, the member for Holsworthy and the member for Goulburn for their advocacy in this matter. In particular, I thank the member for Maitland, who worked hard to ensure that every male member on that side of the House signed their support for the changes. I give a gold star to the member for Camden for being the most enthusiastic male advocate for the change room swap.

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr MIKE BAIRD: I advise members that the Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Medical Research, Assistant Minister for Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will answer questions this week in the absence of the Minister for Health.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following bills was reported:

Retail Trading Amendment Bill 2015
Gaming and Liquor Administration Amendment Bill 2015
Greater Sydney Commission Bill 2015
Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No. 2) 2015
Fisheries Management Amendment Bill 2015

Data Sharing (Government Sector) Bill 2015
Crimes Amendment (Off-road Fatal Accidents) Bill 2015
Conveyancing Amendment (Sunset Clauses) Bill 2015
Firearms and Weapons Prohibition Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
Security Industry Amendment (Regulation of Training Organisations) Bill 2015
State Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
Betting Tax Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
Courts and Other Justice Portfolio Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
Payroll Tax Deferral (BlueScope Steel) Bill 2015
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Exemptions Consolidation) Bill 2015
Gaming Machines Amendment (Centralised Monitoring System) Bill 2015

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE

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

T F BATHURST
Go
vernment House
Lieutenant-Governor
Sy
dney, 6 December 2015

The Honourable Thomas Frederick Bathurst, AC, Lieutenant-Governor of the State of New South Wales, has the honour to inform the Legislative Assembly that, consequent on the Governor of New South Wales, His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley, AC, DSC (Ret'd), being absent from the State, he has assumed the administration of the Government of the State.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE

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

DAVID HURLEY
Go
vernment House
Governor
Sy
dney, 9 December 2015

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

DEATH OF NICHOLAS RUYGROK

Ministerial Statement

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Attorney General) [2.22 p.m.]: Today, with great sadness, I pay tribute to a young man with boundless potential who was taken from life and taken from all of us too soon. Nicholas Ruygrok was a valued member of my ministerial staff. One morning last December he was killed in a cycling accident. Nick loved this place. He loved politics. He loved ideas. He loved Port Adelaide and Melbourne Victory. Most of all he loved his fiancée, Verity; his mum, Jackie; and his sister, Maddy. I welcome Verity to the gallery today.

Nick had measure, and that is not something you readily find in a 25-year-old. In all the right ways Nick was 25 going on 40. In the eight months he worked in my ministerial office he proved that he was not just smart but also hardworking, and that he had a big heart. Nick was always the first person into the office and never the first to go home. I met Nick when he was working with Bruce Notley-Smith on his 2015 re-election campaign. Nick was very polite and courteous. I was struck by his voice—it was a voice worthy of television or radio. After that election in which Bruce Notley-Smith was successfully re-elected Nick was recommended for a job in my ministerial office. "Nick is exceptional," went the recommendation, "we should snap him up", and so we did.

Then Nick snapped up his fiancée, Verity. I recall asking Nick one morning how his weekend was. "I got engaged", he said. I said, "Wow! That is fantastic." Nick then explained the extraordinary lengths to which he had gone to make his proposal to Verity perfect: a harbour view, friends setting up a picnic for the two of them ahead of their arrival at the designated spot and—typical of Nick—a plan B for wet weather. Nick then showed me photographs of him and Verity embracing on a rock ledge. I asked, "How did you manage that? Did you organise a photographer too?" Nick explained that the photographs were taken by a perfect stranger who happened to witness the special event unfolding. A story like that could only be possible in Hollywood one might say but, no, not when it came to Nick. Those minutes I shared with Nick reflecting on his engagement to Verity spread pure joy throughout my workday. I still feel that joy whenever I take myself back to that moment. It was Nick's sheer delight, radiance and unabashed love for Verity that infected me. It still infects me. He was both a strong and a gentle man.

We know that Nick had a bright future in front of him. In my office we sought the best opportunities to make that future possible. First, he gained a promotion to adviser and he then spent a week at the Department of Justice doing some practical legal training. It was there, of course, that Nick learnt you do not have to work seven days a week. Then there were the visits Nick organised to members' electorates. They were a treat—they ran smoothly and afterwards compliments flowed from all concerned. At Parliament Nick was our office ringmaster, cracking the whip for me to get to the Chamber on time to vote or speak to legislation. He never looked stressed as the bells rang and we rushed down the carpeted stairs from level 8 to this Chamber.

"That is correct" was Nick's trademark response to questions I asked, and it was always delivered with trademark reassurance that only Nick could give. The last time I saw Nick was the night before the accident. We had been to a community safety meeting in Waverley. I hopped out of the car to go to another community event and I thanked him for his help. There we go. It does not make any sense. Nick was special, of that there is no doubt. Nick was a talent, of that there is no doubt. Nick will be remembered, of that there is no doubt. Vale Nick Ruygrok.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) [2.28 p.m.]: Early on the morning of 9 December last year I received a telephone call from the superintendent of the Eastern Beaches Local Area Command, who told me that there had been a tragic accident on Fitzgerald Avenue—which is in my electorate—involving a cyclist and a motor vehicle. Thankfully calls like that are rare, but I had the feeling that there was more to the story, and I was right. During the day we were to suffer the grief that one feels when someone like Nicholas Ruygrok passes away.

The Attorney General, the member for Coogee and a raft of other people have painted a picture of a lovely, dedicated, talented, committed and much-loved young man. Like us, Nick was involved in politics and public life. The member for Coogee told the story of a bright young man who had worked for him and who was involved in and loved politics and much more. He was a law graduate from South Australia, where he was born, and he was involved in surf lifesaving, first as a member of the Henley Surf Life Saving Club and then with Coogee Surf Life Saving Club—one of the greatest surf lifesaving clubs in Australia and perhaps the first surf club in the country. He was also a keen cyclist, and we know that his friends from the Dulwich Hill Bicycle Club are gutted at his passing, as are many others.

Those of us in politics and public life know that not as many people are now willing to make the sacrifices involved in this arena as there were in days gone by. When we do come across someone who is intelligent, genuine, compassionate, real and motivated—someone who has it all—we know they are a rare gem. Nicholas was just such a rare gem. The public life of this State and, therefore, this nation has been diminished by the passing of this gem of a young man. The Leader of the Opposition, Luke Foley, and other members of the Opposition pass on our deepest condolences—which we know are of small comfort—to Nicholas's mother, Jackie, his sister, Madison, and his fiancée, Verity, in the knowledge that this young gem can never be replaced and, as the Attorney General said, will never be forgotten.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) [2.32 p.m.], by leave: Not a day goes by in the Coogee electorate office when Nicholas Ruygrok is not looking over our shoulders, and mine in particular. We had moved to our new office only a few days before the tragic accident that took Nick's life. We have very proudly named our meeting room the "Nicholas Ruygrok Conference Room". Not only is Nick's name on the door but his ever-smiling face is also looking down on us from a picture on the wall. I speak for those who have not had the opportunity to publicly express their affection for Nick that has been afforded to the Attorney General and others. I refer in particular to the people in my office who worked so closely with Nick, including Mark Egelstaff, and Waverley councillors Angela Burrill and Tony Kay, Mayor Sally Betts, the former Mayor of Randwick Scott Nash, and the many volunteers who came through our office and who had such a fantastic time working with him. Our relationships with Nick were more than working relationships; they grew into mateship and genuine friendship.

Before the funeral Mark Egelstaff said to me, "It was not like going to work; it felt as though I was going to hang out with a bunch of mates who had an election to win." Working to win the election was something we were doing on the side. Nick was incredibly genuine and he looked after me wonderfully well despite the fact that I had known him for only a short time. He came to work with me in May/June 2014, and I was lucky to have him with me through the election campaign until he was rightly headhunted, or poached, by the Attorney General. His departure represented a massive loss to my office, but I could not let him leave without my best wishes because he was so deserving of the appointment. His work ethic, his interpersonal skills and his manner were of the highest calibre. His passing has been particularly hard for us, his friends, but not nearly as hard as it has been for Verity, Maddy and Jackie and the rest of his family, who had this incredible human being in their lives. I do not say that lightly; he was absolutely incredible. Nick will forever be a mate and a dear friend. He will always be in my heart and the hearts of those who worked with him. We will all miss him very much.

Members and officers of the House stood in their places as a mark of respect.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Notices of Motions

Government Business Notices of Motions (for Bills) given.

Private Members' Business Notices of Motions (for Bills) given.

QUESTION TIME

[Question time commenced at 2.40 p.m.]

MINISTER FOR FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition. Members will come to order. The Leader of the Opposition will be heard in silence.

Mr LUKE FOLEY: My question is directed to the Premier. Did Minister Hazzard inform the

Premier that after the Independent Commission Against Corruption's announcement of an inquiry into Margaret Cunneen he personally contacted an eyewitness to Sophia Tilley's car accident?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: As much as the Leader of the Opposition might be interested in any private discussions that may or may not have taken place, I am not going to provide evidence to him. If he has a concern obviously there is an appropriate body that investigates such things, and that is where it should be left.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier's remarks are in order. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Michael Daley: The question was very specific: Was the Premier notified?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is in order. There is no point of order. The member for Maroubra will resume his seat.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: I address my question to the Premier. How is the Government delivering improved services and infrastructure to communities across New South Wales?

Mr MIKE BAIRD: That is a very good question from a very good member.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. Members who continue to interject will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: It has been a long summer but, importantly for the people of New South Wales, in that time this Government has got to work. Indeed, we continue to work every day for the people of this State.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: Many great things are happening for the people of this State under the great policies of this great Government.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: However, it is an alternative case for those opposite. It will not surprise anyone to learn that the Opposition has not done very much in the past three months—I will get to that in a minute. Those opposite should take notes because it will show them what can be done in government when you are focused on what you are supposed to be doing. Importantly, the Sydney Metro Northwest rail link—

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: With the assistance of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, and all members representing electorates in the Hills, the tunnelling has finally been done. We have heard about it; we have been waiting for it. It has now been done—30 kilometres have been completed on time and under budget.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The Government has announced that Waterloo is to be a new Sydney Metro station. That will mean great opportunities for urban renewal in the area. It will also mean great opportunities to revitalise, rebuild and upgrade social housing. The Minister has announced an incredible social housing policy. We have also announced a preferred light rail route for Parramatta—the member for Parramatta is very excited about what is going on in his electorate. Camden Valley Way has been upgraded and opened to traffic one year ahead of schedule and, importantly, under budget—that is how this Government does infrastructure.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We have announced a new plan to improve local government.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We do not apologise for standing up for ratepayers, delivering better services and more infrastructure, and putting downward pressure on rates.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale will cease shouting.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We all know that we have a great Treasurer but even those opposite would have had to stand and applaud the first lease of TransGrid. They said we would not raise the money. We heard time and again during the election campaign, "You won't raise the money, but this Treasurer certainly did—more than \$10 billion.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: Where will those net proceeds go? They will go into more schools, hospitals, rail, roads and the infrastructure needs of the people of this State. Those opposite stood against it; those on this side of the House are proud to be delivering it. The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure also announced important regulation for point to point ridesharing in this State in support of the transitioning taxi industry. These are great reforms for consumers.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: And everywhere Jillian the builder went, she was building great hospitals—

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: —in regional New South Wales, such as Dubbo, Parkes and Forbes. For the first time we opened three hospitals in four hours. Those opposite could not do that in 16 years but we did it in four hours. Wagga Wagga—

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will come to order. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I call the member for Prospect to order for the second time.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: Those opposite promised the member for Wagga Wagga that they would deliver but they delivered nothing. This Government is delivering.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Port Stephens will cease interjecting.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The member for Kogarah should be happy about St George Hospital. The member for Oatley fought for that—in fact, he brought it forward a year. That is a great outcome for the

people of this State. In his policy the Minister has delivered thousands of additional affordable social housing premises. That will transform social housing in this State. Last year was a record year for jobs—2015 brought many, many jobs—which is a great thing for the people of this State.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Londonderry will cease interjecting. The member for Port Stephens will cease interjecting.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: However, I note that there was very little output from those opposite. The member for Summer Hill—now known as the member for "Summer Pills"—did make a contribution. It was not necessarily endorsed by the party, but she made a contribution. So much promise—

Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. Members will come to order.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We saw from those opposite so much promise in terms of leadership. All of a sudden everyone put up their hand and wanted to be leader. I know the Leader of the Opposition is working hard but the only merger that he should be concerned about is the merger between the member for Maroubra and the member for Kogarah. That sort of merger is very dangerous because the right wing is coming together.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We will get on with the job of looking after the people of this State. It has been a very good summer for the people of New South Wales.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The good news is that we will be here all year and there is much more to do.

MINISTER FOR FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr PAUL LYNCH: Madam Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The member for Liverpool has the call and will be heard in silence.

Mr PAUL LYNCH: I direct my question to the Minister for Family and Community Services. Did the Minister personally contact a witness to Sophia Tilley's car accident during the Independent Commission Against Corruption's investigation concerning Margaret Cunneen?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I was fascinated to hear the Leader of the Opposition's first question today relating to a drink-driving matter.

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

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I think the member knows more than a passing amount about such matters. I was also fascinated to hear that it was a question about the Independent Commission Against Corruption when so many of those opposite know so much about ICAC.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bankstown will cease shouting. Members who continue to interject will be removed from the Chamber.

Dr Hugh McDermott: Point of order—

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

[Interruption]

Dr Hugh McDermott: Sit down.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Prospect will not tell members to sit down; I tell members when to sit down. The member for Prospect will be directed to resume his seat if he continues to be aggressive towards me. What is the member's point of order?

Dr Hugh McDermott: My point of order is under Standing Order 73. What exactly did the Minister mean by his comment about the Independent Commission Against Corruption?

The SPEAKER: Order! That is entirely a matter for the Minister. There is no point of order.

Mr Luke Foley: Nick Greiner lost his job thanks to—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: And you got your job as a result of ICAC; Ian Macdonald got your job for you. Whilst I am mildly amused by the level of intellect not present on the other side of the House, I will answer the question. I am actually amazed. I heard the news this morning that those opposite were going to get into amalgamations, they were going to do this and do that—oh, it was going to be exciting—but what have we got? We have a question about ICAC.

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

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: There are certain matters that, as an Attorney General of the State, obviously I cannot speak about. But I am happy to answer the question. I do not understand why those opposite lack any understanding of the role of an Attorney General. I was contacted by a witness. She called my office, to the best of my recollection—it is pushing it back two or three years now. I do recollect that she spoke to me about the matter and I do recollect that I did what any Attorney General should do in the circumstances, which was to call the counsel assisting the ICAC—that is the counsel who was actually supporting ICAC. I put her in touch with him, and that is all I know. Thank you very much.

Mr PAUL LYNCH: I ask a supplementary question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira will come to order. I need to hear the supplementary question.

Mr PAUL LYNCH: Arising out of that answer, did the Minister advise a witness to Sophia Tilley's car accident to contact Margaret Cunneen?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not recollect that detail. If I did, I do not know. But it is possible—I am not saying I did not; it is possible.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not recollect. But what I can say is I told her definitely because I had to ring. The reason I recollect is that it was difficult to find out who the counsel was who had been temporarily appointed to assist the commission, so I rang the commission. I found out who it was, he was in his chambers, and I recollect ringing him and giving him the detail. I do not recollect whether I told her to ring Ms Cunneen. I do not think I would have, but it is possible—I do not know. Does it matter?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: May I just say that, as Attorney General, if I make a sensible and balanced decision—which I did as Attorney General—you guys can whistle into the wind for a long while and you will get nowhere.

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

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Mr ADAM CROUCH: My question is addressed to the Attorney General. How will the Government's response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse assist victims of child abuse?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: Today we move one step further to getting justice for the child survivors of abuse. Today I will introduce a bill to amend the Limitation Act to provide that there is no time barrier for an action for damages for child abuse. This bill takes up the recommendations of the royal commission. Many survivors take decades to understand and act on the enormous harm inflicted on them by their abusers. Indeed, the royal commission's research found that it takes an average of 22 years to disclose childhood sexual abuse. So the current law needs to change, and that is exactly what we are doing.

That much was clear to me when I attended the royal commission hearing into the abuse that was committed at Bethcar Children's Home. I have also spent time listening to survivors, including Bonny Djuric from Parramatta Girls Home and Leonie Sheedy from Care Leavers Australia Network. Decades later the pain is raw and the pain is still real. So many people have been ignored for too long. I have been inspired by the courage and strength displayed by those witnesses as they spoke out at that hearing about what was happening. We know that all that pain and suffering cannot be cured by politicians in Parliament, but removing limitation periods to claim damages for child sexual abuse lifts a major impediment to people seeking compensation for their pain and their emotional suffering.

The Government's Limitation Amendment (Child Abuse) Bill 2016 is an acknowledgement of the abuse suffered by many children and young people in our community—abuse that can cause trauma and hardship well into adulthood. This is the right thing to do and it will make a real difference. The New South Wales Government from early on has been committed to ensuring that the survivors of child sexual abuse receive the compassion and care they need. The Government has already offered unlimited counselling for survivors through our Victims Support Scheme. We provided extra resources to the Department of Family and Community Services to fast-track access to records. Across government we adopted principles to guide government agencies on how to respond to claims for child sexual abuse. Since the royal commission delivered its final report in September 2015, we have been closely considering all the commission's 99 recommendations. I am convinced that an holistic approach will ultimately deliver the best justice to survivors.

In addition to removing limitation periods, the royal commission recommends reforms to better protect children in the future. Sometimes the biggest barrier to justice for a survivor of child abuse is the institution that looked after that child. The royal commission recommends changes to ensure that there are defendants to those actions. How do we make sure that institutions do not avoid their responsibility to protect children against abuse? What kind of duty do institutions owe to those children? How do we make sure that institutions to which we entrust the care and supervision of our children and young people take the right steps to prevent the harm happening in the first place? In simple terms, how do we do things better in future?

Make no mistake, these reforms are complex. But this Government will not shy away from them.

We also support the royal commission's keystone recommendation for the establishment of a single, national redress scheme. I have been very vocal in my and the Premier's views on this that it must be a nationally led scheme for the benefit of anyone, at any time, in any State that requires redress—practical support, practical assistance and a small payment to make all the difference to their current circumstance. As Attorney General, I will continue to discuss all these important reforms with Commonwealth—

Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: There is work to be done. This is an important plank in our State's response to all those terrible, terrible events that led to the traumatising of our children and young people, some of them so many years ago. I will continue to lead this reform on behalf of the Government. I will continue to work with my State, Federal and Territory colleagues in the coming months. The New South Wales Government will continue to deliver on the recommendations of the royal commission. It is the right thing for us all to do.

The SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the member for Tamworth I welcome to the gallery members of the Seniors Group of Surveyors who dined in Parliament House today and are guests of the Hon. Scott Farlow, member of the Legislative Council. Welcome to question time.

PARTY DRUG USE AT FESTIVALS

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. What is the Government doing to strengthen measures to keep people safe at festivals?

Mr TROY GRANT: I thank the member for Tamworth for his question and also offer my congratulations to him. Over the summer break he hosted a very successful drug summit and forum in Tamworth to tackle some of the issues ravaging and concerning that community. I congratulate him on his initiative, the great response and the work that he is doing in this area. On this issue, my thoughts and those of the Government are first and foremost with the families of those young people who have died as a result of taking illegal drugs at festivals during what has been a tragic summer. The safety of our young people is absolutely paramount to the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government and we have a simple message in relation to that: Drug dealers are using these festivals to prop up their profits, ignoring the misery and the harm that these drugs cause.

As I announced during the summer break, we are reviewing the risk management for these events, including the process for granting event permits and the regulation and security protocols surrounding these festivals. As I have said publicly, it is time for festival organisers to step up and help us stem the drug supply at the gate. Under existing law, sniffer dogs can be used only on the day of the event and they cannot go past the front gate. That is under active review. Anyone who runs a business on public land has an onus of care in addition to a duty of care to manage and promote any event as a legal, drug-free event. To people who run a festival, here is my message: You have an onus of care as well as a duty of care to ensure that your patrons will be safe.

A user-pays system to allow dogs to sweep the grounds for drugs, including those drugs stashed on site before the festival commences, is a commonsense initiative to help us tackle this issue. However, I must correct the dangerous and misleading calls by the member for Summer Hill to stop sniffer dogs. Sniffer dogs do not just find drug users who are breaking the law; they detect the dealers who peddle these cocktails of toxic substances to our young people.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Newtown will come to order. She will cease interjecting.

Mr TROY GRANT: I remind the member for Summer Hill that in this place she is a lawmaker and should not be encouraging people to be lawbreakers. Since 2014 sniffer dogs have detected more than 460 kilograms of drugs.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Newtown will cease interjecting or she will be placed on a call to order.

Mr TROY GRANT: The reckless calls by the member for Summer Hill for pill testing at festivals oversimplifies this very complex health and law enforcement issue, and once again shows that Labor is void of leadership and is all at sea on the most important issues and genuine policies that concern this community. This Government will not run a quality assurance regime using taxpayers' dollars to prop up drug dealers' businesses. We will not support illegal drugs and an industry that destroys families and young lives. Taking drugs is playing Russian roulette with your life and those in this House should be more responsible and understand that. Knowing what is in illegal drugs does not make them safe, as some who support that argument profess. It also does not stop people feeling the full force of the law if they are caught with those illegal drugs.

Government funding is better spent educating young people and rehabilitating addicts. Taking party drugs risks the opposite of a good time—a ride in an ambulance if the person is lucky or unfortunately, and I have had to do this, a knock on a parents' door to tell them that their young person is dead. That is not my idea of a party or a good time. We will not do quality assurance on drug dealers' industries. Pill testing, which has been put forward, is no guarantee against an overdose or a bad reaction that could lead to serious harm or death.

Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.

Mr TROY GRANT: I stress that pill testing is giving those using illegal drugs a very, very dangerous and false sense of security before they pop these pills in their mouth, and it is something we must avoid. Last week in the Central West, very proudly with the Minister for Mental Health, we opened a pilot ice rehabilitation project—money well spent given the impact that the drug ice is having on the community's ordinary daily life. Education and rehabilitation is the path that this Government will be taking in conjunction with the law enforcement effort to protect our young people and our communities, and for that I and this Government make no apology.

MINISTER FOR FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr PAUL LYNCH: My question is directed to the Minister for Family and Community Services.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will come to order.

Mr PAUL LYNCH: Will the Minister confirm that he gave Margaret Cunneen's personal mobile phone number to a witness to Sophia Tilley's car accident?

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will come to order. Those who continue to interject before the Minister has even commenced his answer will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am sorry, I do not recollect. But I know that what I did principally was to contact the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] and speak to the commissioner. I do recollect, as I said earlier, that a witness contacted my office and my staff mentioned that she wanted to talk to me. I spoke to her and she gave me certain alleged facts. I said to her, "Those are matters that obviously you should refer to ICAC." I then hunted out who the ICAC counsel assisting was. I had a conversation with him—

Ms Kate Washington: You remember all that.

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

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I had a conversation with him, as I recollect. I do not recollect doing that; I just do not recollect it.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will come to order. It is not his call to decide what somebody should or should not do. The member will remain silent.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: But if I did I think, trying to assess this, it would have been a matter of the evidence being given to both sides so they could properly do the assessments. But I do not recollect that. But you know what? I do not think it matters two hoots.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease arguing with the Minister. The member for Maroubra will come to order. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the first time.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not think it matters two hoots, so get excited. Seriously, the Leader of the Opposition is an expert on knowing exactly what one should not do in relation to drink-driving and ICAC. I think he should absolutely pull his head in.

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

EMERGENCY SERVICES PROPERTY LEVY

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: My question is addressed to our wonderful Treasurer. How will the Government reform funding for fire and emergency services to ensure that the system is fairer?

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: I thank the outstanding member for Drummoyne for his question. I know that he and many of our colleagues have been working hard to make this State a better place, and will continue to do so.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: That is exactly why we have announced a major policy in relation to tax reform: to abolish the Emergency Services Levy on insurance policies. We have done this because it will make the system fairer and will ensure that insurance premiums are more affordable for people who are currently locked out of being insured in New South Wales. The Emergency Services Levy on insurance policies will be replaced by an Emergency Services Property Levy, which will be paid alongside council rates. This is a critical piece of reform that has been spoken about in New South Wales—and I have checked this—for about the past 17 or 18 years. It is therefore very pleasing that we are now bringing this to the fore.

Currently in New South Wales our fire and emergency services are paid for through a levy on property insurance. This means that under the existing funding system property owners who have insurance policies are paying for fire and emergency services. Of course, we know that things like fire do not discriminate and everybody must have these crucial services available to them in their time of need. Whether or not we are insured, we rely on emergency services. So this system will make it fairer by ensuring that all property owners will pay for our vital fire and emergency services. One part of this policy reform that I am particularly proud of is the positive way in which it will make insurance premiums more affordable.

Regrettably, New South Wales currently has the lowest rate of insurance and underinsurance in the country. States that have made this reform have demonstrated that a reduction in premiums allows people who are currently priced out of the market to obtain insurance to ensure they are covered when a tragic circumstance occurs. This is an important part of our policy. With all property owners across the State sharing the burden, it is not only fairer for people who are currently paying premiums but it is also

fairer for those who are currently priced out of the market because it enables them to cover their properties for times of crisis.

As I have alluded to publicly, this is an important tax reform that is being undertaken by other mainland States and it is about time we did it in New South Wales. I stress that this policy reform is budget neutral to New South Wales. We will not stand to make a dollar. We are introducing this reform because it makes the system fairer and because it means people will be able to afford insurance. We have estimated that the average insured property owner will be \$40 better off during the course of one year. The modelling shows property owners are currently paying \$160 while post these reforms property insurance premiums will go down by \$200.

Mr Michael Daley: Do you promise? Then release the modelling.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I refer the member who made that interjection to Professor Allan Fels who has been appointed by the New South Wales Government to be the Price Commissioner. Professor Allan Fels and I have already met to discuss this reform. He has also given some good advice following the implementation of this policy in 2013 by the Victorian Government. Professor Fels has been engaged to ensure that insurance companies pass on the savings to consumers. An important point I make to all members in this place is that insurance companies will face fines up to \$10 million for unreasonable pricing, and monitoring has already started. As Price Commissioner, Professor Fels is what I would regard as Australia's best-known consumer advocate for this important reform and he has already started his work.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: I want to know if the Treasurer—

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

Mr Michael Daley: The point of order is Standing Order 129. Are poor people still called shirkers? Do you agree with David Elliott?

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I will not dignify that point of order with a response.

Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Professor Fels has already been engaged. Insurance companies will be fined up to \$10 million. Professor Fels and his assistant will be looking at insurance prices until December 2018 to give the community comfort that this Government's policies will be implemented. The reform is about making the system fairer. I also take this opportunity to acknowledge that Minister Elliott, the Minister for Emergency Services, is doing an outstanding job. Fire and Rescue NSW, the NSW Rural Fire Service and the NSW State Emergency Service can be assured that this Government is absolutely committed to funding for those important and vital services. We have made that clear and this source of funding is not in any way compromised by this policy. In fact, this reform will allow this Government, in the strong position it is, to consider additional funding into the future.

This policy was announced before Christmas, but the scheme will not start until 1 July 2017 so it gives everyone a chance to be consulted. We have already consulted with major stakeholders and will continue to do so. I am grateful to those stakeholders who have spoken to Government members about the detail. I stress, the new reform will not start until 1 July 2017. We have learned from the experience of other States. We acknowledge the fact that in Victoria this reform was welcomed in a bipartisan way and I ask the Opposition for its support of this vital and important reform. I hope that we receive that support.

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

will cease interjecting.

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: Consultation started in 2012 when we asked for community feedback in this important area. We look forward to implementing this vital tax reform that will make the system fairer and will ensure funding into the future.

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT AND THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Mr LUKE FOLEY: My question is directed to the Premier. Under what circumstances is it acceptable for one of his Ministers to initiate private conversations with an eyewitness in a matter under active investigation by the Independent Commission Against Corruption?

Mr Michael Daley: Be careful, Mike.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra should be careful. He will cease interjecting.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: It is clear that the matter alluded to in the question should be dealt with by the Independent Commission Against Corruption. That is where it will be dealt with and the matter should be dealt with by the commission alone.

POINT TO POINT TRANSPORT

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. How is the Government modernising the point to point transport industry, creating more choice for consumers and a more level playing field for businesses?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. Members who are removed from the Chamber will remain outside the Chamber for a period of three hours.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I congratulate the member on the backbench for asking the right question. It is tremendous to ask the Government a question about a world-leading, unique and innovative reform. Nowhere else in the world has a government sought to embark on holistic point to point transport reform. The reform is not just about Uber, it is about every element of the point to point transport market. It can also be considered to be a reform of hire cars, club courtesy buses and community transport, and a recognition of the challenges besetting the taxi industry. It is a scrutiny of elements of the taxi industry from country cabs through to operators in metropolitan areas of the State.

Nowhere else in the world have we seen reform of the taxi industry at the same time as we have seen the facilitation and legalisation of ridesharing services. What does it mean? We not only legalised ridesharing but we also stripped out some 50 pieces of regulation and red tape, which cost the taxi industry an enormous amount of time and money. We are now able to facilitate those businesses to again be innovative businesses that are able to meet the needs of customers across the State. Nowhere else in the world has such a generous industry assistance package been offered to the taxi industry. Nowhere else in the world has \$250,000 million been put on the table to assist industry adjustment.

While the Government has announced an immediate \$20,000 payment to industry, it has also indicated that the remaining industry assistance will be put to a panel led by the taxi industry under the stewardship of the NSW Taxi Council, which will work out the best way that the additional \$150 million will further assist industry. There has been a long and protracted history of reform in this sector in years gone by. We have not done it piecemeal. We have not reformed hire cars, unlike Labor did in the early 2000s. We have looked at it holistically and we have ensured that the taxi industry package is fair, particularly for licence holders who depend on their licence to help in their retirement. At the same time, we are ensuring that people are properly assisted.

Mr Chris Minns: That's ridiculous, Andrew.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The member for Kogarah should be careful because I have a few things on him that I will be revealing to the House this year. It is interesting to note that he has been put in charge of the waste watch committee of those opposite. We might revisit that at a later hour.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Another important element of this reform is that we have also announced a new compliance regime for the point to point sector. No longer will compliance be housed in Roads and Maritime Services [RMS]; it will be housed under a commissioner charged with the responsibilities of the point to point market. Taxi industry reform is difficult. This Government understands the difficulties and challenges besetting the industry at this time. At the same time, customers across the State are looking for innovation and improved customer service. By getting off the back of the industry by reducing some \$30 million worth of red tape, we are now able to see that innovation go to work. The reform has come at the same time that we are seeing new products come into the market—Uber and Lyft. The NRMA, in its submission, flagged that it is considering ridesharing. We are expecting the taxi industry to be able to innovate and pivot off these reports.

Under the leadership of the Minister, the Small Business Commissioner is working alongside the Taxi Council to host 12 forums across the State for operators to find out about the reforms. The forums started yesterday in Wagga Wagga. I understand that this reform is an enormous shock for the industry—for cab operators in the country and in the city. The Government wants to work alongside operators to ensure that the taxi industry has a strong, sound future in this State. The other element to this reform is that we have, in essence, two markets, a liberalised booking market and the rank and hail market. The rank and hail market in the central business district is some—

Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: What I was about to say is very important. We have, in essence, the formation of two markets. The booking market will be completely liberalised because through technology we can ensure that we have the appropriate record keeping and safety measures in place for both drivers and passengers. But for community safety purposes the rank and hail market will remain the 100 per cent purview of the taxi industry in recognition of the fact that we must ensure appropriate regulation to safeguard the community. The Government will introduce legislation to ensure that we get the compensation or the industry adjustment packages right. At the same time we will ensure that the appropriate regulatory framework is in place.

At the same time, the Government is taking responsible action to ensure that the community understands the importance of the rank and hail market. I note that it has been a long summer of silence for the Labor Party and in particular my opposite number. I say to the shadow transport Minister in 2016: Maintain that rage, maintain that enthusiasm. I know that the member for Keira is good with a knife. I did not expect him to be good with a spoon over the summer period; one with a ukulele and the other with a spoon. I look forward to the actions of the Dream Team into 2016 and I will continue to back Linda Burney as Deputy Leader of the Labor Party any day over the present Deputy Leader.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Epping.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: It has been longstanding practice in this place for more than a century that when the Government runs out of time and time is left over, the eleventh question goes to the Opposition. The member for Liverpool clearly had the jump and sought the call, if that is the criteria.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have the discretion to do what I like in this Chamber. The member for

Maroubra will resume his seat.

Mr Michael Daley: You might have the discretion, Madam Speaker, but it is very unfair.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. It is my call, and he knows that. The member for Epping sought the call when the member for Ku-ring-gai sought the call. The member for Liverpool did not seek the call.

Mr Anthony Roberts: To the point of order: Madam Speaker, as usual, you are correct. Many things in life are unfair. The last election for those opposite was very unfair, but, as you point out, it is up to you to decide who has the next question.

The SPEAKER: Order! I thank the Minister for his comments. The member for Epping has the call.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: My question is addressed to the Minister for Local Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Canterbury will remain silent.

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: How will local government reforms deliver benefits to communities across this State?

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I thank the member for Epping for his question. He is a member who is concerned to ensure that we have strong councils in this State. If we have strong councils, we have strong communities that get the infrastructure and services they need and deserve. Can there be any doubt today as to why we should reform the local government sector in New South Wales when we consider what has been unfolding today at the City of Botany Bay Council? It is another example that reform is overdue, that the sector is in need of reform. When Labor was last in government what did it do? It did nothing about reforming local government.

These longstanding issues have been put into the too-hard basket for far too long. We need these changes to ensure that we have a strong and effective system of local government. Reform is not easy, but on this side of the House we are making the tough decisions to make lives easier for people in this State. There has been much talk about mergers. We could go back to 1909 when the Lord Mayor said, "This great subject"—of council mergers—"has almost been talked threadbare". He said it "must be grappled with". He further stated:

Greater economy can be secured, and above all, much greater efficiency, with continuity of policy, oneness of purpose, abolition of overlapping and frictions, and a great broadening of the horizon of local government.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. Opposition members who are not interested in the Minister's answer may leave the Chamber.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: In 1946 the Royal Commission into Local Government Boundaries was held. The existing boundaries, fixed as they were without regard to the great developments in transport and communications that have since taken place, are illogical when applied to present day conditions. Creating larger local government is now essential. In the 1970s the Barnett Committee recommended reducing the number of councils to 97.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: For 100 years leaders in local government have said that reform is needed. Change is overdue and this Government is taking action. For too long the benefits of mergers have been clear. The numerous reports we have all seen show that we must reduce the number of councils in this State. The Sansom panel said:

Taxpayers should not be expected to increase grant funding indefinitely to support councils that are necessarily small, lack capacity and build excessive costs into the system.

If we look at past mergers, the panel found:

The overwhelming finding is that, properly planned, mergers can produce stronger, more effective councils, and that community identity can be maintained.

It is time to get councils working for local communities, which is why the Government is sorting it out.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Stronger councils mean more infrastructure and better services. We have seen various reports. Those who are against mergers will criticise these reports. They criticise the calculations and they criticise the savings, saying they are not enough.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: The Government is putting communities first. Creating fewer councils is not just about saving money: It is about reducing red tape and bureaucracy for residents and businesses.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will come to order. The member for Charlestown will come to order. The member for Swansea will come to order. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: It is about taking steps to live within our means. Let us look at the councils in Sydney, which have 41 general managers and compare that to Brisbane, which can manage with just one. It is about getting Sydney moving and growing without negotiating with 41 mini-fiefdoms. It is about ensuring that regional and rural towns remain vibrant and get the services they need and deserve. It is about ensuring that there are top-quality councillors and staff making decisions in the best interests of their communities under great public scrutiny, unlike what we have seen in Auburn over recent months.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. The member for Keira should not be silly.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: The member for Heffron said this about councils:

The members opposite should not have faith in them either in respect of voluntary amalgamations.

He said:

It will not matter how much money the government is offering because councils back self-interest every time.

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

Question time concluded at 3.30 p.m.

VARIATIONS OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ESTIMATES AND APPROPRIATIONS 2015-16

Ms Gladys Berejikian tabled, pursuant to section 24 of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, variations of the receipts and payments estimates and appropriations for 2015-16 relating to the Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet, dated 3 February 2016.

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 at this sitting to postpone the commencement of Government business until the conclusion of the motion accorded priority.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Bills

Motion by Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS agreed to:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the resumption of the adjourned debate on Wednesday 17 February 2016, and passage through all remaining stages at that, or any subsequent sitting, of the Associations Incorporation Amendment (Review) Bill 2016.

DEPARTMENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Report

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to the resolution of 19 November 2015, of the report of the Department of the Legislative Assembly for the year ended 30 June 2015, received 30 November 2015.

Ordered to be printed.

INSPECTOR OF 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 entitled "Report Pursuant to Section 77A Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988: Operation "Hale": ICAC Re Margaret Cunneen SC & Ors ", dated 4 December 2015.

Ordered to be printed.

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 Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled

"Investigation into the Conduct of Officers of the NSW Rural Fire Service and others," dated December 2015.

Ordered to be printed.

FOREST AGREEMENTS AND INTEGRATED FORESTRY OPERATIONS APPROVALS

Amendment

The Speaker announced the receipt, pursuant to section 69H of the Forestry Act 2012, of Amendment No. 5 to the Integrated Forestry Operations Approval for Riverina Red Gum, received out of session on 8 January 2016 and authorised to be made public this day.

PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS ADVISER

Correspondence

The Speaker tabled, pursuant to clause 6 of the resolution of the House relating to the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser, a copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to the Honourable Andrew Stoner, former Minister, dated 14 January 2016.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, of the following reports of the Auditor-General:

- (1) Financial Audit Report for 2015, Volume Seven, received out of session on 24 November 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (2) Financial Audit Report for 2015, Volume Eight, received out of session on 28 November 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (3) Financial Audit Report for 2015, Volume Nine, received out of session on 3 December 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (4) Financial Audit Report for 2015, Volume Ten, received out of session on 8 December 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (5) Financial Audit Report for 2015, Volume Eleven, received out of session on 10 December 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (6) Financial Audit Report for 2015, Volume Twelve, received out of session on 15 December 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (7) Financial Audit Report for 2015, Volume Thirteen, received out of session on 15 December 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (8) Performance Audit Report entitled "Government Assistance to Industry: Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services", dated December 2015, received out of session on 17 December 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (9) Performance Audit Report entitled "Mental health post-discharge care: NSW Health", dated December 2015, received out of session on 17 December 2015 and authorised to be printed

- (10) Performance Audit Report entitled "Public Sector Management Reforms: Public Service Commission", dated January 2016, received out of session on 28 January 2016 and authorised to be printed
- (11) Performance Audit Report entitled "Franchising of Sydney Ferries Network services: Transport for NSW", dated February 2016, received out of session on 4 February 2016 and authorised to be printed

ANNUAL REPORTS

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 13 of the Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985, of the report of the Department of Transport (including the report of Transport for NSW) for the year ended 30 June 2015 (Volumes One and Two), received out of session on 27 November 2015 and authorised to be printed.

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 11 of the Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984, of the following reports for the year ended 30 June 2015, received out of session on 27 November 2015 and authorised to be printed:

Independent Transport Safety Regulator
NSW Trains (Volumes One and Two)
Rail Corporation New South Wales (Volumes One and Two)
State Transit Authority of New South Wales (Volumes One and Two)
Sydney Trains (Volumes One and Two)
Office of Transport Safety Investigations
WestConnex Delivery Authority (Volumes One and Two)

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 11 of the Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984, of the report of Roads and Maritime Services (Volumes One and Two), received out of session on 30 November 2015 and authorised to be printed.

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 11 of the Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984, of the Administration of Agricultural Statutory Authorities, received out of session on 4 December 2015 and authorised to be printed.

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 161 of the Industrial Relations Act 1996, of the report of the Industrial Relations Commission for 2014, received out of session on 1 December 2015 and authorised to be printed.

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 33 of the Radiation Control Act 1990, of the report of the Radiation Advisory Council for the year ended 30 June 2015, received out of session on 4 January 2016 and authorised to be printed.

OFFICE OF TRANSPORT SAFETY INVESTIGATIONS

Reports

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 46D of the Passenger Transport Act 1990, of the following reports from the Office of Transport Safety Investigations entitled:

- (1) "Bus Safety Investigation Report, Fire Involving STA Bus MO 3936, Ashfield, Sydney, 19 May 2015", received out of session on 1 December 2015 and authorised to be printed
- (2) "Rail Safety Investigation Report, Worksite protection incident, Sydney Trains Flemington

Maintenance Centre, 2 August 2014", received out of session on 18 January 2016 and authorised to be printed

- (3) "Bus Safety Report, Bus Fires in New South Wales in 2015", received out of session on 15 February 2016 and authorised to be printed

AUSTRALIAN CRIME COMMISSION

Report

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to section 35 of the Law Enforcement and National Security (Assumed Identities) Act 2010, of the Assumed Identities Report of the Australian Crime Commission for the year ended 30 June 2015, received out of session on 4 December 2015 and authorised to be printed.

INDEPENDENT PRICING AND REGULATORY TRIBUNAL

Report

The Clerk announced the receipt, pursuant to 234C of the National Energy Retail Law (NSW), of the report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled "Review of the performance and competitiveness of the retail electricity market in NSW, From 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, Energy—Final Report", dated November 2015, received out of session on 10 December 2015 and authorised to be printed.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report

Mr Michael Johnsen, as Chair, tabled the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled "Legislation Review Digest No. 12/56", dated 16 February 2016, together with minutes of the committee meeting regarding "Legislative Review Digest No. 11/56", dated 17 November 2015.

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

PETITIONS

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

Gap Bluff Land Use

Petition requesting that the Government reject Gap Bluff Hospitality Pty Limited land use proposals in Watsons Bay and other areas, received from **Ms Gabrielle Upton**.

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

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

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**.

Companion Animals on Public Transport

Petition requesting that companion animals be allowed to travel on all public transport, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Edgecliff Railway Station and Interchange

Petition requesting that the New South Wales Government upgrade the Edgecliff railway station and interchange to provide full access, 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**.

Low-cost Housing and Homelessness

Petition requesting increased funding for low-cost housing and homelessness services, 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**.

Slaughterhouse Monitoring

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

Plastic Bags Ban

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

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

The Hon. Troy Grant—lodged 22 October 2015—Powerhouse Museum Ultimo (Mr Alex Greenwich).

The Hon. Brad Hazzard—lodged 22 October 2015—Homeless People Accommodation (Mr Gareth Ward).

The Hon. Mark Speakman—lodged 10 November 2015—Rubbish Odor Removal (Mrs Tanya Davies).

The Hon. Duncan Gay—lodged 12 November 2015—M4 East Tunnel (Ms Jodi McKay).

The Hon. Paul Toole—lodged 17 November 2015—Local Government Amalgamations (Ms Gabrielle Upton).

The Hon. Jillian Skinner—lodged 19 November 2015—Aged Care Facilities (Ms Tamara Smith).

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Business Lapsed

General Business Notice of Motion (General Notices for Bills) No. 1 and General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) Nos 82, 84, 85, 88 to 99, and 101 to 323 lapsed pursuant to Standing Order 105 (3).

CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO BE ACCORDED PRIORITY

State Infrastructure

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [3.36 p.m.]: This motion should be accorded priority because the New South Wales Government is getting on with the job of delivering improved services, vital infrastructure and jobs to improve the daily lives of families across New South Wales. This Government did not take a break over the summer vacation. This Government got on with the job of delivering for the people of this State. The people of the north-west saw this as tunnelling was completed on the Metro Northwest. Finally a viable public transport solution will be delivered for the long-suffering residents of north-western Sydney.

The people of Camden saw the Government in action over the summer vacation as Camden Valley Way was completed—\$28 million under budget—thanks also to the excellent work of the member for Camden. The people of Dubbo, Parkes, Forbes, Wagga Wagga and Tamworth saw this Government working hard for their interests over the Christmas break. The Government delivered for them. These are examples of this Government delivering for the people of New South Wales.

That stands in stark contrast to the actions of those on the opposite side of the Chamber during the summer break. In fact, they enjoyed a very long summer break. No-one enjoyed the break more than the member for Cabramatta. His tan is looking fantastic. He has written to me several times on behalf of his constituents, who are very concerned about their parking and speeding fines. He has not signed one letter since 26 November 2015. I have letters on behalf of Mr Tran, Mr So, Mr Shivelath, Mr Nguyen and Mr Ti. So concerned was he about their plight that he could not be bothered signing them. He got his staff to sign these letters.

Not everyone on the opposite side of the Chamber was on holidays. Some were standing up for some very important issues for the people of New South Wales. The Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane was standing up for Australian Labor Party [ALP] members who wanted to go to Palestine. He was standing up against ALP members who wanted to go to Israel. Was that very important work for the people of New South Wales? The member for Wollongong was very busy during her summer holiday counting the numbers for the mayoralty of the new combined Shellharbour and Wollongong council. She thought, "How can I better torment the member for Shellharbour?" The member for Kogarah took a break from his grudge match with the shadow Treasurer to stand up for that poor not-for-profit organisation the Australian Hotels Association. The member for Summer Hill was very busy during her summer vacation, as the Premier said, standing up for poor defenceless illicit drug users. While Labor Party members care only about themselves, the Government will continue to stand up for the people of New South Wales. [*Time expired.*]

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! The member for Drummoyne will come

to order. I remind the member for Rockdale that he is on three calls to order.

Local Government Amalgamations

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) [3.39 p.m.]: This matter should be given priority because the Government has broken faith with the people of New South Wales. It has gone back on its word, which it gave in writing to the people of New South Wales. On election in 2011 the Government promised that there would be no local government amalgamations. The Leader of The Nationals and the Leader of the Liberal Party signed documents saying that they would not do that.

Mr Troy Grant: Point of order: The member is not allowed to lie in the Parliament. I never signed a document.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! No points of order will be taken during the debate to establish priority.

Mr RON HOENIG: Prior to 2011 the Leader of The Nationals signed a document promising that there would be no forced amalgamations. The member for Bathurst, now Minister for Local Government, promised publicly that there would be no forced amalgamations. It was a promise. The Government has gone back on its word, and that is why people are up in arms. One might think that the Premier is Nice Guy Mike, but he is no different from any other leader—such as Tony Abbott—whose word means nothing.

All the Government has managed to do in this process is to rort the local government boundaries. The reality is that local governments themselves initiated local government reform. Nobody in the House disagrees that local government needs reform. Professor Graham Sansom carried out a statewide review and made recommendations, but the Government did nothing. What did Professor Sansom say? He said that the Government's process was a rort. He said the Government had drawn the bodgiest boundaries possible to try to give the Liberal Party control. We all know that. The Government's incompetence is such that it did not know how to properly conduct a local government review under the Local Government Act 1993. Instead of following the proper process set by the Local Government Boundaries Commission, the Government has left itself exposed to legal action.

I have time to provide one example of the shambles the Government has created. I would like somebody to tell me what the community of interest is between La Perouse and Watsons Bay. The Government thinks that that should be one council area. The council chambers are to be in Double Bay. The member for Maroubra will take his public housing tenants from South Maroubra to Double Bay for council services. No doubt they will add to the Double Bay economy, which has been in decline since the Westfield shopping centre opened nearby. That is the thought process of the Government. If the Government believed in reform, it had three years to refer this matter to the Local Government Boundaries Commission. Instead of doing that, the Government is embarking upon a rushed, probably unlawful process. Councils around New South Wales are up in arms. People like the member for Kiama previously advocated for reform, but now, as Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra, he is protesting the loudest against this rorted process. It is a disgrace. [*Time expired.*]

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

The House divided.

Ayes, 49

Mr Anderson
Mr Aplin

Ms Goward
Mr Grant

Mr Piccoli
Mr Provest

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

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 Rowell
Mr Sidoti
Mr Speakman
Mr Stokes
Mr Taylor
Mr Toole
Mr Tudehope
Ms Upton
Mr Ward
Mr Williams
Mrs Williams

Tellers,
Mr Bromhead
Mr Patterson

Noes, 39

Ms Aitchison
Mr Atalla
Mr Barr
Ms Burney
Ms Car
Ms Catley
Mr Chanthivong
Mr Crakanthorp
Mr Daley
Mr Dib
Ms Doyle
Ms Finn
Mr Foley
Mr Greenwich

Mr Harris
Ms Harrison
Ms Hay
Ms Haylen
Mr Hoenig
Ms Hornery
Mr Kamper
Ms Leong
Mr Lynch
Dr McDermott
Ms McKay
Mr Mehan
Ms Mihailuk
Mr Minns

Mr Park
Mr Parker
Mr Piper
Mr Robertson
Ms K. Smith
Ms T. F. Smith
Ms Washington
Ms Watson
Mr Zangari

Tellers,
Mr Lulich
Mr Warren

Question resolved in the affirmative.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Motion Accorded Priority

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [3.51 p.m.]: I move:

That this House notes the Government is getting on with the job of delivering improved services, vital infrastructure and jobs to improve the daily lives of families across New South Wales.

It is great to see the Deputy-Speaker back in the chair after his summer vacation. I actually popped into his electorate during the summer vacation—not that I had a summer vacation because I am part of a government that is getting on with the job of delivering improved services, vital infrastructure and jobs to improve the daily lives of families across New South Wales. From Albury to the Tweed, and from Broken Hill across to Pittwater, we can see many examples of this Government delivering better services and infrastructure to residents right across this State. Members should not just believe me and take my word for it; they should believe the facts.

The fact is that the people of the north-west are seeing the Government deliver a better public transport solution in our community by completing the tunnelling on the Sydney Metro Northwest. North-west Sydney, like south-west Sydney, is one of the fastest growing areas in New South Wales and it has been without a viable public transport solution. A transport solution was in fact promised by the Labor Government in 1997, as I understand it, and then it was shelved. It was back on again, and then it was put off again. Finally this Government is getting on with the job of delivering that solution. The Government is taking action not just in north-western Sydney but also in Parramatta, the new centre of Sydney's population.

A preferred route for the Parramatta light rail link has been identified and work will be commencing soon on that. Residents in south-western Sydney have struggled with the roads there for many years. Of course it was the member for Camden, when he first stood for election in 2011, who fought for an upgrade of Camden Valley Way. That has now been delivered—not only has it been delivered; it has been delivered \$28 million under budget. Those funds will now be able to be made available for new projects like the NorthConnex projects, which will make a huge difference to the community in my electorate.

Communities right across New South Wales—such as in Dubbo, Parkes, Forbes, Wagga Wagga, Tamworth and indeed Hornsby—have had new hospital facilities opened over the summer period. Those communities are the big winners. They suffered 16 years of neglect under Labor. It did not invest in the infrastructure and services necessary to support hospitals in those communities. Now that has all changed, and the Minister for Health deserves special commendation for that. The communities of St George and Kogarah have seen that with the fast-tracking of the construction of St George Hospital. It is to be complete by mid-2017, which will save taxpayers \$30 million and deliver better health outcomes for the residents of those communities. Those at the margins of our society—those who are the most vulnerable in our communities—will benefit from the Government's recently announced Social and Affordable Housing Fund. It will deliver an additional 3,000 social and affordable housing places in its first phase.

This is all good news about a government getting on with the job of delivering for people across the State. How has the Government been able to do that? It has been able to do that by managing the State's finances well. That is why the Government is getting things back in the black. Recently the Treasurer delivered a record windfall of \$10.258 billion from the lease of the New South Wales electricity network. The Labor Party said that could never be done. What it could not do was stand up to its paymasters in the Electrical Trades Union [ETU] and put the interests of the residents of New South Wales first. The Government has done that. It is releasing the capital from those assets and will be investing in new schools, new public transport initiatives, new roads and new hospitals right across New South Wales to deliver for every resident of this State. The Government has announced the Emergency Services Property Levy to make the tax system to pay for our emergency services fairer with a broader base.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: It will bring insurance costs down.

Mr MATT KEAN: It will drive down insurance costs. It is a fairer system to help reduce the high levels of underinsurance which currently occur across New South Wales. The fun does not just stop there. The Government has also legalised ridesharing in New South Wales to give consumers more choice in how they move around Sydney. It is a great result and I was very happy to support this initiative. It is another example of this Government getting on with the job of delivering for the people of New South Wales.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) [3.56 p.m.]: We know what the member for Hornsby did over Christmas; he clearly went to summer school at the National Institute of Dramatic Art [NIDA] because that was a great performance. The only problem is that it is so far from the truth and reality that

families are confronting. Let us go through a few of those things now. This is a Government that has south-west Sydney, including the electorate of Campbelltown which I am privileged to represent, as one of the largest growth areas in the State with the announcement of 35,000 new homes, yet Appin Road is overlooked and forgotten. What else did the Government get up to? It has closed or sold off elements of Hurlstone Agricultural High School, and there has been the absolute debacle with TAFE. The Minister for Skills is sitting at the table. I hope he takes note of what I have to say, and hopefully he will take it on board and consider his actions.

The reality is that at last report over 40 per cent of patients at Campbelltown Hospital were waiting more than four hours for emergency treatment. I do not know where the member for Hornsby went for a holiday, but I stayed right here and was watching very closely the challenges being confronted as an outcome of this Government's bad policy. It is persecuting families and health services in all communities, including Hornsby. Woody Allen over there can carry on with the facade all he likes. We lived in hope that when the Parliament came back this year we would see some decency, some real work and some real government. But what do we have? We have the continued theatrics and the facade.

Let us go into the financial facts of the matter. The Sydney central business district [CBD] and South East Light Rail project has blown out from \$1.6 billion to \$2.1 billion, which is an increase of \$500 million. The inner city train fleet renewal blew out by \$1.1 billion because the trains simply do not fit the platform—it went from \$2.8 billion to \$3.9 billion. If that is a small amount of money I will run up and down Macquarie Street right now. The cost of WestConnex has blown out from \$10 billion to \$16.8 billion, which is an increase of \$6.8 billion. Each and every one of the members opposite should ask themselves what they could do in their communities with \$6.8 billion. The member for Hornsby gloated about flogging off in a fire sale assets, which belong to the taxpayers of this State, for over \$10 billion.

Then we see \$6 billion of waste and we do not hear about that—those opposite did not learn about that at NIDA, did they? The Learning Management and Business Reform program has blown out from \$483 million to \$578 million, an increase of \$95 million. These are the facts of the matter. I hope the member for Hornsby enjoyed his time at NIDA, as I am sure he enjoyed sipping lattes at lunchtime and doing all the other stuff the students get up to. But this is so far from the truth of the challenges and issues confronting local families.

We have seen further development on the protection of the Scenic Hills, in the south-west of Sydney. I mentioned Hurlstone Agricultural High School earlier. There is the closing of motor registries and flogging off services. This Government has its priorities wrong in every way: wrong for every local family, wrong for every man, woman and child who deserves good health services so as not to wait more than four hours for treatment at Campbelltown Hospital. The priorities are wrong for every school leaver who wants to go to TAFE to get the skills needed to get a good job not only to drive our economy but also to live the good life that we in this place live. The Minister should take note of this—I know it is a newsflash: to get a good job one needs to get the education available at TAFE. School leavers used to get that education at TAFE but they do not anymore because those opposite took a sledgehammer to TAFE. Those are the facts of the matter.

Let us look at some of the waste—I acknowledge the member for Kogarah called it a waste watch committee. The Minister mentioned that on advertising the Government has spent \$6.5 million on the Tomorrow's Sydney campaign that showcases the Government but does nothing to provide meaningful information. The Government has spent \$30,000 on a social media consultant for 51 days of work. If I had to spend \$30,000 to make myself look good, I would go and have a good look in the mirror. The Government spent \$150,000 to hire a small Christmas tree for George Street. If those opposite told members at the Hornsby soccer club that the Government had spent \$150,000 on a Christmas tree, do they know what those members would say? They would say, "You are joking", because that is what every member of families throughout New South Wales is saying to the Government, and that is what I say to this motion. [*Time expired.*]

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) [4.01 p.m.]: It is with pleasure that I speak in debate on this motion accorded priority that highlights what this Government is doing to get on with the job of delivering improved services, vital infrastructure and jobs to improve the daily lives of families across this State. In fact, this is a lesson in compare and contrast. Let us refer to the Valentine's Day speech of the esteemed Leader of the Opposition. It went down as a speech delivered by a frog prince. It was delivered with as much credibility as that of a junk bonds trader. The Leader of the Opposition was given a standing ovation although his speech ignored country New South Wales. Do members know how many times the Leader of the Opposition referred to "country New South Wales" during his speech? Was it five times? Was it four times? Was it three times? Was it two times? Was it once? It was not even once that he mentioned the word "country" in his speech to his delegates at Sydney Town Hall.

How many times did he mention the word "region"? He mentioned the word "region" not five, not four, not three, not two times but once. How many times did he mention the word "Sydney"? It was six times—compare and contrast what this Government is doing to support regional New South Wales. In his speech the Leader of the Opposition talked about "waging a war on trees that kill millions of our native animals". These were the words of a lefty, inner-city trendy who does not give a damn about country New South Wales and unlocking its potential for blue-collar workers that those opposite once represented. They no longer represent them—

Mr Greg Warren: And still do.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: No, the member for Campbelltown can no longer say that. The Leader of the Opposition—the great, fearless one—stood there and continued to denigrate the blue-collar workers, timber workers and farmers of this State. These are the people who contribute to the State's economy by supporting their families and putting a feed on their table. The Leader of the Opposition used unacceptable and appalling language. He said he is at war with The Greens and the inner city and he does not know what to stand up to or stand up for. Compare and contrast that with what the Government is doing—unlocking the potential of country New South Wales. I am proud that in the past three months we have welcomed patients into the new Kempsey hospital and new hospitals have opened in Tamworth, Dubbo, Orange, Parkes and Forbes. We are unlocking the potential but have had nothing but silence from those opposite for the past three months. It has been like the *Sounds of Silence* from those opposite, without the harmony and talent of Simon and Garfunkel. [*Time expired.*]

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) [4.04 p.m.]: I do not agree with the motion being accorded priority. What I have noted about the infrastructure plans of this Government is that costs keep blowing out by millions of dollars. As for jobs and services, the number of unemployed people in this State is increasing and the services in my electorate, at least, are being destroyed.

Mr Matt Kean: That is not true, actually.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! The member for Hornsby will have an opportunity to reply to the debate.

Ms JULIA FINN: As for getting on with the job in the past three months, the Government has made announcements about destroying local councils and closing the Merrylands motor registry, where people already have to wait 2½ months for a driving test. Once the registry is closed people will have to travel five kilometres to Silverwater or six kilometres to Auburn to a shopfront of Service NSW. Staff at the motor registry were told that this was going to happen before the last election, but nothing was put in writing. I repeatedly asked about it but was given evasive answers and then received a letter during the break, when supposedly the Government was getting on with the job. The Government was getting on with the job of closing the motor registry.

In regard to widening the M4, the Government is getting on with the job of waking up residents in my electorate in the middle of the night to deliver heavy machinery before 6.00 a.m., which means the

contractors are operating outside their approved hours. They are cutting down trees next to people's homes at 2.00 a.m. The first thing one notices about the M4 project is that the tollgates are already up whilst the road is a long way from being widened. Before the last election the Government promised a new car park would be built at the Merrylands station if the Government was returned. The Government was returned, but there is no sign of a new car park. Before the 2011 election, the Liberals promised a new car park at the Westmead Hospital but work on this new infrastructure has only started in the past few months, five years after the promise was made.

In the meantime, the car park at the University of Western Sydney provided overflow parking for the hospital. With the start of construction, people going to the hospital—including patients—have to park in Parramatta Park and walk up a steep hill to the hospital. Not a single car space has so far been created; the only thing that has happened is the cost of parking has increased. At Merrylands East, near the public school, the bridge over the railway line is so rusty that the school has been forced to send out a letter saying that students cannot use it, yet no-one takes responsibility for fixing the bridge. [*Time expired.*]

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.07 p.m.], in reply: I think that we have now heard it all. Despite the confected outrage of the member for Campbelltown and the member for Granville, we know what Labor actually cares about. We saw the member for Summer Hill, defended by the member for Campbelltown, standing up for illicit drug users, wanting to legalise drug use and making it easier for people to use drugs in New South Wales. This is a priority for the member for Campbelltown.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: I accept—

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! What is the member's point of order?

Mr Greg Warren: I ask that you ask the member to retract his statement about the support of drug users. That is inaccurate and untrue.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr MATT KEAN: The Labor Party's priorities over the summer period are highlighted by the call from the member for Summer Hill to make the use of illicit drugs easier and the efforts of the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane to stop members opposite travelling to Israel. That is relevant to the people of Campbelltown, Granville and Macquarie Fields! I am sure they care very much about those matters. The member for Wollongong spent her time plotting her ascension to the mayoralty of the merged Shellharbour and Wollongong council, thereby finding a new way to torment the poor member for Shellharbour. These are the matters that those opposite focused on over the summer break. The member for Kogarah spent his time defending the poor not-for-profit organisation known as the Australian Hotels Association; he stood up for the poor defenceless publicans who have it so tough. These are the issues raised by the Labor Party. This demonstrates how out of touch the Labor Party is with reality and the needs of the residents of New South Wales. The member for Auburn did not mention in his conference speech last week—

Ms Linda Burney: I've been busy.

Mr MATT KEAN: I acknowledge the interjection by the member for Canterbury. The member for Canterbury stood up for what is right and called for the resignation of the general secretary of the Labor Party. This Government is building infrastructure such as the North West Rail Link, the NorthConnex project, the WestConnex project and hospitals in Dubbo, Forbes and Wagga Wagga. The Labor Party cares about making it easier for drug users, a crack in cement, or the legal battles of the member for Wyong with the mayor of Wyong. This Government will focus on the issues that matter to the people of New South Wales. It will continue to deliver, work hard and govern for the people of New South Wales.

Question—That the motion be agreed to—put.

The House divided.

Ayes, 51

Mr Anderson
Mr Aplin
Mr Ayres
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 Greenwich
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 Piper

Mr Provest
Mr Roberts
Mr Rowell
Mr Sidoti
Mr Speakman
Mr Stokes
Mr Taylor
Mr Toole
Mr Tudehope
Ms Upton
Mr Ward
Mr Williams
Mrs Williams

Tellers,
Mr Bromhead
Mr Patterson

Noes, 36

Ms Aitchison
Mr Atalla
Mr Barr
Ms Burney
Ms Car
Ms Catley
Mr Chanthivong
Mr Crakanthorp
Mr Daley
Mr Dib
Ms Doyle
Ms Finn
Mr Harris

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

Mr Park
Mr Parker
Mr Robertson
Ms K. Smith
Ms T. F. Smith
Ms Washington
Ms Watson
Mr Zangari

Tellers,
Mr Lalich
Mr Warren

Pair

Mr Baird

Mr Foley

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Motion agreed to.

Pursuant to resolution Government business proceeded with.

LIMITATION AMENDMENT (CHILD ABUSE) BILL 2016

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Gabrielle Upton, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Attorney General) [4.19 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

On behalf of the Government I am pleased to introduce the Limitation Amendment (Child Abuse) Bill 2016. This bill acknowledges the abuse suffered by many children and young people in our community—abuse that can forever alter the course of people's lives and continue to cause trauma and hardship for decades. The bill cannot and will not change the past for those survivors. Legislation is not enough to take that pain away, but by removing the limitation periods for damages claims the bill will lift one barrier to justice for survivors of child abuse. This reform is the result of extensive work undertaken by the Government, which includes community consultation by way of the release in January 2015 of a discussion paper on limitation period reform options. It is also a response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

In September 2015 the royal commission released its final report on redress and civil litigation. One chapter of that report—chapter 14—was devoted to addressing the barrier posed by limitation periods. The report recommended: that State and Territory governments legislate to remove any limitation periods that apply to a claim for damages resulting from child sexual abuse; that such amendments should be retrospective in effect and apply regardless of whether or not a claim was subject to a limitation period in the past; that the amendments should expressly preserve the courts' existing jurisdictions and powers to stay proceedings; and that the amendments should be implemented as soon as possible, even before the royal commission's recommendations in relation to the duty of institutions and identifying a proper defendant are implemented. The bill delivers on all of those recommendations of the royal commission.

Statutory limitation periods determine the time by which a claim for damages must be commenced. The royal commission found "limitation periods are a significant, sometimes insurmountable, barrier to survivors pursuing civil litigation." It is now widely understood that, due to the injuries inflicted on them by their abusers, survivors of sexual and other child abuse often take decades to understand and act on the harm arising from the abuse. The royal commission's research has revealed that the average time to disclose childhood sexual abuse is around 22 years. As the applicable limitation period is currently between three and 12 years, depending on when the abuse occurred, many survivors find the statutory period in which to commence a claim for damages has passed by the time they are able to commence proceedings. For those survivors who may be able to prove one of the exceptions to the standard limitation period, the process of proving an exception can be expensive, lengthy and traumatic. In essence, statutory limitation periods often mean that survivors of child abuse are unable to claim any compensation for the harm done to them.

The New South Wales Government has long been committed to ensuring that survivors of child sexual abuse receive the compassion and care they need and deserve. The Government has already introduced a number of specific interim measures for survivors of child sexual abuse. The Government has offered unlimited counselling for survivors through the Victims Support Scheme; provided extra resources to the Department of Family and Community Services to improve and fast-track access to care records; assisted with establishing a place of recognition at the Parramatta Girls Home; and adopted guiding principles to guide New South Wales government agencies on how to appropriately respond to a

civil claim for child sexual abuse.

Those guiding principles complement the New South Wales Government Model Litigant Policy and provide, amongst other things, that New South Wales government agencies will not generally raise the passage of time as a defence to a claim. At the same time, the Department of Family and Community Services determined not to generally rely on limitation period defences in civil claims for the sexual and physical abuse of a child. Following the release of the discussion paper by the Department of Justice in January 2015, 48 submissions were received from a wide range of stakeholders, including the Law Society of New South Wales, the New South Wales Bar Association, Care Leavers Australia Network, Barnardos, the Alliance for Forgotten Australians, plaintiff law firms, community legal centres, academics, the judiciary, the NSW Ombudsman, Indigenous advocacy groups, religious organisations and the Insurance Council of Australia. In addition to the recommendations of the royal commission regarding limitation periods—all of which are adopted in this bill—those community submissions have been carefully considered in the development of the bill.

In my time both as the Attorney General and as the former Minister for Families and Community Services I have personally heard evidence at public hearings, in particular the public hearing on Bethcar Children's Home. As I mentioned earlier today, I have spoken with Bonney Djuric from Parramatta Girls Home and Leonie Sheedy, who proudly leads Care Leavers Australia Network. Listening to their heartbreaking stories and their commitment to helping other survivors has strengthened my resolve to redouble our efforts as a government to open up justice for survivors and better protect our children and young people in the future.

Of course, the voices of those survivors, and the extensive work of the royal commission, tell us the removal of limitation periods is only one step towards delivering justice. The royal commission made 99 recommendations in its final report on redress and civil litigation. Only four of those recommendations related specifically to limitation periods. Since the royal commission delivered its report in September 2015 the Government has been closely considering all of the commission's recommendations. This has allowed the Government to consider the cumulative impact of the mix of reforms to help survivors of child abuse.

I am convinced a holistic approach will ultimately deliver the best justice to survivors and so the Government is taking a number of steps to address the other recommendations of the royal commission. In particular, the Government supports the royal commission's keystone recommendation for the establishment of a single national redress scheme. A redress scheme will provide a less traumatic alternative to civil litigation for survivors. At the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council meeting in November the New South Wales and Victorian governments moved a motion urgently calling on the Commonwealth to give effect to the royal commission's recommendation for a single national redress scheme. Last month the Commonwealth Government announced it would lead the development of a "nationally consistent" approach to redress.

I am of the firm belief that a nationally led and nationally administered scheme is the best way to ensure consistent, accessible justice for survivors regardless of where their abuse occurred. Where abuse occurred and where a survivor may live today should not be an impediment to justice. I look forward to continuing to engage in constructive discussions with my Commonwealth, State and Territory colleagues on this issue in the coming months. In addition to removing limitation periods, the royal commission recommended reforms to remove some of the other obstacles to civil litigation for survivors of child abuse. They include requiring institutions with proper trusts to nominate a "proper defendant" to respond to claims for compensation and expanding the legal responsibility of institutions for child abuse.

Members should make no mistake—these reforms are complex, but the Government will not shy away from them. In the coming months, the New South Wales Government will release a consultation paper seeking the community's input on these additional important reforms. The Government will also update the guiding principles, which I referred to earlier. The guiding principles were considered by the

royal commission to be a worthy example of the types of principles that can ensure a more caring and compassionate approach to litigation. Accordingly, to fully comply with the royal commission's recommendations only a minor change is needed to require government agencies to assist plaintiffs in identifying the proper defendant. The principles will also be amended to reflect the definition of "child abuse" in the bill before the House today.

I will now address the key provisions of the bill. The Limitation Act 1969 now applies a complex range of limitation periods to actions for damages relating to child abuse depending on when the abuse took place and, in some cases, the identity of the perpetrator and their relationship to the survivor. It is a complex landscape. In comparison, this bill will treat all child abuse claims equally, regardless of when the abuse occurred or who perpetrated the abuse. The bill removes the existing time limitations on commencing a child abuse action, including the "ultimate bar", which is a statutory provision that prevents claims more than 30 years after the abuse occurred.

The amendments will apply equally to any action that relates to death or personal injury resulting from child abuse. This includes actions against the perpetrator of child abuse and actions against a negligent institution with care and custody of the child. This extends to actions which survive on the death of a person and which are continued by their estate under part 2 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1944. It also includes wrongful death actions brought by the dependants of a deceased survivor under the Compensation to Relatives Act 1897. While these claims rarely arise in relation to child abuse, this provision recognises that the impact of abuse can extend beyond the primary victim to their family and dependents. The bill defines "child abuse" as abuse perpetrated against a person when the person is under 18 years of age; that is, sexual abuse, serious physical abuse, and/or other abuse perpetrated in connection with sexual or serious physical abuse.

The threshold for removal of the limitation period is the sexual or serious physical abuse of a child or young person under the age of 18 years. If this threshold has been met, then other forms of abuse connected to the threshold abuse, such as psychological abuse or minor physical abuse, can be considered in determining the claim. This ensures that the court can consider the whole context of abuse when determining the substance of a claim. "Connected abuse" can be perpetrated by the same person who perpetrated the threshold abuse, or by another person. To avoid doubt, the bill makes it clear that both the "threshold abuse" and "connected abuse" must have occurred when the victim was under the age of 18 years.

The royal commission's recommendations are limited by their terms of reference to child sexual abuse. However, its final report suggests governments could enact reforms covering other types of abuse. This broader approach recognises that many children who have been maltreated experience multiple forms of abuse. For example, a perpetrator of sexual abuse may also use physical violence, grooming and psychological manipulation to prepare a child for sexual activity or to ensure that a child does not report the abuse. The evidence demonstrates that non-sexual forms of abuse, such as serious physical abuse, can be equally as traumatic as child sexual abuse.

The key determinants of worse outcomes for survivors of child abuse are not the kinds of abuse but include factors such as the frequency and duration of abuse, the co-occurrence of multiple forms of abuse, the developmental stage of the victim, and whether there was a close emotional relationship with the abuser. The definition in the bill is thus broad enough to cover the kinds of abuse associated with trauma, serious injury, and delayed disclosure, but not so broad as to cover trivial, accidental or other conduct that, on its own, is unlikely to cause trauma. To avoid being overly prescriptive, the bill does not exhaustively define what conduct constitutes "sexual abuse" or "serious physical abuse". Rather, the bill requires courts to determine whether or not abuse has occurred, having regard to the circumstances of each individual case and the ordinary meaning of the terms. The term "child abuse" should be interpreted in a beneficial manner.

The following examples are indicative of the type of conduct that may constitute child abuse.

"Sexual abuse" of a child has been defined by the royal commission as "any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards". This includes sexual activities that do not involve physical contact with the victim, such as acts of exhibitionism and exposure to pornography. "Serious physical abuse" should capture non-accidental physical contact with a child that could cause injury. It may consist of a series of relatively minor episodes over a period, which cause the conduct to become serious, as well as serious one-off conduct.

The bill is not intended to capture conduct that on its own would not amount to "serious physical abuse", such as a one-off physical altercation between two minors, the reasonable restraint of a violent child, reasonable corporal punishment where a defence of lawful chastisement was available at law at the time of the incident, lawful medical treatments conducted under previous policies, and medical negligence claims. "Connected abuse" could include psychological abuse where a child is manipulated to feel complicit in the abuse, where a child is threatened to prevent them from reporting the abuse, or where a child is coerced into covering up the abuse. It would also include "grooming", which is defined by the royal commission as "actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child". "Connected abuse" could also include minor physical abuse that does not meet the threshold of serious physical abuse, such as minor physical assaults.

Importantly, the bill applies retrospectively, meaning there will be no limitation period for claims regardless of when the abuse occurred. The transitional provisions balance the retrospective nature of the amendments with the fundamental legal principle of *res judicata*, meaning that a matter may not generally be re-litigated once it has been judged on the merits. The bill does not apply to an action where a court has already determined the substantive issues in dispute, or where a matter has been settled between the parties. These actions cannot be re-litigated. However, the amendments do provide for some cases to be reopened, including cases which have commenced but which have not been determined or settled where the limitation period has already expired; where judgment has been given on the basis that the action is statute barred, meaning the limitation period has expired and the statutory exemptions do not apply; and where a survivor has already commenced proceedings against a former solicitor for professional negligence arising from a failure to provide accurate advice in relation to the limitation period that applies to the abuse claim.

It is a fundamental tenet of the rule of law that all parties receive a fair trial. These amendments preserve the existing powers of a court to safeguard the right to a fair trial. They do not restrict a court from dismissing or staying proceedings where it determines that a fair trial is not possible; for example, where the passage of time has led to a loss of evidence capable of establishing a case to be tried. This bill is broadly consistent with similar reforms in other jurisdictions, including the Limitation of Actions Amendment (Child Abuse) Bill 2015 passed by the Victorian Government last year, which removes limitation periods for claims relating to the sexual or physical abuse of a child, and psychological abuse that is connected to the sexual or physical abuse.

This bill is only a part of the Government's response to the recommendations of the royal commission. This Parliament and the community of New South Wales will continue to see this Government deliver on the royal commission's recommendations, in consultation with the community as it does so. These are vital, watershed reforms that come at the end of a long journey. They are part of a human, compassionate, caring and generous response to often untold suffering. We cannot remove the past for those who suffered, but we can try, as we are doing in this bill, to provide some justice and some recognition of what has been unspoken for too long. I commend the bill to the House.

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

ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION AMENDMENT (REVIEW) BILL 2016

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) [4.40 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Associations Incorporation Amendment (Review) Bill 2016 is the result of the statutory review of the Associations Incorporation Act 2009. The review of the Act was completed and tabled in both Houses of Parliament on 17 November 2015. The Act commenced on 1 July 2010, replacing the Associations Incorporation Act 1984. Objects for the legislation were introduced for the first time and the regulatory requirements for associations were modernised. The requirement for the Minister to review the Act is imposed by the Act. The purpose of the review is to determine whether the policy objectives of the Act remain valid and whether the terms of the Act remain appropriate for securing those objectives.

The review found that while the legislation continues to meet its policy objectives, it could be improved by making certain aspects of running an association clearer and more practical. Members would be aware of the necessary and vital role that associations play in the social, creative and service fabric of society. Sports clubs, interest and recreation groups, cultural programs, welfare alliances, education and self-help societies make up our communities. Incorporation of these associations enables the creation of a legal entity and governance structure that is easy to understand, low cost and fit for purpose. The Act enables groups of five or more people to incorporate and is central to community social life and development.

The recommendations of the review were the product of extensive and considered consultation with the sector undertaken in 2013 and 2015. All the recommendations of the review have been adopted by the Government. This amendment bill makes good on the first stage of improvements to the regulatory regime by amending the Act. The remaining stages are to remake the Associations Incorporation Regulation this year in consultation with the sector, and to rewrite and refresh the advisory guidance published by the department to ensure that all the provisions are universally accessible. The review recommended 12 amendments to the Act. These amendments are straightforward and were strongly endorsed by association members through the consultation process.

The first recommendation provides for limitations of rights and liabilities of members of an association. This will be achieved by the proposed amendment to section 26, which makes an existing provision easier to comprehend—a crucial aspect to the value of legislation. The second recommendation was to remove the failure to reserve a name as a ground for refusing a registration application: section 7 (2) (b). This ground is removed where it occurs in the proposed amendments to sections 7 (2) (b) and 12 (2) (c). The third recommendation was to enable the secretary to change the association's name to its registration number where an association has failed to change its name as directed. This will be achieved by the proposed amendment to section 11.

The fourth recommendation was that if an association uses a model constitution, the constitution is updated whenever the model is amended. Any amendments to the model constitution will take effect on the day the relevant amendment to the model constitution comes into operation. The model constitution is set out in the regulation. The amendment to the constitution takes effect without the requirement of a special resolution of the association and does not require the approval of the secretary. This will be achieved by the proposed amendment to section 25 and supporting consequential amendments.

The fifth recommendation was to permit electronic voting when association members are voting remotely, provided this is permitted by the association's constitution. The proposed amendments to

sections 38 and 39 will achieve this outcome. The sixth recommendation was to clarify that the official address of an association must be for the public officer—who is the official contact—and must be an address at which it is possible to serve documents on the association personally or by post in accordance with section 101 of the Act. The proposed amendment to sections 6, 13 and 34 revise and standardise the address required for the service of documents on an association.

The seventh recommendation was to make explicit provision for two common law duties of the committee. It is the duty of each member of a committee of an association to carry out his or her functions for the benefit of the association so far as practicable and with due care and diligence, and to include protection from personal liability for members of a committee who act in good faith. This will be achieved by the proposed new sections 30A and 30B. As a result of the new duties a note is added before the existing section 31, which sets out disclosure of interest obligations on a committee member, to make explicit the duty to ensure that the association remains solvent and is managed in a financially responsible and legal manner. The eighth recommendation was to include a ground where the registration of an association may be cancelled when it is in the public interest to do so. This will be achieved by the proposed amendment to section 76.

The ninth recommendation was to streamline the process for an association to cancel its registration. In addition to the other requirements for an application for cancellation, the proposed amendment to section 72 (2) (c) will require that the accompanying statutory declaration verifying that the association has no outstanding liabilities need only be signed by a single committee member, not two committee members. The tenth recommendation was to provide for the winding up of an association on a certificate issued by the secretary in a manner comparable to the Co-operatives National Law (NSW). This will be achieved by the proposed new section 61A.

The eleventh recommendation was to amend schedule 1 to the Act to require that the association's constitution deal with winding up. Winding-up provisions which ensure that assets and income are transferred to another organisation with similar purposes being an organisation which is not carried on for profit or gain of its individual members is absolutely essential. The proposed amendment will ensure this outcome. The twelfth recommendation is given effect by the proposed amendment to schedule 1, which concerns the composition of an association's committee. If the constitution provides for office bearers, the number of terms that the same person can hold office can be specified. As a consequence of the amendments relating to the official address of the association, amendments are proposed to sections 74, 76 and 80 to ensure consistency for the sending of notices by the secretary.

The bill also includes minor updates such as to refer to the current department and officials who are responsible for the administration of the Act. Two proposed amendments relate to the administration of the legislation and have been put forward by legal observers to clarify issues. First, the definition of an authorised officer under the Act is proposed to be amended to include an investigator within the meaning of the Fair Trading Act 1987. This is a sensible reflection of the way legislation is usually enforced. The second is for the regulation-making powers to make clear the capacity to charge fees in connection with the Act's administration. Into the future I believe the Act will be well placed to continue to provide the flexibility associations need to support their diverse activity. The Act remains simple to understand and comply with. It contains the essentials for good governance without burdensome red tape. As Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation I am pleased to lead on the Government commitment for better regulation through the Associations Incorporation Amendment (Review) Bill 2016. 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 12 November 2015.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) [4.51 p.m.]: This is the third time I have attempted to finish this speech, so it may be a little disjointed, but I will do my best to pull it together. About 4½ months ago I was talking about the commemoration boards at the education department building in Bridge Street. Since then the building has been sold, so I call on our Government with support from the Opposition to make sure those commemoration boards are properly looked after and put where people can access them. I will mention a couple of people from my electorate who served in World War I.

Previously I have mentioned the Hargrave family. Geoffrey Hargrave was a young man full of hopes, dreams and ideas—just like his famous father, Lawrence Hargrave, who was one of Australia's aeronautical pioneers and creative minds. Lawrence, who developed many of his ideas while living in Stanwell Park, took great interest in Geoffrey, his only son, who also showed a flair for engineering. The outbreak of World War I would prove tragic for the Hargrave family, but 100 years later we remember this time for one of the finest parts of the Anzac legend. Private Geoffrey Lewis Hargrave was 22 when he enlisted on 12 September 1914 with a mounted unit. He was later assigned to the 13th Battalion as a machine gunner. He was a junior draftsman studying engineering in Sydney when he answered the call "for King and country".

Geoffrey was among the Australian troops who landed on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, Anzac Day. He was in the afternoon wave of landings as the diggers frantically established and defended their lines in the chaos of that day. He fought hard for several days and, like many of his mates, met his fate in the firing line. Geoffrey was killed in action at Gallipoli on 4 May 1915. It was the start of a shocking time for the Hargrave family. A few months later, in July, Lawrence, who was struck ill with appendicitis, died from complications. Just weeks earlier, he had learned of Geoffrey's death, which compounded his poor health. The family also lost a cousin, Private Karl Hargrave, 1st Light Horse Regiment, in the famous charge on Beersheba on 31 October 1917.

Lawrence Hargrave, depicted alongside some of his gliders, appeared on the reverse side of the Australian \$20 banknote from 1966 to 1994. Geoffrey also took an interest in inventions, particularly in maritime technologies and sailing. He also helped his father with the rotary aeronautical engine. The legacy left by the Hargraves is still being felt by Australians today—Lawrence for his work in flight and machines, and Geoffrey and Karl for their supreme sacrifice in helping secure the freedom we all enjoy.

I also briefly mention Brigadier Hugh Wrigley, a gentleman and an upstanding citizen. He was more than six feet tall. One hundred years ago this Anzac Day, 1,500 brave young men huddled nervously in ships under the veil of darkness at Gallipoli awaiting the fateful word to rush ashore and become part of history. Among those troops was a young Hugh Wrigley, who took part in a covering party for those first in. He enlisted on 17 August 1914, like so many others valiantly answering the call for King and country. He served at Gallipoli and died in 1980. When I speak of those people who gave their lives for King and country, I realise that I am talking about a 22-year-old. My son is 22 years old and I cannot imagine him getting on a boat and heading overseas. It is unbelievable that they had the courage to go and fight for their country. I say to all of them: "Rest in peace." Lest we forget.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) [4.56 p.m.]: I voice my support for this motion that commemorates the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli. I speak in debate on this motion as the representative of the electorate of Wyong. People from the electorate turned out in very large numbers to pay their respects and honour our Anzacs on Anzac Day last year. Local ceremonies saw record crowds attending Anzac commemorations. Crowds of young and old demonstrated the significance of the spirit of the Anzacs. I was pleased to be able to attend the dawn service and breakfast at Wyong RSL and the 11.00 a.m. service and lunch at Toukley RSL. I was also privileged to attend the special service that is held each year at Wallarah Bay on the weekend before Anzac Day.

At each of these services I heard inspirational stories of courage and sacrifice. The significance of the legacy of the Anzacs was apparent not just at these services but in the weeks leading up to Anzac

Day and since. It was particularly heartening to see the number of young people who attended local Anzac services. The spirit of Anzac will be kept alive in future generations by the young people of today. Many families have stories to tell of the Anzac landing. I take this opportunity to relate my family's history of involvement. In his book *Anzac to Amiens* the official war historian, Charles Bean, wrote in a footnote:

The first man ashore was probably Lieutenant D. Chapman (of Maryborough, Queensland), 9th Battalion.

And in his 860-page opus *The Great War* Les Carlyon provided a little more confirmation in a chapter on the Battle of Pozières:

The (45th) battalion lost 345 men, among them Major Duncan Chapman of Brisbane, who many believed was the first Australian to land at Gallipoli.

Lieutenant Duncan Chapman was a 26-year-old paymaster from Whytecliffe, Albion, Queensland. He enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force [AIF] on 21 August 1914 and was allotted to the 9th Battalion, C Company, which embarked from Brisbane, Queensland, on board Transport *A5 Omrah* on 24 September 1914. Chapman was killed in action on 6 August 1916 in the Battle of Pozières in France. An eyewitness account in the Red Cross inquiry files on Chapman's death describes his end:

He was leading into Pozières, saw him killed by a shell, he was hit by the shrapnel and only lived a few minutes—was buried on the top of the trench next morning—he was about 5 foot 7 inches (170 centimetres) high, bit on the gingery side in appearance, was well-liked by the Company, was wearing plain top boots, was fairly well made man, smart in his movements and a good officer.

He was a tall man for those days at 170 centimetres but somewhat slight, weighing just 68 kilograms. His eyesight was good. The contemporary photographs show a serious young man with a moustache. Further interesting light is shed on the controversy as to who was the first man ashore at Gallipoli during the memorable landing of 25 April 1915 by a letter written by the late Major D. K. Chapman, then a captain in the 9th Battalion, to his brother, Mr Fred Chapman of Bankstown, who was my grandfather's uncle. Mr C. E. W. Bean, in his supplementary preface to the official history of the war, named Lieutenant Duncan Chapman as the first man to land. Rival claims were submitted and the question was debated through the columns of a newspaper. In the written letter entitled "In the trenches, Gallipoli, July 8, 1915", Lieutenant Chapman says:

The landing of our troops you no doubt have read about, as full accounts have appeared in all the papers. I happened to be in the first boat that reached the shore and being at the bow at the time, I was the first man to get ashore. I was one of the covering party who had been chosen to go ahead, and, as our boats sneaked on in the early morning light, many of us wondered who would be the first to go.

My grandfather still has a copy of the original letter that was written to his uncle. I read this piece from the Maryborough RSL website:

Maryborough is also honouring the man who has given the city a unique place in the military history of Australia. On April 25, 1915, Lieutenant Duncan Chapman, born and raised in Maryborough, was the first Anzac to step ashore on what we now know as Anzac Cove.

In his words, "To me was given the extreme honour of being actually the first man to step ashore on this peninsula, to lead a portion of the men up the hill in that now historic charge."

...

For 100 years Duncan Chapman has been quietly recognised by Maryborough, acknowledged by the National War Museum in Canberra and regarded with reverence by Queensland's 9th Battalion. Now he will finally be honoured as an iconic figure in the birth of the Anzac legend.

After initial setbacks in attempts to have his statue created and placed in Maryborough, a rallying call went out to the citizens in August 2014. An inspirational groundswell of support followed as a surge of pride rippled through the people: substantial support from businesspeople, small donations from schoolchildren and generous contributions from families raised the funds for the statue in three months.

Duncan Chapman's statue was installed as the centrepiece of a new entrance to Queens Park at the end of Adelaide Street. On 24 April 2015, at 5.15 a.m., it was revealed to the public at the first Dawn of the Anzacs sound and light tribute that focused on the landing, the events at Gallipoli and the sacrifices on the Western Front the following year. The unveiling was followed by a short ceremony of acknowledgement and dedication. I note that my grandfather was named Duncan Chapman after his uncle, who was killed at Pozières.

As a member of the Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving Club, I acknowledge and congratulate members of our club who marked Anzac Day by participating in a commemorative row through the Dardanelles around the Gallipoli peninsula, and which finished south of Anzac Cove on the morning of the centenary celebration. To this day, Australian surf lifesaving is indelibly marked by the Anzacs influence. The march past, the drill-like nature of the rescue and resuscitation competition, the proudly worn identifiable uniform—including the red and yellow cap which is universally known as the icon—the basic operational lifesaving unit of the patrol and its patrol captain, the codes of service and vigilance, the commitment to sacrifice so that others might live, and the ethic of standing up and being counted all have their roots in the experiences and culture of the returned service men and women of the First Australian Imperial Force. The world's most remarkable volunteer lifesaving organisation is a product of those who returned from the killing fields of the First World War and is still marked by their passing.

Fifteen members of the Soldiers Beach Surf Club, aged from 18 to the mid-60s, nominated to take part in a two-day surfboat race around the Gallipoli peninsula on 23 and 24 April 2015. They were joined by approximately 50 to 60 teams from Australia, New Zealand and Turkey. On 25 April 2015, 4.30 a.m. marked the exact moment 100 years ago when the first Australian soldier from the Queensland regiment leading the Gallipoli landings stepped onto the sands of Anzac Cove, under fire. Lifesavers representing Soldiers Beach Surf Club were accompanied by members of surf lifesaving clubs from around Australia who attended services commemorating the 100th anniversary of the landings on the Gallipoli peninsula. The guys noted that while they sat in their boats off Anzac Cove as the sun came up, a lone piper stood up and played the Last Post while they had their oars in the air. Not one of them had a dry eye and they were given a sense of what it was like for the men sitting in their boats before they went ashore on that fateful day.

In the two days leading up to Anzac Day 2015, the Soldiers Beach crew participated in a 53 kilometre surfboat race, along with other crews of Australian surf lifesavers and their Turkish counterparts. The race began at the port of Eceabat where Mustafa Kemal launched the Turkish counterattack against the Australian forces on the morning of the landings in 1915. The course travelled south through the Dardanelles, passed through the narrows of Canakkale and down the line of artillery fortifications along the south-eastern coast of the Gallipoli peninsula, which effectively mauled the Allied naval flotilla in 1915. Reaching the tip of the peninsula at Cape Helles, the race course turned north into the Aegean Sea and headed up the north-western coastline of the Gallipoli peninsula to Anzac Cove and finished, out of respect for the hallowed ground, not at Anzac Beach but slightly north at North Beach on the afternoon before Anzac Day.

Following the race, the Soldiers Beach Surf Club boat and running gear was donated to one of the newly established Turkish lifesaving groups, which had been mentored by Australian surf lifesavers

since 2009. I acknowledge the members of the team: John Edwards, Darcy Waller, Darin Butcher, Shane Walker, Seaton Wilson, Glen Warren, John Tomba, Michael Spring, Matt Rimington, Jason Smith, Michael Raby, Donny Martin, Ashley Falconer, Michael Crowe, Alan Barrie, Brandon Ross, and Dylan Barrie. Importantly, the trip was fully funded through fundraising with the help of Bendigo Bank. We wanted to ensure that two young people from the Central Coast experienced this trip and at the time of this project, Brandon Ross and Dylan Barrie were 18.

A special mention goes to Greg Martin. It was his vision to make the trip and he encouraged everyone to participate in the fundraising. Sadly, Greg lost a battle with cancer before the event. I acknowledge his wife, Pam, and thank them for their support and hard work in making the trip a reality. Their son, Donny, was able to participate and was a member of the rowing crew that represented Greg and Pam. In speaking on these issues today and in recognising my family's history as one Anzac Day story among many, I acknowledge that we owe the men and women of Anzac more than words can express. I pay my respects to all the men and women in our armed services around the world who continue to defend our country today.

The legacy of Anzac will live on in us forever. It is good to see young people attending the Anzac services because they will be responsible for continuing the tradition after those who fought in the wars have passed on. We continue to have wars and there are still soldiers who are returning from those battles. They can help us commemorate the sacrifices that are made in order that we can have the freedoms we enjoy today. At all these events there is a minute's silence to remember the fallen, but this will never be enough to show our ultimate respect and gratitude to those who gave their lives so that we can have those freedoms. We are eternally grateful for their sacrifice. We will remember them. Lest we forget.

Debate adjourned on motion by Dr Hugh McDermott 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

CAMPBELLTOWN ELECTORATE ROADS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) [5.11 p.m.]: Today I again draw the attention of the House, the Premier and his Government to the issue of increasing congestion and a serious lack of investment in Campbelltown's road infrastructure. I have commuted along Narellan Road nearly every day for more than 20 years since I have lived in both Campbelltown and the Macarthur region, and in that time I have seen successive governments throw enormous amounts of money at this road, widening and expanding it in a vain attempt to keep up with the region's growing population. The most recent upgrade of Narellan Road is undoubtedly necessary but does not do enough to counter the serious traffic congestion between the Campbelltown and Camden local government areas, and the Macarthur region more broadly.

The road has come to symbolise this Government's approach to infrastructure spending in Macarthur. While millions of dollars have been thrown at existing major road projects—particularly ones that were announced by the Labor Government—very little has been invested in new infrastructure projects that the region needs for the future of families who come to live in the area. While thousands and thousands of new residents are moving into the Macarthur region, and thousands more will be arriving in the coming decades, there has been no planning for infrastructure to meet this increased demand. There have been countless proposals about how to ease the pressure on our roads and plan for the future, but time after time they have been cast aside. Take for example the Menangle-Spring Farm link road. The project was supported by the Government and the Opposition at the last election. This bipartisan approach on this matter was well received—indeed, it was welcomed—by our community.

The Premier was even quoted in the *Macarthur Advertiser* on 9 March 2015 as saying that if elected he would start planning for a second road from Campbelltown to Camden. It has been nearly 11 months since then and we have still not seen or heard anything from the Government about this vital infrastructure project. This link road would take a large amount of traffic off the congested Narellan Road by providing an alternative route between Campbelltown and Camden. It would also provide an additional point for entry and exit to the Hume Motorway. Yet the Premier's solution is to throw more and more money at Narellan Road and keep his head firmly buried in the sand. He has no vision in relation to this infrastructure.

This project should not be delayed year after year while the Government keeps its focus on one arterial road. Yes, I welcome those upgrades but they are not the solution to the broader road network issues that the Campbelltown and Macarthur regions are facing. This infrastructure needs to be built. To his credit, even the member for Camden understands that. The lack of foresight with regard to road planning will leave the region stuck in traffic, be a drag on economic growth and diminish the quality of life that draws people to the area. It also will cost lives if action is not taken immediately to improve infrastructure in the Macarthur region. Sadly, the loss of lives on our roads is something we experience all too often in all our communities.

For too many years we have had tragic fatal accidents on Appin Road. While I acknowledge that Government members, particularly the member for Wollondilly, have joined me in calling for urgent action to improve safety on Appin Road, there has been too much talk and not enough action. No-one could possibly argue that this road should not be a priority. The road has taken 41 lives in the past two decades, and needs urgent attention. I have written to the Premier about the matter and I thank him for his response. However, I look forward to the action that needs to follow. People cannot continue to lose their lives on Appin Road while the Government takes no action.

Today I met with the member for Keira, the shadow Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, to discuss this matter at length in regard to our combined electorates. I welcome very much the curve realignment that is currently being completed. It is a good starting point for improving this road, but it is just that—a starting point. The problems affecting motorists on Appin Road are extensive. Solving these safety problems will require much more comprehensive upgrades than a simple curve realignment. We need to look at safety barriers and lighting and the problem of the residue from coal wash. These issues need to be taken seriously.

The Campbelltown region is one of the fastest growing regions in New South Wales. We must invest for the future, but so far this Government has failed to invest where it is needed urgently. A lack of planning and investment will lead to more congestion for local residents. Hopefully there will be no more accidents on our roads, but unfortunately lives will continue to be put at risk while action is not taken. I urge the Government to take this issue very seriously. It should take a good, hard look at the state of the roads in the Campbelltown region when planning the budget for 2016.

TRIBUTE TO DR BRENDAN NELSON

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) [5.16 p.m.]: We are all here to make a difference in our lives; that is why we are in this place as representatives of our constituents. Today, however, I pay tribute to a man who spent a considerable period of his life serving the people of the Ku-ring-gai electorate and who recently received due recognition on Australia Day. Wherever he has travelled in his professional life—whether it be in the fields of medicine, politics and ambassadorial service or as the guardian of our proud military past—he has acted with true style. The man I refer to is Dr Brendan Nelson, who today holds the position of Director of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. His vast knowledge of our military history made him the perfect choice as Director of the Australian War Memorial and it is heartening to know that our proud military record on the international stage is being preserved for current and future generations.

To suggest that Dr Nelson's career has been both distinguished and varied would be an understatement. He first came into the public spotlight in 1993 through his role as the President of the Australian Medical Association. He was elected unopposed as he worked as a medical practitioner in Hobart—the youngest person ever to hold that position. Dr Nelson's strong advocacy for Aboriginal health, immunisation and the importance of private health insurance, and his campaigning against tobacco advertising in sport would see him enter the world of politics as the Liberal member for the Sydney seat of Bradfield in March 1996. Bradfield is the Federal seat that encompasses all of the State electorate of Ku-ring-gai together with additional areas on the upper North Shore of Sydney.

Brendan Nelson's 1996 preselection is legendary in the Liberal Party as a whole as well as in my local Liberal Party branches. I joined the Liberal Party shortly after Dr Nelson became the local Federal member and I became a member of the same branch—the St Ives branch. As a fellow branch member, I came to see at close quarters the integrity, intelligence, depth, passion and humanity of Dr Nelson. After the 2001 election, Dr Nelson was promoted to Cabinet as the Minister for Education—an incredibly important portfolio and one that he handled with great skill. It was his idea to give government grants of up to \$150,000 to individual Australian schools. It was a well-run, value-for-money improvement to Australian schools, which provided a strong contrast to the later, wasteful Labor Building the Education Revolution program.

However, tough decisions soon had to be made for our nation on the international front, and Dr Nelson was called upon to help steer our military presence on the world stage as the Minister for Defence in 2006, when the decision was made once again to commit Australian troops to Iraq, as well as to Afghanistan, East Timor and the Solomon Islands. I believe Dr Nelson was certainly the right man for the job at that time. In 2007 Dr Nelson became the eleventh leader of the Federal Liberal Party, a position he held until September 2008. He would step away from political life in 2009, when he took up an ambassadorial appointment to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO], appointed by then Labor Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. In 2012 Dr Nelson would resign as ambassador to return home and take up the position of Director of the Australian War Memorial. If ever there was a perfect "duck to water" fit, this was certainly it.

Dr Nelson would use his time as Ambassador to Belgium to forge deep links with the communities of Flanders and bring that great knowledge to bear in his custodianship of the Australian War Memorial. His deep passion for our military history, including our tragic World War I sacrifices, would teach us all—and, importantly, young Australians—that our military story was not just on the beaches of Gallipoli but also on the muddy and bloody battlefields of the Somme, and bring to our attention place names such as Passchendaele, Fromelles and Pozieres. Of course, it was at this time 100 years ago that Australia was midway through World War I. Dr Nelson and his team have been instrumental in keeping that horrible but important period in our history in the minds of all Australians, through commemorations both here and overseas and revamped displays at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

I think it is fair to say that in every position Dr Nelson has maintained he has undertaken that position with a great degree of hard work, intelligence, passion and self-sacrifice, as well as a deep love for Australia and his fellow Australians. So I was delighted to see that in January this year Dr Brendan Nelson was named in the Australia Day honours as a recipient of an Order of Australia award for his services to the community, the Parliament of Australia, diplomacy and cultural leadership. I thank him and his wife, Gillian, for their contribution to our country.

PARKES ELVIS FESTIVAL

Mr ANDREW GEE (Orange—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.21 p.m.]: I draw the attention of the House to this year's Parkes Elvis Festival, which was another magnificently successful festival. The festival started in 1981 when local Elvis fans Bob and Anne Steele opened a reception centre and restaurant in Parkes that they named "Gracelands". The festival concept was first flagged as an

Elvis-themed party in 1992. This Elvis-themed party proved the appeal of the King across generations, and it has grown from there. This year 22,000 people attended the Parkes Elvis Festival. The program ran over five days and one of the highlights was the Elvis street parade in which I participated and gave a rendition of *Don't be Cruel*. There were 150 individual events.

[Interruption]

The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): Order! I am sure the member for Orange does not require any assistance.

Mr ANDREW GEE: The Elvis Express was another highlight. I caught the Elvis Express from Orange to Parkes, where we were greeted by thousands of people. Some 9,500 people attended the festival in 2009 and, as I said, this year a record 22,000 attended. It is estimated that the festival has an economic impact of \$13 million. It enjoys a worldwide media audience of 60 million, with fans around the globe. In the Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist contest Jack Gatto from Victoria placed first, followed by Moses Kassar from New South Wales in second place and then Brendan Chase from New Zealand in third. Jack Gatto will now travel to Memphis, Tennessee to represent Australia at the Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist event. In 2016 Miss Priscilla was Helen Rowbotham, Picture Perfect was Elissa Gillingham, and Styles of the '60s was Jodie Norrie. Originally from Scotland, Helen has been in Parkes for four years. She is an occupational therapist with Parkes Health Service and says it was a real honour to represent the town throughout the festival.

At the Northparkes Mines Street Parade the best float winner was David Potts from Parkes Bricks, with David Bickett the runner-up. The best walking winner was Samantha Salgado, with the runner-up James Webb. The best non-motorised winner was Kim Chambers and the best non-motorised runner-up was Colouby Creations. The best motorcycle winner was Barry Reeves on a Harley and the best motorcycle runner-up was Don Wauters on a VW Trike. I thank all my band members—the band got back together. We performed *All Shook Up* down the festival route. The smartphone category winner of the photo competition was Shellie Buckle and the runner-up was Steve Ostini. The digital camera winner was Steve Ostini, who was also the runner-up. Overall highly commended was Julie Brown. At the Poets' Breakfast the open winner was Peter Robinson of Kiama Downs and the novice winner was Pam Bell of Peak Hill. The people's choice was also Peter Robinson of Kiama Downs. The busking category was won by Gavin Chatilier, with the runner-up Paul Reynolds of Parkes.

I pay tribute to the hardworking Parkes Elvis Festival committee. The festival director was Emily Mann—unfortunately we will lose her because she is going to Darwin to direct a festival. The festival sponsorships and marketing coordinator is Beth Link, who did a wonderful job. Emily and Beth worked tirelessly in the lead-up to and during the festival. Other committee members include: volunteers coordinator Sue McGrath, Cooke Park main stage coordinator Nola Short, the street parade and cars of the era coordinator Alan Payne, busking coordinator Warren Tanner, renewal of vows coordinator Lorraine Job, the Miss Priscilla dinner coordinator Anne Steele, and poet's breakfast coordinator Lorraine Job, as well as Parkes Shire Council members Mayor Ken Keith, Deputy Mayor Barbara Newton, Alan Ward, Belinda McCorkell, Bob Haddin, George Pratt, Ken McGrath, Louise O'Leary, Michael Greenwood and Patrica Smith. Next year's theme is "Viva Las Vegas", and I invite all members to join me at that event. This year's festival was extraordinarily successful, made possible by the warmth and generosity of spirit of the people of Parkes.

The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): Order! Before I call the Parliamentary Secretary, I remind the member for Orange of the dress code that applies in the Chamber. I suggest that he take his jacket back to Reno, Nevada.

Mr Andrew Gee: For the record, I did check the dress code and think I fit within it wearing the King's jacket.

The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): Order! The member for Orange must not canvass my ruling. I wonder where he has put the wig he wore last year.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.26 p.m.]: I think we need a little less conversation, a little more action. The member for Orange is not a hound dog or a teddy bear. He did not come down in November rain and certainly has never been to Las Vegas. First and foremost, the member for Sydney wants his jacket back for Mardi Gras. Secondly, the member for Orange is a great advocate for his area. We appreciate some comic relief on the first day of the new parliamentary session. I congratulate the member for Orange. Long live the Parkes Elvis Festival.

WESTERN SYDNEY INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) [5.27 p.m.]: I highlight to the House one of the most significant challenges facing the region that I represent. Western Sydney is home to two million people and is growing rapidly. Over the next 20 years it is expected to grow by another million, contributing to more than half of Sydney's overall expected population growth during this period. On top of this, it is the nation's third largest economy. Yet governments have failed to fund the infrastructure needed to relieve the incredible pressure placed on communities in our city's rapidly growing outskirts. This is not news to those of us who live there, as we sit in gridlock or on crowded trains and wait for hours in emergency departments. The decade-long move towards urban sprawl in Sydney has created an infrastructure crisis in our suburbs. As government after government has released more and more land for new housing stock, it has created unacceptably isolated communities, which is made worse by the unaffordability of living closer to the Sydney central business district [CBD].

This is having incredible and terrible impacts. Those impacts cannot be underestimated. It is not just that we are sitting in traffic for an inordinate amount of our day—as ridiculously frustrating as that is. In short, it has resulted in two Sydneys: one Sydney that is close to the CBD and to employment and connected by integrated public transport systems and one Sydney where fewer than three in 10 people have access to a local job, where the rate of diabetes is five times higher than on the north shore and where youth unemployment is twice the regional figure. These issues cannot be attributed to the infrastructure disparity but it cannot be denied that that definitely creates a structural disadvantage. As recently as last night I heard the story of a young woman who catches three buses to get from her home at Ropes Crossing to work in Richmond, with a total travel time of 1½ hours. If we want people to live and work in Western Sydney, they need to be able to get to their workplace.

I recently attended the launch in Penrith of the Fund Our Future campaign led by the National Growth Areas Alliance. The Fund Our Future campaign is calling on the Federal Government to commit to a dedicated infrastructure fund to address the backlog and using this election year to call on both the Government and Opposition to sign up to the cause. The Opposition leader in this place, Luke Foley, has signed a letter of support for this campaign. On behalf of the community I represent, I will watch this campaign with ongoing interest. The New South Wales Government has a responsibility to rise to the challenge and think of ways to confront a dilemma that only deteriorates with time. The Government argues that it is fixing the problem with more roads. It is a *Field of Dreams* moment: "If you build it, they will come." This is Sydney: the road will be clogged again within 12 months and we will be back to square one.

Everyone knows that the answer is better public transport. Instead of flogging off publicly owned assets, this Government must look at other, more creative ways to fund the backlog. There is no magic pudding; new funding models are needed. Publicly owned rail assets must be used productively—the land around them and the air space over them—to get the best outcome for the community. That may include developments along rail corridors to fund desperately needed infrastructure. It is not good that a city such as Sydney is divided. If Sydney aspires to be a global city then government must get real about connecting all our communities to services and stop the breakneck outward expansion that is occurring without the infrastructure that communities such as mine deserve. Without the courage to look at this

issue creatively, these divisions will only deepen on our watch.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.31 p.m.]: I take the opportunity to remind the member for Londonderry that never was an area more deprived of essential services such as roads and public transport than Western Sydney during the 16-year reign of the previous Labor Government—her party. No area suffered more than my electorate of Rouse Hill and the surrounding area, which is expected to absorb 250,000 to 300,000 new residents. Labor made promise after promise to build the North West Rail Link, but each one was broken. It never eventuated. The Premier proudly announced today that tunnelling on the 31 kilometres of rail line is now complete. That rail line will be finished by 2019. I remind the member for Londonderry that the Opposition leader opposed the inner-city light rail. The Labor Party is on record as opposing public transport.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) [5.32 p.m.]: Today I will speak about the great need for increased services and support across the inner city for people with a mental illness. I raised this issue in May 2013 and noted the excellent services provided by St Vincent's Hospital Mental Health Service and a range of inner-city non-government organisations working together with a dedicated New South Wales Minister for Mental Health and State and Federal mental health commissions. The November 2014 Commonwealth Mental Health Commission report, entitled "Contributing Lives, Thriving Communities", and the December 2014 New South Wales Mental Health Commission's "Living Well—A Strategic Plan for Mental Health in NSW 2014-2024" restate the findings of 32 previous reports published between 2006 and 2012: Our mental health system is focused on crisis and we must improve early intervention, prevention or community recovery services.

Sebastian Rosenberg from the University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre summarised this in a report called "Mind the mental health gap", noting that Australia has failed to invest in alternative community mental health care since the 1990s, when many asylums were rightly closed. Rosenberg says that in New South Wales less than half of mental health hospital discharges include connections to community services within a week of discharge. He identifies this as the missing middle ground of community support. Mr Rosenberg states that these organisations receive approximately 7 per cent of Australia's mental health budget but are vital for the living skills, housing and employment support they provide. Increasingly, that includes specialist and clinical skills.

Mr Rosenberg also notes that we badly need short-term supported accommodation options so that people do not need to go to hospital or stay in hospital when they are not quite ready to go home. The mental health service at St Vincent's Hospital knows that respite accommodation is needed for six to 12 months in order to prevent many emergency department presentations. In my electorate an integrated approach to people with complex mental health needs is required to ensure that those who are homeless or living in social housing get the support they need. I recently met the Minister for Social Housing to discuss the need for the Housing and Mental Health Agreement to work properly. In recent debate I urged the Government to increase prevention and early intervention services as I had been informed that Housing NSW tenants did not receive early support due to limited communication between tenancy managers, health workers and police.

The New South Wales Government must advocate that Federal funding for the national health system be increased, not cut further. New funds must be directed to support people in their communities and within families, not just when they are in hospital. The Living Well strategic plan identifies the Inner City Cadre Project as an example of a mental health neighbourhood watch that encourages ground-up change to achieve mental health recovery. Programs such as this must continue and expand. Inner-city homelessness services play a vital role. We know that many of those who are sleeping rough and spending their days in parks and streets have some form of often undiagnosed and untreated mental illness. The Government must learn from the changes made through Going Home Staying Home and ensure that funding for inner-city refuges and hostels continues, with specialist programs for women

escaping domestic violence. I commend the partnership that has been built over several years between St Vincent's Hospital and homelessness service providers to better help vulnerable people.

The data shows us that we fail to meet the mental health needs of several groups that have higher suicide and self-harm rates and are more likely to suffer psychological distress. They include Indigenous people, refugees and migrants, young people, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community. The community organisations that work with these groups must be funded to provide informal support for groups and activities and be linked to specialist services. For my constituents it is vital that the Government continue to fund and support organisations such as Walla Mulla, the Wayside Chapel, Kings Cross Community Centre, Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, The Harris Centre, ACON, the Gender Centre, Oasis Youth Support, Buckingham House, Holdsworth Centre and Twenty-Ten. A huge amount of support happens within families, and I commend the commitment and love that carers give to their ill relatives and friends.

I am pleased that the Mental Health Commission supports the Urban Partnership for Integrated Inner City Healthcare and Wellbeing, linking the service providers who work with particularly vulnerable people. Based on the collective impact model, this group is developing innovative approaches to ensure that people do not fall through the cracks but get wraparound care. The massive gap between need and support remains, despite many reviews and reports. Both the Commonwealth and New South Wales governments have stated a commitment to improving mental health and support services. I urge the Government to follow these commitments with action, funds and ongoing support.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.37 p.m.]: I commend the statement by the member for Sydney in relation to homelessness and congratulate him on his advocacy of the services and staff involved in providing support in this area. It never ceases to amaze me that only metres from this building there is extraordinarily homelessness in the city of Sydney. Sydney is renowned as a global city but contains significant abject poverty. It is incumbent on the Government to focus not just on inputs and money but also on outputs. That is something all members will agree with. I commend the work of the St Vincent de Paul Society Sydney Night Patrol volunteers, who address homelessness in the city. I look forward to working with the member for Sydney and the Government to combat this issue in both metropolitan and regional areas. Homelessness is often not associated with country communities, but I assure the House that areas such as the Illawarra face the same pressures. I commend the member for Sydney for his advocacy and work in this important area.

Private members' statements concluded.

Pursuant to sessional order matter of public importance proceeded with.

REDFEB

Matter of Public Importance

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) [5.38 p.m.]: I ask the House to note as a matter of public importance the RedFeb initiative. RedFeb aims to raise community awareness about the signs of heart attack and the risk factors of heart attack in Australia. Each year almost 10,000 Australians die from heart attack and 160,000 New South Wales residents are hospitalised as a consequence of cardiovascular disease. More than one million Australians are at high risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke. The Heart Foundation saves lives and improves health through funding cardiovascular research, informing the public about the importance of heart health and assessing people with cardiovascular disease. RedFeb will occur on Friday 26 February. I encourage people to dress in red and to give very generously. The RedFeb target is to raise \$250,000 this year for research into cardiovascular disease.

Heart Research Australia is dedicated to funding first stage, innovative research into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease. It attracts its funding not only from government but

also its many generous public supporters. RedFeb provides funding for post-doctoral fellowships to support the next generation of heart researchers in Australia; for two academic chairs of cardiology in association with the University of Sydney, which attracts international researchers who are committed to training future heart scientists; to employ specialists and support staff; and to provide research equipment. We have come a long way in the field of cardiovascular research, and campaigns like RedFeb provide the people of New South Wales with the opportunity to contribute to its continuation.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the New South Wales Government's commitment to cardiovascular disease research. The Government's Quit for New Life program supports pregnant Aboriginal mothers and their families to quit smoking. The program is being rolled out across the State over four years, and 14 local health districts have now commenced implementation. I take this opportunity to compliment the Hon. Jillian Skinner and the Hon. Pru Goward on their ongoing commitment to heart disease research in their respective portfolios of Health and Medical Research. We know that heart disease is a leading cause of death in women, taking the lives of 25 women every day. It has not fully registered in the community that heart disease is claiming so many of our mothers, sisters, daughters and friends. Australians are 26 per cent more likely to die from heart disease than from cancer, and almost four times as many women die from heart disease than from breast cancer. These are staggering statistics.

The NSW Medical Research Support Program provides infrastructure to independent medical research institutes. This funding supports the delivery of quality health and medical research, including cardiac research. Two institutes with strong reputations for cardiac research are the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute and the Centenary Institute. The New South Wales Government has provided funding through the Breaking the Cycle of Heart Disease 20:20 Campaign to enhance cardiovascular research in New South Wales. This initiative is being led by the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, which is a member of the Cardiovascular Research Network [CRN]. The CRN is a unique network of research institutes, researchers, clinicians and organisations in New South Wales that specialise in the treatment of and research into cardiovascular disease and related conditions such as strokes, kidney disease and diabetes.

The Government is investing \$10.2 million in 2015-16 to encourage and to support investment in the development and commercialisation of medical devices in this State. In 2013, Endoluminal was awarded \$2.4 million to develop breakthrough technology for the treatment of failing heart valves. In 2015, All Vascular Holdings Pty Limited was awarded \$1.75 million to commercialise a novel patented vascular access device. This Government is committed to addressing risk factors for heart disease, including overweight, obesity, lack of physical activity, low fruit and vegetable intake, excessive consumption of alcohol, and smoking. [*Time expired.*]

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) [5.43 p.m.]: RedFeb is an important event organised by Heart Research Australia. It is held on the last Friday of February and raises awareness of and funds for research into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease. Heart Research Australia was established in 1986 to find new ways to reduce the high incidence of death from heart disease. It is now one of the leading killers of Australians and more must be done to reduce its incidence. The funds that are donated to the organisation will be used to conduct research on heart problems and diseases in babies and pregnant women, and also to find a cure for heart failure. In a healthy baby, a structure in the heart known as a "duct" normally closes within hours of birth. However, the duct remains open in premature babies, and doctors are investigating the use of paracetamol to treat this problem.

Funds are also used to conduct research into the link between pre-eclampsia and pregnancy-induced heart failure. Pre-eclampsia affects 5 per cent to 10 per cent of all pregnancies in Australia and up to 30 per cent of pregnancies in developing countries. It is a serious challenge because there are no effective interventions to treat or to prevent this disease. About 30,000 Australians are diagnosed with heart failure every year. That is a staggering number, and research is being conducted to find a cure or a treatment. Money raised is used to provide scholarships that will support the next

generation of heart researchers, specialists and support staff, and research equipment.

As members know, I had heart problems, so I know how daunting they can be. I had open heart surgery about 18 months ago because the left mitral valve in my heart had been crook for 30 years. Surgeons repaired my heart valve and did two bypasses while they were at it. They said, "While we have your chest open we might as well do the bypasses because something will need to be done in the next five to 10 years." I acknowledge the great work of the staff at St Vincent's Hospital. I thank in particular surgeon Dr Emily Granger and her vital team. I also thank heart specialist Dr Paul Roy and his son David Roy for the great work that they did and their ongoing treatment at my yearly visits. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the doctors and other staff in the State's hospitals for the wonderful, caring work they do for the people of New South Wales. I encourage everyone to wear red on 26 February and to support this great campaign by making a donation. Rather than aiming to raise \$500,000, we should try for \$1 million. I remind members that their heart health might depend on the money raised.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) [5.46 p.m.]: I join my colleagues in supporting RedFeb day. I note that I am 10 days early in wearing a red dress today. It is a great event, and as Parliamentary Secretary for Regional and Rural Health I promoted it across the State. It is very sobering to note that more women die of cardiovascular disease than from any other disease. It is important to highlight that fact because many believe that heart disease affects men more than it does women. It is a serious problem in women, and particularly in mature women. If anyone is experiencing the symptoms of heart disease they should see a doctor. I encourage everyone to live a healthy lifestyle by watching their diet and exercising. We should all stop doing the naughty things we should not do. RedFeb is a great initiative on the part of the Heart Foundation. I congratulate my colleague the member for Terrigal on raising it and drawing attention to the good work being carried out by the foundation.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) [5.47 p.m.], in reply: I thank the member for Cabramatta and my wonderful colleague the member for Oxley, who is wearing a red dress. She has been a strong advocate for cardiovascular health in this State. It would be remiss of me not to mention that one Australian dies from heart disease every 27 minutes. That is a sobering statistic. Given that, it is important that everyone take RedFeb seriously. The member for Cabramatta said that he has had firsthand experience of the benefits of heart surgery. We should take the opportunity to give generously on Friday 26 February. I urge all members to spread the word about RedFeb throughout their electorates and to encourage their constituents to make a donation. Much more work must be done to find a cure because 30,000 Australians are diagnosed with heart failure every year. I again thank the member for Oxley and the member for Cabramatta for their contributions to this debate, and urge everyone to donate on 26 February so that we can tackle the scourge of heart disease.

Discussion concluded.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 5.49 p.m. until
Wednesday 17 February 2016 at 10.00 a.m.**
