



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 30 March 2017

The SPEAKER (The Hon. Shelley Elizabeth Hancock) took the chair at 10:00.

The SPEAKER read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the Parliament Tom Glasgow from Springwood High School, guest of the member for Blue Mountains, and all of the students from Bobs Farm Public School, guests of the member for Port Stephens. I extend a warm welcome to them and trust they will enjoy their time at Parliament House today.

[*Notices of motions given.*]

Bills

MOTOR ACCIDENT INJURIES BILL 2017

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bill with amendments.

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of the Legislative Council's amendments.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 29 March 2017

No. 1 CDP No. 1 [c2017-014]

Page 19, clause 2.25. Insert after line 27:

- (b) must be undertaken if the average realised profits of insurers for 1 or more years are greater than the average filed profits of insurers by 2 per cent or more of the average filed profits, and

No. 2 OPP No. 4 [c2017-009D]

Page 19, clause 2.25, line 29. Omit "greater or".

No. 3 CDP No. 3 [c2017-014]

Page 19, clause 2.25, lines 38–44. Omit all words on those lines. Insert instead:

- (3) If, as a result of the exercise of a function under this section, the Authority determines that premiums and Fund levies under Division 10.4 should be adjusted to avoid excess profits, the Authority must take action to make adjustments to avoid those excess profits.
- (4) The Authority may, following any adjustment referred to in subsection (2) of premiums and Fund levies under Division 10.4 to avoid excess losses, direct payments from the Motor Accidents Operational Fund under that Division to insurers corresponding to any increase in Fund levies otherwise payable.
- (5) The Authority must, following any adjustment referred to in subsection (2) of premiums and Fund levies under Division 10.4 to avoid excess profits, direct insurers to make payments to the Motor Accidents Operational Fund under that Division corresponding to any reduction in Fund levies otherwise payable.
- (6) An amount payable to or from the Motor Accidents Operational Fund under subsection (4) or (5) is not recoverable from or payable to policy holders.

No. 4 GRNS No. 1 [c2017-015]

Page 40, clause 3.33, line 34. Omit "resides outside Australia". Insert instead "is not an Australian citizen or a permanent resident of Australia".

No. 5 GRNS No. 2 [c2017-015]

Page 40, clause 3.33, lines 35 and 36. Omit "while the person is residing".

No. 6 GRNS No. 3 [c2017-015]

Page 48, clause 4.5, lines 5–7. Omit all words on those lines. Insert instead:

- (a) damages for past or future economic loss due to loss of earnings or the deprivation or impairment of earning capacity, and

No. 7 **CDP No. 4 [c2017-014]**

Page 76, clause 7.12. Insert after line 40:

- (5) The claimant and the insurer must provide to the merit reviewer such information as the reviewer may reasonably require for the purposes of the merit review.
- (6) It is a condition of an insurer's licence under this Act that the insurer must comply with subsection (5).
- (7) The merit reviewer may decline to review the reviewable decision if the claimant or the insurer has failed to provide any such information required by the reviewer.

No. 8 **CDP No. 5 [c2017-014]**

Page 77, clause 7.13. Insert after line 22:

- (6) If a merit reviewer is satisfied that a certificate under this section contains an obvious error, the merit reviewer may issue a replacement certificate to correct the error.

No. 9 **CDP [c2017-014]**

Page 77 and 78, clause 7.15, line 40 on page 77 to line 12 on page 78. Omit all words on those lines.

No. 10 **CDP No. 6 [c2017-014]**

Page 78, clause 7.16, lines 26 and 27. Omit "Sections 7.14 (Effect of merit review decision) and 7.15 (Effect of decision on internal review or merit review) apply". Insert instead "Section 7.14 (Effect of merit review decision) applies".

No. 11 **CDP No. 7 [c2017-014]**

Page 79, clause 7.21. Insert after line 41:

- (4) The claimant and the insurer must provide to the medical assessor such information as the assessor may reasonably require for the purposes of the medical assessment.
- (5) It is a condition of an insurer's licence under this Act that the insurer must comply with subsection (4).
- (6) The medical assessor may decline to make a medical assessment if the claimant or the insurer has failed to provide any such information required by the assessor.

No. 12 **GRNS No. 4 [c2017-015]**

Page 84, clause 7.33, lines 20–23 and 26–40. Omit all words on those lines.

No. 13 **CDP No. 8 [c2017-014]**

Page 88, clause 7.44. Insert after line 11:

- (5) It is a condition of an insurer's licence under this Act that the insurer must comply with a direction given to the insurer under this section.

No. 14 **GRNS No. 5 [c2017-015]**

Page 89. Insert after line 32:

7.48 Persons under legal incapacity

- (1) A claimant who is a person under legal incapacity in relation to proceedings under this Part may not make any application or refer any matter to the Dispute Resolution Service, or carry on proceedings, under this Part except by his or her appointed representative in accordance with the Motor Accident Guidelines.

- (2) In this section:

appointed representative, in relation to a person under legal incapacity, means a person appointed to represent the person under legal incapacity (whether by a claims assessor or otherwise) in accordance with the Motor Accident Guidelines.

person under legal incapacity includes:

- (a) a child under the age of 18 years, and
- (b) an involuntary patient or forensic patient within the meaning of the *Mental Health Act 2007*, and
- (c) a person under guardianship within the meaning of the *Guardianship Act 1987*, and
- (d) a protected person within the meaning of the *NSW Trustee and Guardian Act 2009*, and

- (e) an incommunicate person, being a person who has such a physical or mental disability that he or she is unable to receive communications, or express his or her will, with respect to his or her property or affairs.

No. 15 **CDP No. 9 [c2017-014]**

Page 89. Insert after line 32:

7.48 Effect of decisions under this Part

- (1) This section applies where a decision is made in accordance with this Part by an insurer on an internal review or by a decision-maker on a merit review, medical assessment or assessment of a dispute about a miscellaneous claims assessment matter.
- (2) If the decision results in an increase in the amount of payments of statutory benefits payable to a claimant, the claimant is entitled to the increase in payments from the date of the original decision that is the subject of the review or assessment concerned.
- (3) If the decision results in the discontinuation of or a further reduction in any payments of statutory benefits payable to a claimant, and is less favourable to the claimant than the decision that is the subject of the review or assessment, the requirements of Division 3.3 (Weekly payments of statutory benefits to injured persons) as to the giving of notice before discontinuing or reducing weekly payments of statutory benefits extend to the discontinuation or further reduction that results from the decision on the review or assessment concerned.
- (4) This section extends to any new decision made by a review panel under section 7.16 (Review of merit review decision by review panel) or 7.27 (Review of medical assessment by review panel).

No. 16 **CDP No. 10 [c2017-014]**

Page 146, Schedule 4, Part 2. Insert after line 23:

7 Determination of premiums for taxis and hire vehicles

- (1) This clause applies in respect of Motor Accident Guidelines that:
 - (a) relate to the determination of insurance premiums for third-party policies for taxis or hire vehicles (within the meaning of section 2.26 (Special provisions relating to taxis and hire vehicles and other vehicles)), and
 - (b) provide for the premium, or part of the premium, to be paid on the basis of the distance travelled by the vehicles.
- (2) This clause applies only in respect of Motor Accident Guidelines issued during the period of 3 years starting on the commencement of this Act.
- (3) In determining the guidelines for insurance premiums for third-party policies for taxis and hire vehicles, the Authority is to ensure that similar insurance premiums are to be paid for taxis and hire vehicles having regard to relevant factors of comparison, such as the class of the vehicles, the distance travelled by the vehicles and the activities in which the vehicles are engaged.
- (4) However, the methodology used to determine the distance travelled may differ according to the class of vehicle.
- (5) Subclause (3) does not apply to the determination of guidelines under section 2.26 (Special provisions relating to taxis and hire vehicles and other vehicles) to the extent that the determination relates only to that part of the premium to be paid before the issue of a third-party policy.
- (6) The Motor Accident Guidelines may provide for the refund of part of the premium paid for a third-party policy after the period for which the policy is issued by reference to digital information recorded about the distance travelled by the motor vehicle.
- (7) The Motor Accident Guidelines may exclude any class of vehicles from the operation of this provision.

Mr MARK COURE: On behalf of Mr Victor Dominello: I move:

That the House agree to the Legislative Council amendments.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (10:14): The Opposition congratulates the Government on accepting a number of our amendments relating to the clawback provisions. We do need to ensure that the days of insurer super profits are over. These amendments will assist in that regard. As I have said, the Government has been dragged kicking and screaming to sort out the fat super profits of insurers. While we are disappointed that they did not go hard on insurers, we are not surprised.

Motion agreed to.

TATTOO PARLOURS AMENDMENT BILL 2017**First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Kevin Anderson, on behalf of Mr Troy Grant, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (10:18): On behalf of Mr Troy Grant: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Tattoo Parlours Amendment Bill 2017 includes a range of amendments to the Tattoo Parlours Act 2012 that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the tattoo parlour regulatory scheme in New South Wales. The current regulatory framework for tattoo parlours was introduced to curb infiltration of the industry by organised criminal groups. These arrangements require applications for a licence to be made to NSW Fair Trading and a probity check in the form of a security determination to be made by the NSW Police Force. This was intended to clean up the industry and to stop tattoo parlours being used as a front for criminal enterprise. I understand that, since the scheme has commenced, the scheme has helped reduce bkie involvement in the tattoo industry. However, there is still more work to be done. These amendments will ensure that the Tattoo Parlours Act 2012 remains fit for purpose in limiting infiltration of the body art tattooing industry by organised crime.

I now turn to the details of the bill. A key amendment proposed in this bill is the creation of the ability to renew a licence issued under the Act. Proposed section 13A sets out an application process for licence renewal. This will ensure that operator licences and tattooist licences issued under the Tattoo Parlours Act 2012 can be renewed without the need to make a brand-new licence application, as is currently the case. The renewal process will cut the red tape that is associated with the requirement to make a brand-new licence application without compromising the integrity of the scheme. While many of the steps for licence renewal are similar to those required when making the original licence application the renewal process will be more streamlined.

The new section 14 (2) proposed by this bill sets out that licence renewal applications need only be referred to the police for security determinations if the application includes any changes relating to the close associates of the licensee or the licensed premises at, on or in which the licensee carries on a body art tattooing business. This will ensure that police resources are not required to make new security determinations every time a renewal application is made unless a change has occurred in respect of close associates of the licensee or the premises of the body art tattooing business. The new section 17 continues the existing arrangements in terms of licence term, which provide that a licence remains in force for a period of three years from the date on which it comes into force unless it is sooner cancelled or surrendered or otherwise ceases to be in force.

The renewal process in section 13A sets out that when an application for a licence renewal is made the licence will continue to be in force until the application is determined. This will mean that if the licence renewal is made before the expiration date of the licence the licence holder can continue to operate until the renewal application is determined. Transitional arrangements are included in schedule 1, part 4 of the Act that set out that any pending applications before the commencement of the bill for a new licence can be treated as a licence renewal. This will ensure that those licence holders who already have made a new licence application are not required to withdraw their application and can have it dealt with as if it were a new licence renewal made under the new laws. The creation of a licence renewal process makes sense for tattoo parlours regulation. It will cut red tape for licence applicants and government agencies who regulate this industry. This will reduce the burden on tattoo parlours who are approaching the end of their three-year licence term by removing the need to make a fresh application.

Another key amendment made by this bill is to clarify that, in determining whether an individual should be granted an operator or tattooist licence or be permitted to continue to hold one, the Commissioner of Police may make an adverse security determination on the ground that a close associate of the applicant or licensee is not a fit and proper person. This is achieved by amendments to the definition of "adverse security determination" in section 3 to clarify that such a determination includes a determination that a close associate of the applicant or licensee is not a fit and proper person. The inclusion of section 19 (1) (a1) and section 19 (2) (a1) clarify that the Commissioner of Police is to investigate the close associates of applicants or licence holders to determine whether they are fit and proper persons. Amendments to section 19A ensure that the commissioner may require further information from a licensee or close associate in respect of such an investigation. Clarifying that adverse security determinations can be made in respect of close associates ensures that police can make these determinations to prevent tattoo licences being issued to applicants in situations where bkie gangs have effective control over a tattoo parlour. This solidifies a critical measure within the Act, which is serving to stamp out the influence of bikies and other organised criminal networks in the tattoo industry. It ensures that police can gather all the

information available to them to make these important decisions about close associates that exert control over tattoo parlour operators and licensees.

The bill also includes provisions to ensure that any criminal intelligence reports or other criminal reports used by police in determining licence applications or administering licences are protected against disclosure. Section 20 is amended to ensure that any criminal intelligence reports or other criminal reports used by police are protected. Similarly, section 27 is amended to ensure that criminal intelligence relied on by police when making a security determination remains protected in matters considered by the New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT]. These amendments will mean that when police rely on particular criminal intelligence when making licensing decisions or defending matters before the NCAT, the risk of criminal intelligence holdings being made public is greatly reduced.

Amendments to section 22 of the bill make it a condition of tattooist licences issued under the Act that the holder must give written notice to the regulator of a change in particulars within 14 days of the change. This is already a condition of an operator licence and this bill will extend the requirement to tattooist licence holders. This will mean that the regulator has up-to-date details of all licence holders in New South Wales. In relation to operator licence holders, they will continue to be required to provide written notification of any changes in relation to close associates. The inclusion of section 22 (1A) sets out that declaration of a change in the particulars of a close associate must be accompanied by copies of three forms of personal identification for each individual identified in that notice as a close associate. This will ensure that police are provided with information to start performing any necessary checks when the notification is received instead of having to make additional requests for information and wait for the information to be returned.

The bill also amends section 26 to clarify the grounds on which the regulator can cancel a licence. This includes amendments to section 26 (1) (a) specifying that the secretary must cancel a licence in cases where additional information required by the Commissioner of Police under section 19A has not been provided within the time specified. This will help in ensuring that police are provided with the information required to investigate whether a person is a fit and proper person. This goes to the heart of the scheme and provides for cancellation of licences where the person refuses to answer questions from the police.

Under proposed section 26 (2) (a1) the secretary may cancel a licence where it is not collected within a 60-day period. Currently the Act specifies that the secretary must cancel the licence in such situations. The bill is therefore adding discretion for the secretary to choose not to cancel a licence in these circumstances. The bill also amends section 30C to clarify that when authorised officers lawfully enter a premises under the Act for a purpose referred to in section 30A they may make such examinations and inquiries as the authorised officer considers necessary. There are already a range of powers in section 30C that police can exercise when they lawfully enter a premises under the Act and this power ensures that police continue to have the power to make the required inquiries necessary to regulate the scheme effectively.

The bill also amends the wording in sections 35 and 39 to clarify and streamline the requirements concerning penalty notices and the servicing of documents. Another measure being introduced by this bill is the insertion of section 33A, which provides for the statutory abrogation of the privilege against self-incrimination in regard to the tattoo parlour regulatory scheme. This will mean persons required to provide information by enforcement officers must provide that information regardless of whether their answer would incriminate them. However, section 33A (3) provides protections that limit the use of any answer provided in criminal proceedings against the person if the person objects to providing an answer on the ground that it might incriminate them.

This provision addresses the current situation where a person could refuse to answer questions or produce documents requested by enforcement officers if so doing was likely to incriminate them. This is an easy option for anyone who wants to hide criminal activity from those who are tasked with upholding the regulatory scheme. The provision included in this bill is similar to provisions that already exist in a raft of other legislation providing for industry regulation and it is appropriate that the legislation that regulates an industry which historically has been infiltrated by organised crime is similarly strengthened. This will close a loophole and ensure that this industry can be regulated as effectively as possible, as always intended.

The bill also makes a range of mechanical amendments to ensure that the Tattoo Parlours Act 2012 remains fit for purpose to stamp out criminal infiltration in the tattoo parlour industry in New South Wales. I am pleased that the new measures included in this bill, including licence renewal, will reduce red tape for small business engaged in the industry and that other measures in the bill will ensure that the regulator and police are provided with the powers necessary to regulate effectively. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

SECURITY INDUSTRY AMENDMENT BILL 2017**First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Kevin Anderson, on behalf of Mr Troy Grant, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (10:31): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Security Industry Amendment Bill 2017. This bill is evidence of the Government's unflagging commitment to the strong and effective regulation of the New South Wales private security industry. The provision of private security services is quite rightly considered a high-risk activity. Security licensees are given access to firearms and to large quantities of cash. They often have access to commercially sensitive sites and information as well as being routinely asked to maintain order in public areas and to diffuse potentially dangerous situations. We ask a lot of our security firms.

Security industry licensees are providing vital services to communities right across New South Wales every day—in hospitals, pubs and clubs, banks, shopping centres and defence sites. But, as a high-risk industry, we expect a lot too. It is vital that the Commissioner of Police and his delegate—as industry regulator—are appropriately empowered and resourced to keep the industry honest and to ensure holders of security licences are properly trained to do their job. It is worth repeating that we rely on the NSW Police Force to weed out rogue operators and to maintain high standards of probity and training across this industry. Accordingly, this bill seeks to strengthen the Security Industry Act 1997 by making a series of small but significant changes requested by the regulator: the NSW Police Force.

I will now outline these proposed amendments in greater detail. Many pieces of New South Wales legislation dealing with industry regulation already contain a provision which serves to abrogate or set aside the common law privilege against self-incrimination. An example is section 35 of the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007. The importance of such provisions is that they ensure that an industry participant cannot evade reasonable and necessary questioning and proper record keeping by the regulator by claiming privilege. Such a provision is considered an appropriate and necessary inclusion for the Security Industry Act and hence will be included via item [23] of the bill, if passed.

In addition, item [13] of the bill provides that the Commissioner of Police may, if satisfied that grounds may exist for revoking a licence, suspend the licence for a period of up to 60 days, with no requirement to provide the licensee with an opportunity to be heard. The commissioner, by further notice, may extend the period of suspension for a further period of up to 60 days. Such a change will ensure that police, as industry regulator, can better manage risks within the industry. For example, being able to immediately remove a crowd controller from their position when they have been charged with violent offences but the charges have yet to be heard by a court, and being able to continue the suspension until the charges have been determined. I am sure members will agree that public safety must be paramount in such situations.

Should licensees wish to challenge the suspension of their licence, they will, of course, still be able to seek a review by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT]. Item [18] of the bill strengthens current protections around the disclosure of information, criminal information or criminal intelligence used by the NSW Police Force in matters before NCAT. This is important to ensure, for example, that a rogue licensee cannot use such proceedings as a backdoor way of gaining access to police criminal intelligence holdings, with all the threats to police human sources that entails. The bill also makes a series of other small but important amendments to the Act which will, if passed, strengthen the current regulatory scheme for the New South Wales security industry. For example, the bill clarifies that the Commissioner of Police must refuse to renew a licence in circumstances where the Act would mandate refusal if the licence holder were applying for a new licence.

Finally, item [28] of the bill adds to the efficiency of court proceedings by providing that the Commissioner of Police may provide certificate evidence relating to the following matters: that a specified person was or was not, on a day or during a specified period, a person or organisation approved under section 27A of the Act; and that on a day or during a specified period, specified conditions were or were not imposed under section 27A with respect to the provision of training, assessment and instruction by a person or organisation approved under that section. We already have done the heavy lifting in reforming the regulation of the security industry. So while these changes are not major, they are important in assisting us ensure that the legislation remains effective in helping to maintain high probity and competency standards across the New South Wales private security industry. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

**LAND AND PROPERTY INFORMATION NSW (AUTHORISED TRANSACTION) REPEAL BILL
2017**

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Clayton Barr, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (10:38): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time. It is with considerable sadness that I introduce the Land and Property Information NSW (Authorised Transaction) Repeal Bill 2017 to Parliament today. Quite frankly, I wish, for the sake of the people of New South Wales, that it did not come to this. Legislation in this place is not always an emotional experience for members of parliaments, but in this case I can confirm that for me it is. The idea that we would sell our land titles registry makes me incredibly sad. People sometimes wonder about the role or the purpose of an opposition in Parliament. In essence, there are two things. Ideologically and philosophically governments and oppositions have their differences—that has stood the test of time. But in this instance the purpose of the Opposition is to save the Government from itself. In attempting to do that, let us deal with a few core facts about the proposed transaction authorised by the bill I am seeking to repeal today.

Let us start with the companies that are said to be bidding for the privilege of owning this exquisite, incredibly profitable, monopoly business. Almost all the companies in the bidding have an underlying funding model that is linked to offshore shelf companies based in the Cayman Islands and other similar tax havens. It is unthinkable that a State government in Australia would consider entering into a sale process that supports tax evasion, but here we are on the brink of exactly that. If the tax avoidance is not enough to scare the pants off us think about the security and uncertainty. These \$2 shelf companies are set up deliberately so that they can disappear easily. That is their point. These companies will not give a Jatz cracker if the New South Wales land titles registry falls over; their only concern is their ability to profit from it. They will not care if it all goes pear-shaped because that is the very business model they have set up.

Let me be crystal clear: The majority of the potential buyers of our land titles registry are companies that will happily wipe their hands and walk away at the first sniff of trouble or as soon as their profits are no longer protected. Let us call that what it is—sovereign risk. In September 2016 I made the point that strategically an invading armed force will target the land titles registry as its first goal in an attack. But here in New South Wales we are on the brink of saying to the world, "Do not bother invading us; we will just sell it to you, even though you are a dodgy shelf company with no real interest in the success or failure of our State." How can that be anything other than sovereign risk?

Secondly, in explaining why this repeal bill must succeed, I want to address the issue of title insurance as a consequence of privatisation of our land title registry, which will place an additional cost on already struggling households. As much as the Premier wants to say that title insurance will not be required, that decision is not up to her. It will be the financial industry that decides whether or not it will insist on title insurance and that decision will be based on its confidence in our title system. At the moment, title insurance is not required because the financial institutions have absolute confidence in our titling system. The banks will be very eager to head into the title insurance business because they will offer that product as one of their services. The banks will have a vested interest in making title insurance compulsory. Is there anyone—apart from the Premier—who cannot see that?

It is not for the Premier to speak about title insurance because she will have no control over it whatsoever. One financial institution already insists on title insurance and has done so for the past 10 years. That is not a secret; one just has to google it. One of the big four banks already has considered the issue of title insurance based on whether or not this sale goes ahead. There is nothing the Premier can do about that. The Premier should stop telling people that there is nothing to worry about. The issue of title insurance is so important to us in this place because it speaks to housing affordability for every aspiring home owner in New South Wales and every member of Parliament should care about that.

A third reason this repeal bill is so important is privacy. I acknowledge that the legislation I am seeking to repeal today states that the data server must be physically located in New South Wales. But that is irrelevant. It is clever, sneaky and misleading language used by the Government as a smokescreen. A data server is simply a cloud and on the worldwide web the server—the cloud—can be based anywhere and accessed from anywhere. Many members of this House will have photos and music stored in the cloud but not one of them could tell us where that server is. Where is that server? No-one knows. The idea that we are going to have the server based in New South Wales—in line with the legislation—is nothing but a smokescreen.

Shelf companies are lining up to buy this asset. It is clear that they will be based somewhere else in the world. They are required to be in New South Wales only for the first 12 months and in the contract for sale in the deed there are clear instructions about "when", "how", "if" and "if you wish"—"to locate themselves somewhere

other than New South Wales". So it is clear that the new owner—one of these Cayman Islands-based shelf companies—will go outside New South Wales and access the land title registry cloud that will be set up on the internet. After seeing the United States presidential election hacked by the Russians, we would be extremely naive to think that our land title registry will not be subject to hacking once it is in the cloud and on a server that can be accessed from other parts of the world.

But hacking is not the main issue here. The main issue is that our land title registry dataset, with the personal and private information of millions of New South Wales people, will be able to be mined for its data by the new owner. They will have access to information about our debts, wages, salary, income, marital status, financial structures and tax details. It goes on and on. That information can be used to benefit the shelf company. The Premier, and the legislation, says that farming of the data will not be permitted. That is a lie and we must not be so naive, blind or stupid to fall for it. Of course the new owners will mine, farm, process, digest, use and onsell our personal information—because they are in the business of making money. The Government of New South Wales will be unable to do anything about it. The New South Wales Government will have no way of knowing that data mining is occurring. The New South Wales Government will have no means and no grounds by which it can audit the database to determine whether or not the files have been copied, saved elsewhere, processed, sorted, summarised or sold. I am not making this up—it is a simple fact.

The powers of the registrar general in the concession deed and in the legislation only allows the registrar general to investigate the use of the database if he or she can prove to the new operator that there are reasonable grounds for doing so. It is straightforward and anyone with a hint of technological knowledge will understand it. The so-called step-in powers reserved by the Government are meaningless. They cannot apply to the data and, even if they did, it is not possible to see that data is being pilfered. It is not possible to take action over something that one is unable to detect or prove. The reality of this sale is that our private information about our assets, wealth, marital status, et cetera, is going on the market—not just the land title information but also our personal information.

The fourth reason to support the bill is the Government's secrecy throughout the entire sale process. I note the decision of the court this week regarding the Ku-ring-gai Council forced merger. The magistrate stated in his ruling that he found in favour of Ku-ring-gai Council because the information and reports supporting the forced merger process had been hidden and kept secret. I will now inform the House about some of the documents that have been kept secret from the people of New South Wales and this Chamber. The first scoping study from 2012 reportedly said, "Do not sell" and it is not available. The second scoping study from 2014 which said, "Do not sell", is not available.

The third scoping study in 2015 which said, "Selling is a wonderful idea", is not available. The review of the fees and charges, which declared a 700 per cent increase in some of the fees and charges to be normal, is not available. The first expression of interest paper released to interested parties is not available. The second detailed document, which gave financial and structural information to bidders so that they could gauge their interest, is not available. The third and final concession deed document, the contract for sale, is not available. None of the seven documents is available. The Government is showing utter contempt for the people of New South Wales—the same people who funded the documents and reports.

If the reports are supportive of the sale, why hide them? The Government should wear them as a suit of armour, hold them up as evidence and say, "This is wonderful. This is why, and here is the proof." But none of those documents is available. These documents are available to the people who are looking to buy but they are not available to the owners of the land registry—the people of New South Wales. What sort of infantile logic is that? I have a more thorough and logical conversation with my five-year-old child when we are talking about ice-cream. She understands the exchange of ideas and I cannot hide a thing from her. This Government, when dealing with the State's most precious crown jewel, has kept it all a secret.

This Government did not properly inform its own members. It did not tell them about the implications of this sale. It did not give them the details. I know that some Government members who were approached about the issue said that they were lied to. They were lied to by their own parties. Those are not my words; they are the words of Government members. Finally, NSW Land and Property Information [LPI] is a world leader and has exported its model, practices and procedures to the rest of the world. Technologically the LPI office is cutting edge. It is utter nonsense that there needs to be a technical upgrade and that the private sector will do it better; it is utter gutter nonsense. If we have the best system in the world, we celebrate it.

Over the past few years I have listened to the Premier's contributions on this issue. It is essential to remind members that the Premier—the former Treasurer—introduced the Land and Property Information NSW (Authorised Transaction) Bill 2016. She led for the Government in debate on this issue. Each time the Premier speaks about selling the land titles office it is clear that she does not understand the business she is selling. I understand the need for Government members to defend their leader and I commend them for that; it is what

they should do. Let me give an example of the Premier's ignorance concerning what she is selling. She refers to it as "just the admin part", but nothing could be further from the truth. The keepers of our land registry are not a simple collection of admin assistants from a temping pool, as the Premier would have us believe.

The land titles office employs highly skilled and trained experts in the fields of law, survey, mapping, spatial data, planning, registration and mediation. They spend their entire lives building the skills to do the work. There are dozens of jobs in the land registry office that cannot be done by anyone with less than 10 or 20 years experience. These people cannot be replaced by a temp from an admin agency. Once these people are gone we cannot replace them. That makes the 35-year concession or the idea that the Government has step-in powers farcical. New South Wales will never be able to resume control of the land registry because these amazingly skilled people will not be available. Any admin person could be the Premier—that is a fact—but only the highly trained and skilled can be the land registry keepers. I commend this repeal bill to the House. I declare this bill to be an urgent bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that this bill be considered an urgent bill.

The House divided.

Ayes36
Noes44
Majority.....8

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Foley, Mr L
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Piper, Mr G
Smith, Ms T F
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N (teller)
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Robertson, Mr J
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Constance, Mr A
Davies, Ms T
Evans, Mr L
Goward, Ms P
Hodgkinson, Ms K
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Williams, Mr R

Aplin, Mr G
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Fraser, Mr A
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Piccoli, Mr A
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Ayres, Mr S
Conolly, Mr K
Crouch, Mr A
Elliott, Mr D
Gibbons, Ms M
Henskens, Mr A
Johnsen, Mr M
Maguire, Mr D
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Provest, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Ward, Mr G

PAIRS

Hornery, Ms S
Mihailuk, Ms T

Tudehope, Mr D
Berejiklian, Ms G

Motion negatived.

Debate adjourned.

Documents

AUDITOR-GENERAL

Reports

The DEPUTY CLERK: On behalf of the Clerk: In accordance with section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of a report of the Auditor-General entitled, "2016—An Overview", dated March 2017, received 30 March 2017 and authorised to be printed.

Bills

SUITORS' FUND AMENDMENT (COSTS OF NCAT APPEALS) BILL 2016

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 13 October 2016.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (11:04): I lead for the Government in debate on the Suitors' Fund Amendment (Costs of NCAT Appeals) Bill 2016, which seeks to extend the Suitors' Fund to parties to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT]. In 2015 the Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013 consolidated 22 tribunals and other bodies into a one-stop shop for fast, fair and efficient justice: NCAT. On 21 November 2012 former Attorney General the Hon. Greg Smith, SC, said in this House:

The new tribunal will consolidate the functions of most tribunals in New South Wales, with some limited exceptions. The New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal will improve customer service by using simple, quick and effective processes for resolving a wide range of disputes. The ability to share facilities will mean that people in both metropolitan and regional areas will have access to tribunal services through a single point of access. There will be improved accountability, transparency and quality of decision-making through consistency in standards, processes and professional development. The tribunal will review fees and charges to achieve greater equity. The tribunal will also create savings due to economies of scale.

Those predictions have come to pass. The 22 tribunals and other bodies that were consolidated include: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Tribunal; the Aboriginal Land Councils Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal; Charity Referees; the Chinese Medicine Tribunal; the Chiropractic Tribunal; the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal; the Dental Tribunal; the Guardianship Tribunal; the Local Government Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal; local land boards; the Medical Radiation Practice Tribunal; the Medical Tribunal; the Nursing and Midwifery Tribunal; the Occupational Therapy Tribunal; the Optometry Tribunal; the Osteopathy Tribunal; the Pharmacy Tribunal; the Physiotherapy Tribunal; the Podiatry Tribunal; the Psychology Tribunal; and the Vocational Training Appeals Panel. The Government has continued to support the important work of NCAT by providing \$9.6 million in the 2016-17 budget for the relocation and upgrade of NCAT facilities. What does NCAT do? Justice Robertson Wright, who became president of NCAT, said it best in his swearing-in speech as a judge of the Supreme Court, when he stated:

For many people in New South Wales, making application to NCAT will be their sole or principal means of obtaining access justice. As President of NCAT, I see it as my duty to do all I can to ensure that the tribunal's processes are efficient, transparent and proportionate to the subject matters of the claims.

The Suitors' Fund Act 1951 provides for the establishment and maintenance of the Suitors' Fund from which government can reimburse parties for part of the costs of court proceedings when those costs were incurred through no fault of the parties. The Suitors' Fund is funded by an allocation within the budget of the Department of Justice each year. Parties may apply for payment from the fund in three circumstances: first, under sections 6 and 6B of the Act, following successful appeals; secondly, under section 6A of the Act, following aborted or discontinued trials; and, thirdly, under section 6C of the Act, when a payment from the Suitors' Fund would be within the "spirit and intent" of the Act but is not otherwise authorised under the Act. The maximum payment available is \$10,000, or \$20,000 for a High Court appeal only.

In relation to successful appeals, the purpose of Suitors' Fund payments is to alleviate unfairness to a party who has been ordered to pay both parties' costs in relation to the appeal. The Act currently applies to certain appeals to the High Court, Supreme Court, the Land and Environment Court and the District Court from decisions concerning a question of law—or on both questions of law and fact in the case of appeals to the Supreme Court. It does not currently apply to internal appeals in NCAT. The first step in process for obtaining a payment from the Suitors' Fund in relation to a successful appeal is that the respondent in the appeal receives an indemnity certificate. Where an appeal on a point of law is successful—or on a point of law or fact in the Supreme Court—judges have discretion to grant an indemnity certificate to the unsuccessful respondent.

The indemnity certificate can be issued only if the respondent is personally liable for payment of the appellant's costs. The effect of an indemnity certificate is to allow a respondent to apply to be reimbursed out of

the Suitors' Fund for all or part of the appellant's costs of the appeal paid by the respondent. For example, let us say person A successfully sues person B in the District Court. Person B appeals to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court upholds person B's appeal and orders person A to pay all costs for both parties incurred in both the district and supreme courts. The Supreme Court can issue an indemnity certificate to person A, entitling him or her to apply for a payment out of the Suitors' Fund to cover the costs of the Supreme Court appeal. Indemnity certificates cannot be granted to appellants under any circumstances. Step two is for the respondent to apply for payment from the Suitors' Fund.

A respondent with an indemnity certificate can apply to the Office of General Counsel within the Department of Justice for a payment from the Suitors' Fund. In most cases the respondent is required to include a certificate issued by a cost assessor to ensure that the party's claims are reasonable. The respondent must have paid the appellant's costs before any Suitors' Fund payment can be made. However, if payment of these costs would cause the respondent undue hardship, the respondent may apply for the Suitors' Fund payment to be made directly to the appellant. It is also possible for the appellant to apply directly to the Suitors' Fund if an indemnity certificate has been granted to a respondent and the respondent unreasonably neglects or refuses to pay the appellant's costs, or the appellant cannot locate the respondent after diligent search and inquiry in order to enforce the costs order.

As I said, the Suitors' Fund is established by the Suitors' Fund Act 1951. Its purpose is to compensate parties to court proceedings who incur additional legal costs through no fault of their own. The underlying principle behind the Suitors' Fund is that parties should not have two sets of court proceedings to determine one matter. The Opposition bill would amend the Act so that it applies to internal appeals within NCAT. The Opposition bill also potentially makes the Suitors' Fund available in relation to discontinued NCAT matters and confirms that the Act covers appeals from NCAT to a court. It is important to recognise that the Suitors' Fund is not for the purpose of assisting parties who experience hardship in paying legal costs; different schemes are in place for that purpose including Legal Aid representation and fee waiver and reduction policies that are in place for all New South Wales courts and tribunals in my portfolio.

There is no general entitlement to be legally represented in NCAT proceedings. In any event, people experiencing financial hardship may be eligible for a grant of Legal Aid provided they satisfy certain means and matters tests. There are several arrangements relating to fees in place at NCAT to ensure access to justice for those experiencing hardship: no fees are payable in certain NCAT jurisdictions; eligible pensioners pay fees at a concession rate set at 25 per cent of the full fee for any application for which a fee is payable; and the principal registrar may fully or partially waive or postpone the payment of fees if paying the fee would cause the applicant serious hardship.

The Government opposes the bill on four grounds: NCAT is a jurisdiction significantly different from courts to which the Act currently applies; extending the Act would appear to be cost effective—an issue that does not appear to have been addressed by the Opposition; the impact of the proposed amendments is unclear; and there is no need to clarify the application of the Act. I will now go into each of those grounds in more detail. Importantly, NCAT is a jurisdiction significantly different from courts to which the Act currently applies. NCAT was designed to provide quick, informal and low-cost access to justice. This jurisdiction is significantly different from the courts for which the Suitors' Fund Act was developed. Courts are cost jurisdictions. That means an unsuccessful party is usually liable for both parties' legal costs. In contrast, NCAT is a no cost jurisdiction. That means that each party usually pays their own costs. NCAT may award costs in relation to proceedings if it is satisfied that there are special circumstances to warrant an award of costs, but such an award is a rare occurrence.

Suitors' Fund payments are usually used to cover an unsuccessful respondent in an appeal who has been ordered to pay an appellant's legal costs for both the original decision and the appeal. Usually parties in NCAT proceedings bear their own costs, so there is no clear need to allow applications to the Suitors' Fund for internal appeals. In addition, as I said, there is no general entitlement to be legally represented at NCAT. Parties may be represented by another person only if NCAT grants leave. This is intended to keep costs down for parties. If a person is self-represented, their legal costs are generally no more than the cost of the application to NCAT. Again, there is no clear need to allow applications to the Suitors' Fund where there are no legal costs. It is important to note that schemes equivalent to the Suitors' Fund are available at the Commonwealth level and in other Australian States and Territories, except for South Australia. In his second reading speech the member for Liverpool described the Opposition's proposal as "blindingly obvious", yet those other jurisdictions do not extend the Suitors' Funds or equivalent schemes in the way the member for Liverpool seeks. It is hardly "blindingly obvious".

The Government also opposes the bill because extending the Act would appear to be cost ineffective. That appears to be an issue that the Opposition has not considered. The Suitors' Fund is administered by the Department of Justice and funded by government. Its extension to NCAT may lead to an increase in Suitors' Fund applications, which would impact the resources required by the Department of Justice. As I said, NCAT is a no

cost jurisdiction, with no general entitlement to be legally represented. Where the costs to parties are as low as they are in NCAT, there is a risk that the amount sought by parties to internal appeals at NCAT would be less than the cost to government to process the application.

The impact of the amendments proposed in this bill is unclear. The Government is concerned that the impact of the amendments has not been fully assessed and that there may be unintended consequences if the Act were amended in the ad hoc way proposed by this bill. The Opposition has focused on the application of the Act to NCAT internal appeals in the explanatory memorandum and the second reading speech. However, the provisions in the bill appear to have broader application to NCAT than the Opposition has implied. The bill amends the definition of "court" in the Act to include NCAT, which might mean the entirety of the Act would apply to NCAT. That might mean that other types of Suitors' Fund applications could be made in relation to NCAT proceedings, including applications concerning proceedings that are aborted or discontinued, and applications where a payment would be within the "spirit and intent" of the Suitors' Fund Act but not otherwise authorised under the Act.

The Government also opposes the bill because there is no need to clarify application of the Act to appeals to superior courts. If the bill does mean that the entirety of the Act applies to NCAT it would confirm that indemnity certificates may be issued by superior courts in relation to matters heard by NCAT at first instance. There is no practical need for a legislative amendment to confirm that application of the Act. The Department of Justice currently accepts applications under the Suitors' Fund in those circumstances. In conclusion, the Government has some serious concerns about this bill. Not only would it extend the Suitors' Fund in a way that is inconsistent with its true intent; it is also incompatible with the purpose of NCAT. The Government is concerned that a proper assessment has not been undertaken as to whether the extensions contemplated by this bill are cost effective. The Government is also concerned that the application of the bill goes beyond what was represented in the explanatory memorandum and the second reading speech delivered by the member for Liverpool. I note that it appears that NCAT has not been consulted on the bill. For the reasons I have outlined, the Government will not be supporting the bill.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (11:18): I support the Suitors' Fund Amendment (Cost of NCAT Appeals) Bill 2016, which aims to allow the appeals panel of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] to grant indemnity certificates to respondents to successful internal appeals made under section 80 of the Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013. The bill will amend the Suitors' Fund Act 1951 to that effect. The bill will allow litigants to be compensated for errors made by the NCAT. Such a move has been described as "blindingly obvious" by the shadow Attorney General, who introduced this bill. The shadow Attorney General is correct in his description. There is no good reason why the NCAT should not be able to grant indemnity certificates to those who fall victim to what are effectively legal mistakes. That is especially true when considering the wideranging influence of NCAT on litigants seeking access to justice.

I have a story to tell about a constituent whom, in order to protect her privacy, we will call "Cynthia". Cynthia came to the Prospect electorate office last year with a consumer issue that had recently been rejected by NCAT. Cynthia had purchased a brand new four-wheel drive vehicle for her son on his twenty-first birthday—not a purchase made lightly. It was what her son had wanted: rugged and with enough space for all his mates. It should have been the perfect vehicle for road trips to faraway festivals and a reliable work vehicle. As with any new car, he expected it to operate reliably. Unfortunately, Cynthia was not so lucky. Her birthday gift to her son turned out to be faulty. The engine's valves clicked, oil leaked and the vehicle's performance was simply below the reasonably expected standard, so Cynthia asked for a replacement. The dealer, however, refused. They took the vehicle in multiple times, always claiming to have fixed the problem. Cynthia's son barely got to drive his present as, cumulatively, the vehicle spent months in workshops.

Already this story has clear signs of breaches of consumer rights. Herein lies the importance of the NCAT and the tribunals that preceded it—affordable access to a legal remedy was in reach. We have all heard stories about consumers receiving justice after having a bad experience by representing themselves, for minimal cost, at a tribunal. Cynthia too had heard of this possible remedy, so she appeared before NCAT as a self-represented litigant. Unfortunately, Cynthia was unprepared for the reality of even this most accessible level of the legal system. Her evidence was limited to personal accounts and she was unprepared for the cost of compensating independent witnesses for a day away from their regular work duties. The dealer, however, had been through this before. They knew exactly what to do at the tribunal and had an unfair advantage in expertise.

The NCAT recognised this imbalance and advised Cynthia to come back at another time when she was better prepared. Sadly, Cynthia never returned to the NCAT with new evidence, as the costs and the confusion related to the legal system were all too much for her. Whilst she received due process and was treated fairly, there still remains a gap in the justice system for people such as Cynthia. What if she had proceeded with an appeal and

been successful? Under the current law, the NCAT would not have been able to award her costs to cover her legal expenses. That is something this bill aims to change.

Litigants like Cynthia deserve the same degree of justice as anybody else in our community. Indemnity certificates should not be restricted to those with the financial budget, legal expertise and determination to go to a court. The NCAT, which saves taxpayers and litigants millions of dollars, should be able to make simple determinations regarding compensation for legal expenses. There is no good reason not to, and the simple and obvious solution is to harmonise the rights available to people who use the NCAT. This bill aims to do that.

The proposal to allow the NCAT to order compensation would not lead to the creation of a "treasure chest" for successful appellants, as some people have suggested. Currently, the maximum claimable amounts from the Suitors' Fund are \$20,000 for the High Court and \$10,000 for lower courts. While these limits have been criticised for being too low, this bill does not seek to increase them. Instead the bill would fill the gap in legislation that was left upon the introduction of the NCAT. The O'Farrell Government should have included a provision for indemnity certificates when drafting the original legislation that created the NCAT, but it appears to have missed that opportunity.

It saddens me that the Berejiklian Government, and particularly the newly appointed Attorney General, opposes this legislation merely because it was introduced by an Opposition member. The Attorney General may try to hide this through the use of alternative facts—as he did only moments ago in his contribution to the second reading debate—but, sadly, we have seen this before. This sort of partisan approach is the same as that taken by the previous—sacked—Attorney General, Gabrielle Upton. The enabling of NCAT to award indemnity certificates is not a partisan issue. It is, rather, a matter of justice and consistency. The bill has the potential to assist thousands of litigants facing financial hardship due to errors of law by NCAT. Similar provisions already exist in Western Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth jurisdictions.

Referring back to the example of Cynthia's vehicle mentioned earlier, had she had not been a constituent of Prospect but instead a resident of the Deputy Premier's electorate of Monaro, and had she purchased the vehicle from nearby Canberra, her experience with the justice system would have been different. The law in New South Wales is different in this regard from the law in Canberra. A complainant in Canberra who has a legal dispute—such as seeking the replacement of a vehicle with a major failure under the Australian Consumer Law—would have access to compensation for a tribunal error whereas somebody in New South Wales with the same dispute is entitled to no compensation at all. Such a system is inconsistent and should not continue to operate as the law. The simple amendment proposed by the shadow Attorney General would remove this inequitable process in the legal system.

In 1987 the then Leader of the Liberal-Nationals Opposition, John Dowd, QC, argued that the major drawback to compensation from the Suitors' Fund was that people were generally not aware of its existence. As the shadow Attorney General noted in his second reading speech, the Government seems to have been unaware of the existence of the Suitors' Fund at the time the legislation to create NCAT was written. Therefore, in the best interests of litigants who require the services of the NCAT, this amendment must be implemented to remedy this shortcoming of the New South Wales legal system. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (11:26): The Opposition clearly is struggling for something to do and some way to try to make itself appear relevant. The members in the Chamber who form the legal cabal in the Opposition—the member for Liverpool, the member for Prospect and the member for Heffron, who is hovering over the lectern waiting to get his chance—obviously had a meeting over a cup of tea in the Opposition lawyers' common room and asked themselves, "What can we possibly think of to try to make ourselves relevant?"

Dr Hugh McDermott: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 76. Can you please instruct the member to be relevant to the bill instead of talking about the Opposition?

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

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I am so glad that the member for Prospect has taken some time out from his appearances on Sky News to spend a bit of time here at his day job. It would be nice if he looked after his constituents for a change instead of swanning around doing media appearances. It would be good to see him concentrate on his day job.

The member for Prospect, no doubt fresh from having his cup of tea with the legal cabal of the Opposition, has spoken in favour of this bill. He said that it was a "blindingly obvious" thing to have NCAT included within the Suitors' Fund. That was his argument—and it was similar to what the member for Liverpool said in his second reading speech. The justification for this bill—

Dr Hugh McDermott: He could have the job in about two years. You never will.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I certainly hope that never transpires. It is quite clear that the shadow Attorney General does not understand one of the most fundamental distinctions in the legal world: the difference between a court and a tribunal. In his second reading speech the shadow Attorney General said:

The argument for extension of this scheme to NCAT is powerful. In fact, it should have been done when this Government introduced the legislation establishing NCAT. It is a good example of the lack of attention paid by this Government to the legislation it introduced.

The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal was a coming together of 22 separate tribunals which were amalgamated into NCAT on 1 January 2014. The Suitors' Fund Act has been in force since 1951. All of the tribunals that were rolled into NCAT in 2014 could have been brought under the suitors' fund at any time during the 16 years of the Labor Government. If what this bill purports to do was so blindingly obvious—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Prospect will cease interrupting.

Dr Hugh McDermott: I just do it better than him.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: That is a matter of opinion. In the entire 16 years of the Labor Government this so-called blindingly obvious measure was never undertaken by any member of the Labor Government, including all of the many Attorneys General—not in respect of the Aboriginal Land Councils Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal, established in 1983, which was in existence for the entirety of the Labor Government, then brought into NCAT in 2014. It was not undertaken in respect of the Administrative Decisions Tribunal, including Victims Compensation Tribunal, established in 1997 by the Labor Government and brought into NCAT in 2014, and never brought under the suitors' fund; nor was it undertaken in respect of the Charity Referees Tribunal, established in 1942, in existence through the entirety of the Labor Government and brought into NCAT in 2014.

This measure was not undertaken in respect of the Chiropractors Tribunal, established by the Labor Government in 2001, never brought under the suitors' fund and brought into NCAT in 2014. It was not undertaken in respect of the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal, established by the Labor Government in 2001, never brought under the suitors' fund and rolled into NCAT in 2014 with the same jurisdictional limit that the shadow Attorney General referred to as so-called mandating the necessity for NCAT to be brought under the suitors' fund. It was not undertaken in respect of the Dental Tribunal, established by the Labor Government in 2001, brought into NCAT in 2014 and never brought under the suitors' fund.

It was not undertaken in respect of the Guardianship Tribunal, established in 1987 by the Labor Government, never brought within the suitors' fund through the entirety of the Labor Government of 16 years and brought into NCAT in 2014. It was not undertaken in respect of the Local Government Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal, established in 1993, in existence for the entirety of the Labor Government of 16 years and never brought under the suitors' fund and rolled into NCAT in 2014. Nor was it undertaken in respect of Local Lands Boards, established in 1998 by the Labor Government, never brought under the suitors' fund and rolled into NCAT in 2014, nor in respect of the Vocational Training Appeals Panel, established by the Labor Government in 2001, in existence throughout the Labor Government and rolled into NCAT in 2014.

Why did it not happen? Most of those tribunals were in existence throughout the entirety of the Labor Government, or had been established by the Labor Government, and were never brought under the suitors' fund. Why is that the case? The reasons are the valid and good reasons which have been foreshadowed by the Attorney General. The first reason is that NCAT is clearly different to a court. It is a fundamental proposition. God help us if the member for Liverpool is ever the Attorney General of this State because he does not understand the difference between a court and a tribunal. Through this bill the member will have to perform major surgery to the suitors' fund in order to bring a tribunal under its permit. This is a powerful point: There is a massive difference between a court and a tribunal.

Dr Hugh McDermott: You've got a point?

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Settle down, member for Sky TV. You have had your turn.

Dr Hugh McDermott: You'll never be AG and you'll never be on TV.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: You have such a beautiful face for television. The five people who watch Sky News enjoy you very much, mate. [*Extension of time*]

The second valid reason articulated by the Attorney General was that not only is NCAT a tribunal and not a court but, very importantly, courts are cost jurisdictions—that is, the general principle is that costs follow

the event. This might be something that the member for Prospect knows, although I do not think he has ever practised. Costs follow the event.

Dr Hugh McDermott: I'll send in my CV, will I?

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Does that include all your dodgy medals? The costs follow the event in a court of law and do not automatically follow the event in NCAT. The awarding of legal costs is an exceptional circumstance rather than the rule. There is a very important distinction between a tribunal and a court. Under the Suitors' Fund Act it is only on points of law that are successful on appeal that the suitors' fund is even engaged; it is not engaged, for example, in respect of appeals which are successful on matters of fact. What we are talking about is a very limited operation of the suitors' fund in a very limited circumstance to only courts of law, as it has been the law of this State since 1951.

The member for Liverpool seeks to make quite a significant change to what has been the case since 1951, a change which was never thought necessary throughout the Wran Government, when there were tribunals which have now been rolled into NCAT. This was never thought of during the 16 years of the Labor Government prior to 2011, but apparently it is such a blindingly obvious matter that the member for Liverpool need hardly give any justification for it. The Attorney General made a very strong and powerful point that this measure is probably cost-ineffective—that is, the cost of administering any claim in respect of costs incurred in NCAT, being a non-cost jurisdiction where legal representation is not the norm, will probably be greater than any claim for costs made under the suitors' fund. There has been no cost-benefit analysis conducted by Labor. Labor is very bad with numbers. We know members of the Labor Party never think of numbers; they never think of a cost-benefit analysis.

Mr Kevin Anderson: They love union numbers.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: They love stacking branches and they love union numbers—the member for Tamworth is right. They only like some numbers. They do not like numbers with dollar signs in front of them; they like only numbers in branches and they like numbers when it comes to the stacking of unions, as the Heydon royal commission amply demonstrated. No doubt the member for Tamworth reads the report of the royal commission every night and gets inspiration from that important report.

Mr Paul Lynch: That shows how sad you both are.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I think they are more interesting discussions than the ones around your tea room with all the legal members of the Opposition, if this is the product of your discussions. This amendment is cost-ineffective. The true purpose is unclear; it is not a purpose that has previously been known to this Parliament since 1951 when the Suitors' Fund Act first came into operation and, as the Attorney General properly said, there may well be unintended consequences from this legislation. The legislation has not even been discussed with NCAT itself. There has been no consultation in relation to this bill and it is wholly inappropriate for this Parliament to pass it. It is another example of how this Opposition is eternally searching for ways to make itself relevant, and even when it does come up with something, over cups of tea in the common room, it comes up with a pretty bad idea. This is a pretty lame piece of legislation that the Opposition has put before the Parliament. For those reasons I encourage the House to oppose this bill. It is unnecessary and it is ill-advised.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (11:41): One would think that the member for Ku-ring-gai, when he refers to the legal cabal of the member for Liverpool and the member for Prospect—he himself being an eminent Senior Counsel—must be in training to be a jury advocate. However, just as in the rest of his career, he will not succeed in that area. The most disappointing thing is that the member for Ku-ring-gai is better than his contribution. The member for Ku-ring-gai can read a bill better than I can and he can interpret legislation better than I can, but he spent no time whatsoever analysing the bill. That is probably an indication of the stance taken by the Government on a bill that deals with a very narrow clause, the mode of reasoning of which is justified because of changes of circumstances.

I appreciate the Attorney General leading for the Government on this bill; it demonstrated considerable courtesy on his part. Too often in the past Ministers and Attorneys General have not participated in private members' bills and have left it to others. The Attorney General made a very reasoned analysis of the history of the Suitors' Fund and indemnity certificates and he indicated the Government's position, which is the position one would expect from somebody leading on behalf of a bureaucracy. However, one would have thought that at least the member for Ku-ring-gai would have given the House the benefit of his knowledge, experience and understanding of that history and would have at least given the House the benefit of a brief argument on the bill.

I draw the attention of the member for Ku-ring-gai to the bill. It would take him less time to read it than it would take me. Item [4] of schedule 1 deals with a very narrow area, such a narrow area that the cost consequences are not great. Whilst the Attorney General may have been concerned about cost consequences, I can

indicate to the Attorney General where he can find considerable savings in his portfolio which may well have funded this amendment for the next 20 years. I refer to 10 February 2017, when the Attorney General's department would not grant overtime to sheriff's officers in the Downing Centre to supervise contractors building a courtroom. The contractors left the doors of the Downing Centre open and, as a result, every court in the Downing Centre had to be closed that day.

The magistrates were sent home, the prisoners were sent back to Long Bay Jail, the District Courts were closed and juries were told to return at 2 o'clock. It costs the District Court \$50,000 a day to sit, and there are 17 District Courts in the building. There are probably 30 to 35 magistrates courts in the Downing Centre and they all went home and had the day off, as did the police prosecutors. The cost of the closure of the Downing Centre was enormous. The Attorney General will not answer the member for Liverpool's question in writing, he says because of security reasons. Well, now I have breached security in this House. The Attorney General did not give overtime to the sheriff's officers to supervise the court complex and, as a result, for security reasons, every court had to be closed.

That is the sort of thing money is wasted on by the Attorney General's department; yet, at the same time, a small amount of money to fix a problem in this legislation is dismissed as being too expensive. There is a fundamental principle and there is a mode of reasoning, and I know the member for Ku-ring-gai will follow this. With the advent of tribunals, whether it be NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] or former tribunals, over a number of years the Parliament has been pushing more and more matters before tribunals to give affordable justice to people so they do not have to go through the court process. But ordinarily, before the introduction of these tribunals, matters such as the one the member for Prospect referred to would have been subject to proceedings in the courts, and probably the person to whom he referred would not have been able to access the courts.

But the justice principle, whether it comes out of the courts or the tribunal, is the same: It is designed to give access to affordable justice—they are still applying the law and they are still applying the same standards in making their determination. As a result of more and more matters being forced before NCAT, more and more errors are being made by the tribunal. Item [4] of schedule 1 is very, very narrow; it simply restricts the amendments to where questions of law succeed. It is a pretty minor amendment to entitle somebody who suffers cost at no fault of their own—because, on appeal, it has been determined that there has been a legal error—to access the Suitors' Fund. It is really no big deal.

Mr Alister Henskens: Why didn't you do it in 16 years?

Mr RON HOENIG: I will come to that in a minute. It certainly does not warrant an eminent Senior Counsel such as the member for Ku-ring-gai performing for 15 minutes and attacking the member for Liverpool over the motive to move a pretty minor amendment such as this, which is designed to remedy an injustice. The reason it probably has not been done over Labor's 16 years and over the Government's six years is the way in which legislation often operates—they probably never thought of it. But the volume of material put before NCAT now has reached a critical point, and when injustice is occurring there should be a mechanism to provide an amount of compensation.

Those opposite did not think about it for six years and we did not think about it when the Hon. Greg Smith introduced the legislation. Probably if we had raised it with him informally it might have been examined by the department at that stage and may have been included. It may be that since then the number of matters that are before NCAT have mushroomed. There is a variety of reasons. But one of the things that the Coalition will have to understand is that it has been in government for more than six years now and its members are running out of time to point to the Labor Party and say, "Sixteen long years". Those opposite have been in Government for six years and it is about time they took responsibility for their own administration of the State and for their own legislation that they are pushing through this House.

Despite the member for Ku-ring-gai's performance, I know he is better than that. I would invite Government members to have another look at the bill: Read the bill and see what is happening in terms of the tribunal. Members will see that it is a narrow issue. The member for Liverpool has not used it as an effort to grandstand. The bill is only a matter to remedy injustice in a very narrow area caused by a variety of things occurring before the tribunal. There comes a time when members of this House have to act like legislators. There comes a time when those opposite need to examine a bill and make up their own minds. They should talk among themselves and exercise some responsibility towards the people of New South Wales. On this side of the House most of us took a pledge to the people of New South Wales; on the other side, they have taken an oath to the Queen. But effectively their oath was to do the best they can for the people of New South Wales. I invite members opposite to do the best they can, look at the bill, and stop this political nonsense.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (11:51): I note the comments of the member for Heffron about us being here to serve the good people of the community. Practicality is one of the cornerstones of representing those people. This matter certainly has brought out the legal eagles around the place. I notice the legal eagle for Liverpool is here, and the High Court member for Heffron, who is a learned colleague: perhaps we could also have the High Court Henskens. I could not think of any "P" words—legal "P" words—for the member for Prospect. I could only find "pandering" but that would be most inappropriate. The member should look that one up. To "pander" is an old offence. However, I withdraw my comment as being most inappropriate.

We are here to debate the Suitors' Fund Amendment (Costs of NCAT Appeals) Bill 2017 introduced by the member for Liverpool. The work of 22 separate tribunals was brought together under NCAT in January 2014 after the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice found that "tribunal users and stakeholders find the current tribunal system in New South Wales complex and confusing". That goes to the heart of what we are here to talk about today, as the member for Ku-ring-gai eloquently expanded upon—NCAT holds tribunals, not courts. It is practical law for the people of New South Wales. Enabling those tribunals to exist as a network, rather than in isolation, allows for improved quality, transparency and consistency of tribunal services in New South Wales.

Prior to 2014 there were a number of tribunals and I will enlighten the House on what they were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Tribunal; the Aboriginal Lands Council Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal; the Administrative Decisions Tribunal; the Charity Referees; the Chinese Medicine Tribunal; the Chiropractic Tribunal; the Consumer Trade and Tenancy Tribunal; the Dental Tribunal; the Guardianship Tribunal; and the Local Government Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal. There was the Local Lands Board—no wonder this system was amended—the Medical Radiation Practice Tribunal; the Medical Tribunal; the Nursing and Midwifery Tribunal; the Occupational Therapy Tribunal—and so it goes on. There was the Pharmacy Tribunal; the Physiotherapy Tribunal; the Podiatry Tribunal; the Psychology Tribunal; and the Vocational Training Appeals Panel. I will not list them all.

The NCAT deals with a broad range of matters from tenancy issues and building works to decisions on guardianship and administrative reviews of Government decisions. So the establishment of NCAT in 2014 collectively brought these under a number of divisions. The Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division, which reviews decisions by New South Wales Government agencies in discrimination matters, goes to the heart of issues such as job and firearm licensing, discrimination, victims services, land matters and equal opportunity. Probably one of the most active is the Consumer and Commercial Division, which looks at things such as consumer claims, dividing fences, retirement villages and retail leases. This is a classic example of the benefit for the people of New South Wales of tribunals, rather than the court system, resolving matters such as fencing issues with neighbours.

A day or so before this parliamentary session I handled a constituent matter involving trees and fences. It was a classic case of a dispute between neighbours that needed to be resolved. They came to my office and we discussed their experience with NCAT. They were complimentary about the ability it afforded them to resolve their issues through a simple process. Similar issues arise between the residents of retirement villages involving elderly persons and disputes with owners or other situations that might occur in a retirement village. The simple process offered by a tribunal, as opposed to a court, offers low cost, effective, efficient justice for all. The Consumer and Commercial Division deals with retail leases which are often held by mums and dads running businesses who may have a dispute with their landlord. They are focused on their business and on trying to make a go in life. The last thing they want to be involved in is lengthy litigation when their matter can be resolved at NCAT with short and efficient justice.

Another division of NCAT is the Guardianship Division. When one is dealing with the difficulties of family members who need the assistance of a guardian or other related issues—it may be a person suffering from a disability and we need a legally appointed decision-maker—it can sometimes cause disputes. There is nothing worse than sending those families into a court environment requiring legal representation and complex litigation. The good thing about NCAT is that there is front-end assistance. The registrar's office provides assistance to people who are making applications and that helps them to resolve their issues as quickly and efficiently as possible. The Occupational Division assists people involved in small business, such as taxidriviers, real estate agents or those who are buying and selling cars.

There is nothing worse than being involved in a lengthy dispute over the purchase of a motor vehicle for children in one's family, for example, when such issues can be resolved. NCAT can assist those who have issues involving illegal practitioners, veterinary practitioners, architects and builders. One can see that all those tribunals have been brought together under those divisions of NCAT. In 2015-16 more than 82,400 hearings were held at 70 venues across New South Wales, showing that this is a tribunal for the people—a tribunal that aims to provide service in the most convenient location possible. In 2015 and 2016 the largest number of applications before the

NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal were consumer and commercial actions. There were 57,299 Guardianship matters comprising 10,384 or 15 per cent of actions before NCAT.

The tribunal is a place for mediation and not for adversarial matters such as those dealt with by a court. What is the difference between NCAT and the court? The Suitors Fund Act 1951 currently applies to appeals heard by courts, including the High Court, Supreme Court, Land and Environment Court and the District Court. If the Opposition's bill is passed the Act would apply to internal appeals heard before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal appeals panel. The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal was established to provide quick, informal and cheap access to justice in comparison to the courts. The key features of the NCAT jurisdiction make it unclear why the Opposition would seek to apply the Act to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. *[Extension of time]*

Prior to entering this Chamber as the member for Seven Hills I was involved in Local Court reform. One of the issues that arose was that those seeking justice wanted quick and efficient access to it. The last thing they want is to be confronted with many days of litigation where most of their money is spent on legal representation and they leave dissatisfied. My experience and testimony from my constituents indicates that NCAT provides efficient and effective justice for the community, which is why it is held in good stead. The Opposition's bill will make the system more complicated and increase costs and regulation, which is not what the community wants. The Government's original bill paid attention to what was required for those seeking justice.

There is no general entitlement to be legally represented at NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal proceedings; parties may be represented by another person only if the NCAT grants leave, which is intended to keep down costs for parties. There are some exceptions for internal appeals. The NCAT estimates that 70 per cent of internal appeals have legal representation on one side. Parties in NCAT proceedings who are not legally represented usually have minimal legal costs. Usually those costs are the costs of the application. The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal is a no-cost jurisdiction. Where parties are legally represented the general rule is that they pay their own costs as the tribunal is a no-cost jurisdiction. NCAT may award costs relating to proceedings only if it is satisfied there are special circumstances to warrant awarding costs. Costs are rarely awarded.

In contrast, courts are cost jurisdictions, which means an unsuccessful party is usually liable for both parties' costs and upon appeal the unsuccessful respondent may be liable for both parties' costs for the appeal as well as the original action. These legal costs are often significant. It is not uncommon in the justice system for costs application hearings to run for the same amount of time as litigation. The Suitors' Fund payments cover duplicate costs for which an unsuccessful respondent is liable to pay. NCAT parties generally bear their own costs. The Government cannot see the need to apply the Act to NCAT internal appeals. No other jurisdiction has equivalent schemes for internal appeals within tribunals. None of the schemes in Western Australia, Tasmania or Queensland apply their Acts to appeals. I oppose the bill.

Debate interrupted.

Motions

ANZAC MEMORIAL CENTENARY PROJECT

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (12:05): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the Government has committed to upgrading and enhancing the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park.
- (2) Notes that a major public artwork at this memorial began, installing the works on Monday 27 March 2017.
- (3) Notes that the artwork will display soil and individual plaques for the 1,699 towns, suburbs and localities from where the men and women of New South Wales enlisted for service in the First World War.
- (4) Notes that the Government is committed to acknowledging more than 100 years of service and sacrifice which will never be forgotten.

The 100-year anniversary of the culmination of the war to end all wars will occur in 2018. It is appropriate that this Government is embarking on a program to realise the vision of architect Bruce Dellit, who designed what is undoubtedly the primary memorial in New South Wales. The Government and the trustees of the Anzac Memorial are undertaking a major refurbishment of the Hyde Park memorial as part of the commemoration of the Centenary of Anzac. The original plans that Dellit drew included a water cascade that was to reach Liverpool Street on the south of the park. A new education and interpretation facility is being built which will include education programs, exhibitions and display, and care of the memorial's significant collection.

In 2016 renowned artist Fiona Hall was commissioned to create an artwork at the Anzac Memorial. Artist Fiona Hall is collaborating with project architect Richard Johnson. Fiona Hall proposed that a plaque be created for every town, suburb and locality around New South Wales in which men enlisted for the First World War, and

gave their place of address. Each plaque will be named and within it displayed a sample of soil collected from a soldier's hometown. It will appear in the Hall of Service to acknowledge more than 100 years of service. That process began last Monday in Bathurst when Minister Elliott and Minister Toole collected the first sample. That process will continue around New South Wales as the artwork is created.

The Office of Veterans Affairs has been working closely with the Geographical Names Boards of NSW, which is located in Bathurst, to identify the exact sites where soil samples will be collected to coincide with World War One memorials and other places of historic importance. I thank Ms Narelle Underwood, Surveyor General, and the team at the Geographical Names Board for their hard work in assisting with the project and mapping locations around the State. Soil will be collected with the assistance of New South Wales surveyors—a project that they are enthusiastic to undertake. It will be a lasting acknowledgement of communities across New South Wales who will be featured in the State memorial. A wonderful community engagement plan will involve the collecting of soil from around the State. I look forward to working with local communities as part of the Centenary of Anzac. In May the Minister for Veterans Affairs, the Hon. David Elliott, will make a ministerial visit to Wagga Wagga to collect this soil. Wagga Wagga is the place where the Kangaroo March commenced and it is the town from which many young men and women went to war to fight for their country.

The Government will contribute \$37.9 million to this project, which will include an education and interpretation centre beneath the memorial and the southern water feature that was part of the original 1930s design. The pool of reflection already has been renovated and reopened to the public. I commend all those who were involved in that fantastic restoration. The redevelopment of the memorial will be the primary legacy of New South Wales for the Centenary of Anzac commemorations. The soil collection commenced in Bathurst. People from regional New South Wales have been involved in every war since Federation and they always have punched above their weight. Regional New South Wales has had more men and women—sons and daughters, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters—making the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

Agreement has been reached to host the Royal United Services Institute Library in the centenary project. The library has a collection of approximately 30,000 books, journals, maps and other documents relating to military history with an emphasis on Australia and, in particular, New South Wales. The memorial project, which is on track, will be delivered in time for the Centenary of Anzac commemorations. The completion date for the centenary commemorations—11 November 2018—marks the end of the Great War. Construction and management of the project commenced after the turning of the first sod by former Premier Mike Baird and Senator Sinodinos on Saturday 20 August 2016. The construction zone was established in September 2016 and site hoardings were installed. More than 60 information boards around the history of the memorial and the centenary project were applied to the hoardings to share the Anzac story and to inform community members about construction work.

Concept plans for the Anzac Memorial project, developed by architectural firm Johnson Pilton Walker and the New South Wales Government Architect, have been publicly displayed. I will make available to members a list of the 1,699 towns, villages and locations to be included in the Hall of Service. During the year communities will be consulted about planned ceremonies and they will be able to participate in them. Communities across New South Wales and Australia have participated in re-enactments and other events to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac. I commend those communities for participating and for remembering those men and women who sacrificed their lives while serving this country. We will never forget.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (12:13): I am honoured to speak in debate on the motion moved by the member for Wagga Wagga relating to the rededication of the Anzac Memorial and the collection of soil during the Centenary of Anzac commemorations. My electorate of Heathcote has a rich history. Many young men and women who served in World War I did not return to their villages along the northern Illawarra escarpment. Townships such as Clifton, Heathcote, Helensburgh, Lilyvale, Otford, Scarborough, Stanwell Park, Sutherland and Waterfall were included in the original Coee March which commenced in the south and headed to the city. Young men signed up for what they thought would be a great adventure but tragically many of them lost their lives. A park in Sutherland in my electorate was the original camping area where they met before marching into the city. Hundreds of men joined in the march along the Illawarra escarpment—a pretty rough and ready place in those days with coalmining towns located along a horse track.

The Anzac Memorial at Hyde Park was opened in 1934 and was built to commemorate the courage, endurance and sacrifice of Australian soldiers during the Great War. The dead from that conflict were buried where they died far from the communities from which they came but memorials were created in Australia as de facto grave sites and places of remembrance. I am pleased—I am sure all members agree—that this memorial will finally be completed. In 2018 we will celebrate the culmination of many years of hard work by those who fought to complete the memorial. Every year I issue an Anzac brochure which features some of the characters who came from my electorate; for example a four-foot-eight inch coalminer from Helensburgh. Many people wondered what

a four-foot-eight conscript would be able to do. In World War 1 he was a member of the Hill 60 crew that burrowed under the hill and used explosives to blow up the hill. Unfortunately he lost his life but he is part of our rich history of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

The redevelopment of the memorial will be the primary legacy of New South Wales Centenary of Anzac commemorations. Following an art competition, Fiona Hall was commissioned to create a new artwork for the centenary project's new Hall of Service. Part of this project involves the collection of soil from towns throughout New South Wales. I was given an indication of what the new memorial will look like once it is complete. It is will be spectacular—an icon of which we will all be proud when it is completed. I was shown how the balance between water and soil represents all those who lost their lives and the places from which they came. Each place name will also display a handful of soil from the town or village from which each soldier came.

A community engagement plan is being developed for the collection of soil throughout the State, which is anticipated to take 12 months. A ring set into the floor will list 100 sites of significance to New South Wales military service. I am excited about what this means for communities across New South Wales. I am sure that the names of the scout groups or whoever has responsibility for collecting the soil will be recorded at the new memorial. This is a fantastic opportunity for all of us in this Parliament to congratulate the organisation committee on this celebration of those men and women who lost their lives in the Great War. I commend the motion.

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (12:19): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for moving this motion about the Anzac Memorial Centenary Project. At every opportunity we should remember and pay respect to our fallen. Importantly, soil from every village, town and locality in Australia where the men and women of the First World War lived, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice, will be collected and included as part of this project in commemoration of their efforts. Indeed, it is because of their sacrifices that we live today in this wonderful democracy in Australia. Without their sacrifice, we could have been living under a dictatorship and all the hardship that that would entail. I suggest that the collection of these soil samples should be extended to every country in which Australia fought during the First World War. This would show the very soil on which those men and women gave their lives for us.

It does not matter who fought in the First World War—whether they were Indigenous, Caucasian or European—they must all be remembered. We must pray for them and give thanks for what they have done for us. Two years ago I went to Egypt. Whilst I was there I collected some sand and stones from the graveyard where my mum and dad had left three siblings—two boys and a girl—in 1944 when we were travelling through Egypt as refugees. I declared the sand and stones. There was no problem getting through customs. I then had them placed inside my mother's grave as a memorial. I did that in recognition and remembrance of my siblings who did not make it to this country.

That is similar to what this project is all about. We are never going to find the bodies of most of the men and women who were killed in World War 1. In fact, I was told there were about 160 people in that Egyptian graveyard where my parents had left their siblings. There is no memorial there; it is just sand. I would have liked to have exhumed their bodies and buried them with my mum and dad, but I never would have been able to find them. I again thank the member for Wagga Wagga for moving this motion. The loss of those brave men and women, as well as the loss of my siblings, is a matter that is close to my heart. Lest we forget. We love them all.

Visitors

VISITORS

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I welcome to the Chamber Mayor Neville Kschenka and Deputy Manager of Infrastructure Julian Geddes of the Narrandera Shire Council, guests of the member for Cootamundra. Welcome to the oldest Parliament in Australia.

Motions

ANZAC MEMORIAL CENTENARY PROJECT

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:23): I speak in support of the motion moved by the member for Wagga Wagga. The member for Cabramatta suggested that soil samples should also be collected from different countries. He also mentioned the sand and stones he had collected from Egypt. Similarly, a jar of sand given to me last year by the Lemnos' Friends of Anzac takes pride of place in my lounge room—it was also cleared by customs. Each time I look at that very special jar I remember when I walked through those battlegrounds.

Mr Stephen Kamper: It is Greek sand.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: It is good Greek sand. It makes me think of the nurses who looked after those had who fought so gallantly, particularly at Gallipoli, on the island of Lemnos. The New South Wales

Government has committed to upgrading and enhancing the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park, which is from where the idea for the collection of this soil for display emanated. The Anzac Memorial is the pre-eminent war memorial in New South Wales; it is listed as a military memorial of national significance. On July 2015 the plans to extend and complete the original design for the Anzac Memorial were unveiled by then Premier Mike Baird, together with the trustees and Minister David Elliott, MP. The project is being overseen by the Trustees of the Anzac Memorial Building, with the Premier as chairman. The other trustees include the New South Wales Leader of the Opposition, City of Sydney and Returned and Services League New South Wales Branch.

The New South Wales Government will contribute \$37.9 million to the project. It will include education and interpretation facilities beneath the memorial as well as a southern water feature, which was part of the original 1930s design but not completed at the time because of the lack of funds. The Commonwealth is also contributing funding of \$19.6 million. The redevelopment of the memorial will be the primary legacy of New South Wales Centenary of Anzac commemorations. Following an art competition, artist Fiona Hall has been commissioned to create a new art installation in the centenary project's new Hall of Service. The artwork will present the names of 1,699 towns, suburbs and localities from across New South Wales from where men and women enlisted for the First World War. A handful of soil from each location will be displayed by each place name. A community engagement plan is being developed for the collection of soil throughout the State. That task is anticipated to take 12 months. A ring set into the floor will list 100 sites of significance to New South Wales military service.

I mentioned earlier the jar of sand given to me by the Lemnos' Friends of Anzac. I received that last year when I accompanied Minister Elliott, Anthony Ball and Nathan Rees and the six winners of the Anzac Youth Ambassadors program, which is sponsored by ClubsNSW, to Europe. The students were: Eduardo Bianchino, Shehani De Silva, Petra Stojnic, Joshua Bednar, Lauren Sullivan and Liam Rickard. We should all be looking out for those fabulous people in the future; they will be making sure that our Anzac history is never forgotten. We spent a very cold Anzac Day together last year at Villers-Bretonneux. I have spent many other Anzac Days at Holsworthy Barracks and I thank all who serve there. I encourage everyone to visit the museum at Holsworthy Barracks; it is a profound experience.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (12:27): I speak in support of this important motion moved by the member for Wagga Wagga. One hundred and three years ago on 25 April tens of thousands of young Australian and New Zealand men went ashore on a far distant land where, on the battlefields of Gallipoli, the legend of Anzac was forged. That legend is one of courage under fire, selflessness, loyalty, ingenuity and integrity; the things that we all want to be part of our everyday lives. That is why we commemorate Anzac Day. Many of the tens of thousands of men who went ashore were from regional New South Wales.

Indeed, in every war since Federation those from regional New South Wales have punched above their weight. Regional New South Wales has given more men and women, be they sons or daughters, husbands or wives, fathers or mothers, brothers or sisters, in service to this great country, and the electorate of Myall Lakes is no different to any other in regional New South Wales. The member for Heathcote spoke about the Cooee March. I am sure the member for Northern Tablelands would talk about the Kurrajongs if he were here. The same applies to the electorate of Myall Lakes.

The towns where people enlisted included Bulahdelah, Bungwahl, Cape Hawke, Coolongolook, Croki, Cundletown, Dyers Crossing, Failford, Firefly, Forster, Ghinni Ghinni, Jones Island, Killabakh, Knorrit Flat, Krambach, Kundibakh, Mitchells Island, Napiac, Old Bar, Oxley Island, Taree, Tinonee, Topi Topi, Tuncurry, Wang Wauk, Wherrol Flat, Wingham, Wootton, Bobin, Glenthorne, Mount George, Kimbriki, Marlee, Pampoolah and Kolodong. There are memorial halls and other memorials all around the electorate of Myall Lakes displaying the names of those who enlisted and those who made the ultimate sacrifice. I began by speaking about the Anzac legend. We commemorate the First World War and remember those who served because their sacrifice, and the sacrifice of others in the conflicts that have followed, is what makes us the community that we are today. It is because of their sacrifice that we enjoy our democracy and freedoms.

The War Memorial in Hyde Park opened in 1934. Upgrading and enhancing the Hyde Park War Memorial is part of the centenary project to commemorate the First World War from 1914 to 1918. It is an extremely important project for a number of reasons. One hundred years since the war and Anzac Day is actually growing. It is important that we continue to send the message to the community that the Parliament of New South Wales is committed to ensuring that the mistakes made 100 years ago are not repeated in the future. That is why we have these sorts of commemorations and build these memorials. Once again, I commend the motion to the House.

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (12:32): I support the motion of my good friend the member for Wagga Wagga and I commend him for putting it forward. I had the opportunity to visit Gallipoli in 2002, where I visited the memorial and viewed a number of the headstones. I discovered a headstone belonging to a fellow from Macksville, which I photographed and advertised in the paper. It was just a small classified

advertisement saying that I had been there and asking whether anyone knew about the person. As a result, I met the fellow's family. They had held a celebration not long before I placed the advertisement. It was poignant to note that none of the relatives of that man who was killed at Anzac Cove had been to visit his grave. I was pleased to be able to present them with a photo of it. I did not do it publicly; it was a very private thing for me. That is because my grandfather, Cyril Morison, fought with the 1st Australian Imperial Force [AIF] in France and died as a result of the Great War—"the war to end all wars". As I result, my mother and her siblings never knew their father.

Six years ago I had the opportunity to visit the memorial at Villers-Bretonneux and lay a wreath on behalf of the people of New South Wales. It was a bitterly cold morning, all but sleeting. Former Premier Bob Carr, who was Australia's Foreign Minister at the time, also laid a wreath on the same day on behalf of the Australian people. We sat there in what was almost sleet, as I said. They were miserable conditions, but they were not nearly as miserable as the conditions in which our forebears had to fight during the Great War. If people visit the memorials in those magnificent parts of France these days they will see that the small cemeteries are attended by the French people.

Looking at the peaceful and tranquil setting, it is almost impossible to imagine the horror that was part and parcel of the Great War. I recommend a book called *Somme Mud* to all members of the House. It details the conditions in which Australian soldiers fought during the Great War. It was written, I believe, as a war diary, but in the third person. The fellow who wrote it, Corporal Edward Lynch, was unable to have it published. No-one wanted to know about it. I think it was his grandson who lent it to documentary maker and writer Will Davies, who edited it and had it published. The descriptions of what those people had to go through to provide us with the democracy we have today are truly frightening.

They said that the Great War would mean that we would never see another war. Unfortunately, we have had the Second World War and been involved in a number of conflicts since. To collect soil from all towns across New South Wales that were involved in the Great War—1,699 of them—is a commendable process. For the Government to spend almost \$40 million to finish the Hyde Park Anzac Memorial is fantastic. I once again commend the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing this motion to the House. I say vale to all those who lost their lives, but I also say thank you to all who served.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:36): By leave: I acknowledge the Parliamentary Secretary, the member for Wagga Wagga, for bringing this motion to the House. Continuing this outstanding initiative is a credit to him and to Minister Elliott. There is no day more moving for a member of Parliament than Anzac Day, and no scene is more stirring than Terrigal Beach on that day. At last year's service lifesavers in costume rode into the beach to the sound of gunfire. It was a goosebumps moment. As the member for Myall Lakes mentioned, the number of Central Coast residents attending and paying their respects on Anzac Day continues to increase. I am extremely honoured to be the great-grandson of a former light horseman. My great-grandfather, Benjamin Crouch, did his duty to help protect our country.

It is a credit to the Government and to the community that the Hyde Park Anzac Memorial is reaching its final stages. I am thrilled that my electorate of Terrigal will be well represented. The suburbs of Davistown, Erina, Kincumber, Matcham and Terrigal in my electorate will be among the 1,699 towns across New South Wales supplying soil to be enshrined in that beautiful and very fitting memorial to service men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect this country and our way of life. We come together today to pay tribute to them.

This project has been overseen by the trustees of the Anzac Memorial building. The board of trustees is chaired by the Premier, and other trustees include the Leader of the Opposition, the Lord Mayor of Sydney and the President of the New South Wales Branch of the Returned Services League. It is amazing that the New South Wales Government will be contributing almost \$37.9 million to this very fitting project. It is great that our communities can take a hands-on role in the project. I am extremely proud that the people of the Central Coast will have the chance to make a contribution that will be permanently on display in Hyde Park. I know my community will treat the exercise with the reverence and respect it deserves. It will be a long process—almost 12 months—but I know the people of the Central Coast, especially those in my electorate, will love the opportunity to stand up and say thank you to all of those servicemen and servicewomen for their sacrifice, their dedication, their fearless efforts on behalf of our country and their defence of the rights of others.

I am pleased so many areas in regional New South Wales will get to take part. The construction of this memorial project had never quite been completed; the funds were not available. Now, after all these years of us acknowledging the sacrifice of our service men and women, the final part of the puzzle is being put together. We are making a final salute to those people who have protected our way of life. I pay tribute to the Government and the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing this motion to the House. I also pay tribute to Minister Elliot for

his tireless advocacy for all current service men and women as well as those who sadly made the ultimate sacrifice. Lest we forget.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (12:40): By leave: I support the motion moved by the member for Wagga Wagga and thank him for bringing it to the House. Like all members, I know how important the commemoration of the events of 1914 to 1918 is for my community. In 1914 Riverstone was a little country town in what was a regional area of New South Wales. The suburbs that now form my electorate have grown on the sites of what was mostly farmland at that stage. I am advised by the staff of the department that three places in the Riverstone electorate will be represented in the collection of soil to be added to the monument—the township of Riverstone itself, Quakers Hill and Glenwood.

I am a little curious about Glenwood being added because I understand that according to the Geographic Names Board the suburb of Glenwood did not exist in 1914. But there were once farms and properties at that location and it may well be from one of those historical properties that recruits signed up. I will be interested to find out exactly where that occurred. People from the small farms in my electorate were representative of the nature of the community at the time. Not many of them were very wealthy. They were ordinary people eking out a pretty ordinary living, but they volunteered in droves to support King and country and to fight for what they thought was right—the protection of our way of life. We owe them so much for that.

There are many new suburbs in my region and several more about to be created. The Blacktown City Council is conducting consultation on the names that some of the suburbs in the north-west growth area will take. Councillors, former town clerks and others have suggested names from a range of sources including Indigenous culture, botany, geography and prominent local politicians. At least one person has proposed the name of 1914 volunteer Private Rankin for a new suburb in the Schofields area. I hope that the local people who respond to the call for consultation will support naming a suburb after him. In doing so we will also recognise all volunteers who stood beside him.

Private Rankin grew up in the Riverstone-Schofields area and went to the Schofields Public School. He signed up early in 1914 and went off to war to protect his country as well as his King and Empire. Like many members, I am a descendant of people who served. They are part of all our family trees and our communities. My father is named after two of his uncles who lost their lives in France in 1917 and 1918. He never knew them, but their names have been passed down through our family. We recall the devastating impact that the high toll of the war had on so many families. This project is a wonderful act by the Government to commemorate the service of our service men and women. When completed the monument in Hyde Park will recognise the source of a great number of volunteers from across the State.

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (12:44): By leave: I congratulate the member for Wagga Wagga, and Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans Affairs, on moving this motion. I also congratulate the Minister, who has participated so ably in this commemoration of the Centenary of Anzac. The Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park opened in 1934 and was built to commemorate the courage, endurance and sacrifice of Australians from New South Wales during the Great War. As the dead from that conflict were buried far from the communities they came from, memorials were created in Australia as de facto grave sites and places of remembrance. I welcomed the Minister to Howlong recently. He made a similar observation to the people who gathered around the cenotaph as he granted funds to redevelop the site where Anzac Day and other commemorations are held annually.

It is possible that the inspiration for the project we are discussing today came from a poem written many years ago. The collection of soil from locations where mostly men but also some women enlisted for the First World War will be forever commemorated in the Fiona Hall artwork being developed as part of the Anzac Memorial Centenary Project. Written in 1914, *The Soldier* by well-known English poet Rupert Brooke reminds us of this project. If we substitute one particular country for another its underlying importance becomes clear. It reads in part:

If I should die, think only this of me;
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ...

The poem then talks about the significance of death on foreign soil and says those sites will be forever commemorated as part of the country whence those people came. That is what we are talking about today. The redevelopment of the memorial will be the primary legacy of our Centenary of Anzac commemorations. Following an art competition, artist Fiona Hall was commissioned to create a new art installation in the new Hall of Service. This artwork will present the names of 1,699 towns, suburbs and localities from across New South Wales from where men and women enlisted to serve in the First World War. Displayed by each place name will be a handful of soil from that location. A community engagement plan is being developed for the collection of

soil throughout the State, which is anticipated to take 12 months. The soil collection was launched this week at Bathurst, Blayney and Orange in regional New South Wales.

I congratulate the Minister and the parliamentary secretary on this project. I recognise that soil will be collected from no less than 51 locations in the electorate of Albury, ranging from Albury to Wymah and places including Jerilderie, Jingellic, Khancoban, Lowesdale, Mulwala, Oaklands, Ournie, Rosewood, Table Top, Thurgoona and Tumbarumba. They are all locations where service people enlisted and left their families. Sadly, many did not return. The artwork will forever be a wonderful commemoration of their service for our freedom.

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (12:48): By leave: I congratulate the member for Wagga Wagga on bringing this motion to the House and on the work he has done with the Ministry. The stunning artwork at the refurbished Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park will recognise and honour our soldiers who enlisted and fought in the Great War. As we heard, there are 1,699 New South Wales towns, suburbs and localities where soldiers enlisted for the Great War. As part of the Anzac Memorial Centenary project, soil samples will be taken from these sites and displayed in the Hall of Service as part of a permanent artwork by Fiona Hall. This hits home for me because many of my family members—as will be the case for many members in this place—were part of those wars. We recognise them for enabling us to be here today.

Many people from my electorate of Wollondilly in the Southern Highlands enlisted for the First World War and 24 towns and villages will have soil samples collected: Alpine, Appin—one of the oldest towns in New South Wales, turning 200 years old a few years ago—Balmoral, Bargo, Bowral, Braemar, Burradoo, Burragorang, Buxton, Colo Vale Douglas Park, Glenmore, Hill Top, Maldon, Menangle, Mittagong, Orangeville, Picton, Razorback, Thirlmere, Werombi, Wilton, Woodlands and Yerranderie which is now a town with one resident.

As the member for Wagga Wagga knows, my electorate recently held a re-enactment of the Kangaroo March that went from Wagga Wagga to Campbelltown just over 100 years ago. The re-enactment ensured that children and others from our communities could walk sections of the 520-kilometre track along which men enlisted for the war, so that they could better understand what it was like for our great heroes of that time. Like the member for Wagga Wagga and the member for Camden, we had the opportunity to participate in that re-enactment; every RSL, every community and just about all schools in my electorate were involved. The children's choir sang some beautiful songs and the children took stories of the experience back to their classrooms and their schoolmates.

We will never forget the sacrifices those people made in the Great War. We are not here to glorify war, but this project serves as a reminder of their important sacrifice. We want to ensure that governments of this country never repeat the decisions of governments at that time and that we can live in a peaceful society. It gives me great pleasure to support this soil collection; I believe it is an absolutely fitting thing to do. The project will be completed late next year as the Centenary of Anzac commemorations draw to a close. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:52): By leave: I join all members of the House in supporting the Anzac War Memorial Centenary project soil collection. It is a fantastic initiative and I acknowledge the Minister for Veteran Affairs and all the people involved. The Minister will be the first to tell the House that this project has come to fruition through consultation with the RSL clubs and the many veteran affairs organisations. I acknowledge all groups and individuals who have helped in this project. As speakers before me have said, we as a community and as Australians are extremely proud of those who made the ultimate sacrifice and gave their lives and those who spent years away from their families. Many people lost family members in all theatres of war and many soldiers returned home not as the same person who left, which created a void in families, towns and communities.

This is an Anzac commemoration and, as we are all aware, more than 100 years ago Australia and New Zealand came of age on the world stage when we announced ourselves as people of loyalty, of mateship and of standing up for what we believe in, who answered the call to fight for what we believed in—our freedom—and to support our Mother country. As a community and as a State, we must do everything we can to ensure that we recognise, acknowledge and never forget the selfless contributions of those men and women, families and communities who sacrificed so much during the First World War and so many other theatres. This project is about going around and collecting soil from the 1,699 locations across the State where Australians enlisted for the First World War in 1914. It is unbelievable that nearly 1,700 towns gave their young men and women to fight for and support a cause that was far greater than the individual, the family and the town. I am extremely supportive of the project, as is every member of this House, and I cannot wait for Camden and all the 1,699 towns to be recognised. Lest we forget.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (12:56): By leave: I support the motion of the member for Wagga Wagga and parliamentary secretary. It is a very worthy motion that states that this House:

- (1) Notes that the Government has committed to upgrading and enhancing the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park.
- (2) Notes that a major public artwork at this memorial began, installing the works on Monday 27 March 2017.
- (3) Notes that the artwork will display soil and individual plaques for the 1,699 towns, suburbs and localities from where the men and women of New South Wales enlisted for service in the First World War.
- (4) Notes that the Government is committed to acknowledging more than 100 years of service and sacrifice which will never be forgotten.

I am extremely proud to be part of the collection of soil samples from the Tamworth electorate for the Anzac Memorial Centenary project. I am a returned serviceperson who spent six years in the Royal Australian Air Force as a signals operator. I also spent time in a peacekeeping force in Fiji in the mid-1980s called Operation Morris Dance—which was the first active service the Australian Defence Force had seen since Vietnam. I was honoured and privileged to be part of that operation. I know what it is like to serve one's country and understand the feeling of pride that one has. Every member of this House will be willing to be part of a contribution to this Anzac Memorial artwork that honours our soldiers.

Last Saturday I was the guest speaker at the sixty-sixth anniversary of the nashos in Tamworth. At the first round for national service, 227,000 young people who turned 18 between 1951 and 1959 were called up. They were given 176 days of basic training and five years in the Reserves. The second round called up 63,000 who turned 20 between 1965 and 1972. That was in the Vietnam War era, and 212 died in that conflict. We need to remember, acknowledge, pay tribute and pay our respect to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in defence of our nation to keep our shores free and to establish this great country as it is today.

The collection of soil samples from the 1,699 locations across the State from where Australians enlisted in the First World War is an admirable idea. I commend the Minister, David Elliott MP, for his efforts in pulling this together in memory of those servicemen and women. In times of need and in the defence and support of this great country of ours, we come together as one. It is fitting that those soil samples are brought together as one again, as we recognise and pay tribute to those who fought for this great country. I commend the member for Wagga Wagga for moving this motion. It has my full support. Lest we forget.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (13:00): By leave: I commend the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing this motion before the House because I know that he has a keen interest in the service histories of not only those long past but also those who are still with us. A couple of years ago, at the commemoration and rededication of the Anzac Parade memorial obelisk, the member for Wagga Wagga pointed out Mr Keith Payne, VC, an Australian war hero who is, blessedly, still with us. Mr Payne is the only surviving winner of the Victoria Cross [VC], the award given prior to the Australian Victoria Cross. In 1934 the Anzac Memorial was built in Hyde Park in dedication and as a place of remembrance and respect and solitude. During the Great War of 1914 to 1918, our poor servicemen were buried where they fell in overseas theatres of war. They were not returned home. Their families did not have gravesites to tend or funeral services for their loved ones that could assist them through the important process of grieving.

Memorials such as that great Art Deco memorial in Hyde Park play a much more important function than we realise because it was for all intents and purposes the resting place, the grave and the memorial for those who lost their lives in the First World War. It is commendable that the centenary project, which will open in 2018 to mark the centenary of the end of the Great War, will create this new extension to the Anzac Memorial. The design of the extension will continue the beautiful architectural and artistic traditions of the original Art Deco building while creating new spaces for expanded education and interpretation programs. Our plans to extend the memorial were unveiled on 19 July 2015 by the then Premier, Mike Baird, alongside the trustees and Minister David Elliott, who is a former serviceman.

The redevelopment of the memorial will be the primary legacy of the NSW Centenary of Anzac commemoration. Following an art competition, the artist Fiona Hall was commissioned to create the new art installation in the centenary project's new Hall of Service. The artwork will represent the names of 1,699 towns, suburbs and localities from across New South Wales where men and women enlisted for the First World War. This is an important recognition of the end of the Great War but also of the service and sacrifice so many of our fellow Australians made during that war and subsequent battles.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (13:05): By leave: I congratulate the member for Wagga Wagga on bringing this important topic before the House for discussion. The soil samples will be collected from each town and placed in the Anzac Memorial as a strong symbol for generations to come. People will be able to visit Hyde Park and say, "That little town of mine, where there may only be a small population, made a contribution to the Australia we have today". I have often spoken about the contributions people make to our society and the Anzac

legend is one on which we forge our Australian narrative. I once had the privilege of visiting Gallipoli. I will never forget it. It was a grey day but at the same time there was something serene and surreal about seeing those cliffs.

It was difficult to imagine how it was possible for our soldiers to make it up those hills. In that furnace they forged our great Australian spirit. I have often spoken about the fact that for many people, regardless of whether they migrated to Australia after that time, that great Australian Anzac spirit not only is something that we treasure but also is something that defines who we are as a people and the values we hold. We see that at Isurava, on the way to Kokoda—mateship, sacrifice, courage and endurance. That is what we mean when we talk about creating the great Australian story and the great Australian psyche.

When I heard about this project, I was excited. There is not a town represented by us, in this place or the other place, that does not have a memorial of some sort to remember those who stood up for their country and made the ultimate sacrifice at a time when it was needed. We see that spirit in Australian soldiers, from those in the Boer War to the people who are still fighting to protect freedoms. A small sample of soil from each town means a great deal, perhaps more than most people would credit. There is not much soil in Lakemba—there is plenty of concrete—but we do have a park that we can take soil from. I talked once about Captain Parry, who used to be the Mayor of the Canterbury area, which is in the middle of my electorate. He became the mayor after the First World War, and Parry Park—an important park for us—was named after him. Wherever you go, whatever town you visit, whether it is rural, remote or in a suburban built-up urban area of Sydney, you see the acknowledgement of the sacrifices people have made.

It is important to remember that there also were many sacrifices made at home by the unsung heroes who made sure that the home front continued on. But in those difficult early days of the Great War—"the war to end all wars"—we lost a generation of our finest. I commend the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing this motion before the House. I look forward to seeing the extension to the Anzac Memorial when it is complete. We are all proud Australians who bring different stories with us. We contribute to this country in different ways. When we consider that people once sacrificed their lives so that we could be here and enjoy the opportunities offered by this country, it is really something to think about. The symbol of soil collection from across the nation defines the nation's character. I congratulate all those involved.

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (13:09): In reply: I thank the members for Heathcote, Cabramatta, Holsworthy, Myall Lakes, Coffs Harbour, Terrigal, Riverstone, Albury, Wollondilly, Camden, Tamworth, Coogee and Lakemba for their heartfelt contributions to this important debate. The debate will inform our fellow citizens about this program and artwork that will encompass 1,699 towns, villages and locations around New South Wales to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac. It will be installed in the war memorial. The member for Cabramatta raised the issue of using soil from places of significance, and 100 places that were of significance during the war will be selected. I will table the list for the member's edification.

The great historian and official reporter, Charles Bean, was a commentator on the war. There were many battles in the Great War. The most well-known is Gallipoli, where the Anzac legend was born. On 19 July 1916, in one night at Fromelles and Pozieres, Australians suffered 5,500 casualties—the greatest loss suffered in a single day. Four days later Australians went into action at the Somme, capturing Pozieres. There were 23,000 casualties in the following weeks. On 29 July 1916 Charles Bean reported:

Pozieres has been a terrible sight all day ... The men were simply turned in there as into some ghastly giant mincing machine. They have to stay there while shell after huge shell descends with a shriek close beside them ... each shrieking tearing crash bringing a promise to each man—instantaneous—I will tear you into ghastly wounds—I will rend your flesh and pulp an arm or a leg—fling you half a gaping quivering man (like those that you see smashed around you one by one) to lie there rotting and blackening like all the things you saw by the awful roadside, or in that sickening dusty crater.

That is an excerpt from Charles Bean's diary and record of the war. There was a number of marches referred to by members such as Coogee, Kangaroo, Dungarees, Waratahs, Wallabies, Snowy River, Kookaburras and Boomerangs. Following the Great War, "the war to end all wars", memorials were built all around the country. The soldiers in that war "fell with their faces to the foe" and were not repatriated but buried where they fell. In order to remember them and give family and loved ones a place to mourn, memorials were built. The memorial project we speak of today is significant and appropriate. Some of the 1,699 towns and places now exist in name only. There will be a process to ensure that communities can participate. I will finish with a quote from a poem by Robert Binyon:

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

Lest we forget. I commend this motion to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CAMDEN LOCAL AREA COMMAND

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (13:14): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the great work that Police do day to day to protect the community.
- (2) Notes that the Camden Local Area Command has increased in population by approximately 12,000 people in recent times.
- (3) Notes that with the population growth projected in Wollondilly and Camden over the next ten years there will be increased workloads placed on the Camden Local Area Command.
- (4) Notes that Camden Local Area Command is already doing more work now compared to similar sized commands.
- (5) Requests that all options be examined with the view to strengthening police numbers at Camden Local Area Command.

In times of emergency our police are there and do a fantastic job protecting life and property. They face challenges on a daily basis in the line of duty. The member for Camden and I have experienced firsthand the amazing work they do. I have two local area commands [LACs] in my electorate, the Camden Local Area Command and the Southern Highlands Local Area Command. The member for Camden and I will focus today on the Camden Local Area Command, which we share. It should be noted that our region is growing rapidly.

Geographically the Camden Local Area Command is the largest in the Sydney metropolitan area, with 2,600 square kilometres under its command in the largest growing region and with an expanding population of more than 100,000 people. Recently 12,000 new people called the region home. It is important that we do not overwork our NSW Police Force. A recent report by the Camden branch of the NSW Police Association notes that police officers have put in more hour-to-hour work than those in Green Valley, Cabramatta and Macquarie Fields. Using a comparison of car crashes to police officers the Camden LAC had 15,788 car crashes to 97 staff, while in Cabramatta there were 8,773 car crashes to 117 staff. This is one illustration of the necessity for the Camden LAC to have additional police numbers.

The Camden Local Area Command is experiencing nearly double the priority 3 calls received by Cabramatta and far exceeds Green Valley. The increase in calls for assistance between 2014-15 and 2015-16 has been significant. Calls for assistance in Cabramatta and Macquarie Fields increased by some 300 calls whereas Camden LAC increased by roughly 1,500 calls. It is imperative that we continue to invest in the growth of our police force. I acknowledge the work of the Government to increase police numbers and provide funding to the force. The police approached the member for Camden and I to support them and to advocate for additional resources in that unique and growing LAC. The member for Camden and I support our local police—they do an amazing job—and, of course, we said yes.

On 13 October, 19 October and 8 November last year I raised this issue in Parliament and called for further police resources. On numerous occasions I have raised this matter with the Minister's office. I know that the member for Camden has undertaken a similar lobbying task. The Camden Local Area Command deserves it. Just about every crime category in my electorate has been trending down and in some cases they have dropped to 20- or 30-year lows, proving how great the LAC is. It is fair and appropriate that we support the police. If these trends are to continue, police must be provided with the resources and staff needed for such a growing area.

The member for Camden and I have had numerous meetings with the Local Area Command, the Police Association, deputy police commissioners of New South Wales and representatives of the Camden Local Area Command. To date we have achieved the following: four recover-at-work officers are providing important back-of-house support to frontline police; one sergeant working a 38-hour week is performing computerised operational policing system [COPS] work confirmation; one detective senior constable has been assigned to Camden from 23 January 2017; increased police officers include one chief inspector, one sergeant and an upgrade to the detective sergeant investigations manager position; a second domestic violence liaison officer has been allocated; additional general administrative support officers [GASO] have been rostered for seven-hour overtime shifts; there is an on-loan arrangement for a vacant GASO position from the Macquarie Fields Local Area Command; and two recently appointed probationary constables are to remain in over-strength positions, which essentially gives the command two extra vacancies for recruitment.

There is the secondment of a fully operational detective senior constable for six months. There has been the recruitment of a part-time detective senior constable to job-share with a part-time Special Auxiliary Police [SAP] position, which is a current vacancy. A recent transfer of four officers is pending. A permanent part-time job-share arrangement in the exhibits position for two senior constables has created a further General Duties SAP

vacancy. There has been a commitment to reduce the number of staff required to attend active armed offender training at the one time.

There has been a commitment by the region commander to review the workload of the Camden LAC Criminal Investigation, exclude Camden LAC from ongoing Strike Force or external secondments, and excuse the Camden LAC from having to provide a South West Metropolitan Radio Electronics Section secondee until January of this year. The duty officer from Camden will be allowed to return. There will be proactive recruitment strategies to fill any pending general duties constable vacancies. There is an initial request for three probationary constables from class 330 and there will be discussion about further secondments.

That is a step in the right direction but my local police, the Police Association, our local area commanders and all who were involved know that this is just a start. They need additional police positions. I am pleased to say that when the member for Camden and I recently met with the local area commander, the two Deputy Commissioners of Police and our local Police Association, Camden branch, we came to a resolution. I know the member for Camden was as excited as I am when it was announced recently that 10 new police officers will join the Camden Local Area Command, which services the Wollondilly and Camden electorates.

Unlike LACs right across the State, the Camden LAC is growing at an astronomical rate. In my area we have just announced that a large regional town will be built on what is currently a skydiving centre in a paddock. The Police Association of New South Wales has said this is fantastic news—not only for the safety of police doing their jobs but also for the safety of the men and women of our communities in a 2,500 square kilometre LAC that needs resources to keep people safe. This is absolutely fantastic for the communities of Wollondilly and Camden.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:21): I support the motion moved by the member for Wollondilly, which acknowledges the work of police to protect the community. It notes that the Camden Local Area Command [LAC] serves an area that has increased in population to around 12,000 residents. The motion also notes that the population growth projected in Wollondilly and Camden in the next 10 years will increase the workload of rank and file police officers in the Camden LAC. The motion also requests that all options be examined for supporting police numbers in that area. In referring to police resourcing, I note that the member for Wollondilly and the member for Camden are passionate about their areas, just like the other 91 members in this Chamber, but I will draw parallels between what is occurring in Camden and what is occurring in the Fairfield Local Area Command. I have referred to this twice in this Chamber this year, and I have also referred to it in notices of motion.

The member for Wollondilly referred to a recent increase of 12,000 people but the population of the Fairfield local government area has increased with 5,000 refugees. The Most Rev. Amel Shamon Nona, the Bishop of the Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle of Sydney of the Chaldeans at Bossley Park, has also brought to my attention the fact that 5,000 Chaldean migrants are now calling Fairfield home. Wollondilly has increased by 12,000 and Fairfield by 10,000. I note that the member for Wollondilly and the member for Camden have been afforded the courtesy as members of Parliament to assist their local police, as well as the branches of the Police Association, to have discussions with the Government to achieve what needs to be in place for the safety and welfare of their communities and the police officers who serve and protect them. The Fairfield branch of the Police Association was disappointed that this courtesy was not extended to me as the local member.

I told the former Minister for Police that all members of Parliament want to ensure that they have adequate police numbers in their communities. Some areas are more needy than others and, as the member for Wollondilly said, the need in the Camden LAC is due to the increase in population and the increase in the number of dwellings, which brings with it many issues in the community. Those issues could be domestic violence, drugs, the ice epidemic, threats of terror or tackling organised crime. The area of need in the Fairfield LAC is similar, although different with the inclusion of people from a refugee background who require other specialist services such as counselling, family and community service caseworkers, doctors and specialists who speak their language and who also understand the nature of what has happened to them.

As the shadow Minister for Police I wholeheartedly support the motion moved by the member for Wollondilly. I ask the Government and the Commissioner-elect Mick Fuller to extend the same courtesy to the Fairfield Local Area Command. I ask them to bring stability to the 16,500 men and women who serve and protect us. I congratulate and extend my best wishes to outgoing Commissioner Scipione on his loyal service to our State as the Commissioner of Police. Members of Parliament have many things in common, one of which is that we want our LACs to be well resourced so that the fine and men women in the service do their job without fatigue, stress and extra pressures put on them.

We have heard that the Camden Local Area Command has had great news with 10 extra police officers. All members of Parliament should work towards ensuring that they get a full complement of police in their LAC. The Fairfield Police Association and I ask that 16 extra police officers are put into the Fairfield LAC in order to deal with the dynamic and diverse nature of that command, much like the Camden LAC. In the far west, local

area commands have their own struggles in their communities with substance abuse and domestic violence. They are looking at programs to ensure that Indigenous youths are engaged, off the streets, in schools or in jobs so that they make a positive contribution to society. The Opposition supports the motion moved by the member for Wollondilly but asks that all LACs throughout the State have adequate resources and police numbers to deal with their specific issues and diverse range of needs in their LACs.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (13:28): I support the motion moved by the member for Wollondilly that was put on the *Business Paper* last year. As the member for Wollondilly said, we have achieved a very good outcome with the support of the Government. I acknowledge the role of the Minister for Police and the support of the Police Association. I acknowledge the efforts at a local level of Rod Sheraton and Dan Ryder from the Camden Police Association, who are extremely passionate, who work very professionally in their roles and who play hard and fair. The Camden Local Area Commander, Ward Hanson, played a major part. I also acknowledge Frank Mennella, Regional Commander, who played a major role in bringing people together and making sure we were on the same page when matters were getting bogged down. He enabled us to have a robust discussion that achieved great outcomes.

Debate interrupted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I will now leave the chair and the House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome everybody in the gallery to question time. In particular I extend a very warm welcome to Doreen Easley and Wayne Willis, who are my guests. I welcome back to the gallery Tom Glasgow, a year 10 student on work experience from the Springwood High School, who is a guest of the member for Blue Mountains. I also welcome three young women who are participating in The Nationals Young Women's Mentoring Program: Kate Otwell, guest of the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight; Amy Young, guest of the member for Port Macquarie; and Alexandra Hall, guest of the member for Cootamundra. I acknowledge UTS student Shani Novak, guest of the Minister for the Environment.

I also extend a warm welcome to a group of international master of laws students from the University of New South Wales and their lecturer, Ms Audrey Blunden, guests of the member for Kiama and the member for Coogee. I welcome Miss Constance Wang, Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, accompanied by Mr Jonathan Tzu-Yi, guests of the member for Oatley, and the members of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Friendship Group.

I also welcome George and Gillian Collinson in the gallery, guests of the member for Maroubra. I welcome to the Chamber a delegation of seven members and two accompanying staff from the New Zealand Parliament Justice and Electoral Committee. I welcome students from the University of Sydney who are here as part of the university's Welcome to Sydney program, guests of the Executive Manager of the Department of Parliamentary Services, Mark Webb. I welcome the students and their teachers from the Dubbo College Senior Campus and Granville Boys High School, guests of the member for Dubbo and the member for Granville.

Question Time

MEMBER FOR DRUMMOYNE

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:19): My question is directed to the Premier. What steps has the Premier taken to safeguard against insider trading, given that a parliamentary secretary in her government, who is responsible for planning and transport decisions, acquired property that is now being developed to deliver him a multimillion dollar windfall?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. I remind members that even though it is Thursday they can still be removed from the Chamber. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:19): I stress that all members of Parliament are expected to make appropriate declarations and disclosures. I have also been advised that the member for Drummoyne has declared all of his property interests. Given that the Leader of the Opposition has spoken about insider trading, it is interesting to read what former Senator Doug Cameron said about his insider trading in relation to Ian Macdonald. As we know, earlier today Ian Macdonald was found guilty of criminal misconduct.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Leader of the Opposition was a witness for the prosecution.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. I call the member for Murray to order for the first time. I call the member for Baulkham Hills to order for the first time. The clock will be stopped until members come to order. There will be no further interjections during the Premier's answer. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I was saying, Ian Macdonald has been found guilty of criminal misconduct in public office after granting a mining licence to a union mate. That is a question of fact. Given that the Leader of the Opposition spoke about insider trading, what Doug Cameron said about him and Ian Macdonald is interesting. On the ABC on 27 March 2013, Doug Cameron said:

What Luke Foley said yesterday about a chorus of complaints, about a loss of moral compass, about the abandonment of Labor principles was not put at that meeting. In fact Luke Foley was very quiet at that meeting. There was certainly—

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

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The question was about what steps the Premier wants to take.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is being relevant to the question she was asked.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: I also refer to Standing Order 73. This secret shareholder stuff is the stuff of Obeid.

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

Mr Michael Daley: If you want to have a debate about propriety, let us stop the clock and let us spend all afternoon so we can work out what the Premier is doing about that character over there who is masquerading behind his parents.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Maroubra to order for the second time. The member for Maroubra will resume his seat or be placed on three calls to order and removed from the Chamber. I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Maroubra.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Maroubra left the Chamber, accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Doug Cameron said:

What Luke Foley said yesterday about a chorus of complaints, about a loss of moral compass, about the abandonment of Labor principles was not put at that meeting. In fact Luke Foley was very quiet at that meeting. There was certainly no warnings.

And I have to say to you if then at that meeting people like myself, George Campbell, Anthony Albanese and Paul Bastian did nothing then he should have done something about it. These are people of the highest proprietary and I must say I reject completely the view that's being perpetrated out there that Luke Foley was some white knight—

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation to order for the first time.

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 54. It is hard to get a word in edgeways when Doug Cameron is speaking.

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

Mr Chris Minns: It is under Standing Order 54. The Premier is out of order.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Mr Cameron said:

I reject completely the view that's being perpetrated out there that Luke Foley was some white knight and everyone and I kept Macdonald alive.

NEW SOUTH WALES COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (14:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. What is the New South Wales Government doing to support the New South Wales police?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:26): I thank the member for Seven Hills for his question. I also want to thank and commend him for his time in the force. Before he came to this place he was a decorated officer and then police prosecutor. We are very proud to have people of his standing as members of the Liberal-Nationals Government. Firstly I would like to pay tribute to the outgoing police commissioner, Andrew Scipione. I know that all members in this place wish him the very best for his future and thank him for his decades of service to the NSW Police Force. New South Wales is a better and safer place for his 10 years as

commissioner. He will be remembered as one of our strongest and finest commissioners. He served with distinction in the NSW Police Force for 37 years and is the recipient of the Australian Police Medal and the National Medal.

He had a spectacular career, rising through the ranks from being a general duties police officer at Hurstville to detective and then, after serving in many roles in the Police Force, becoming an assistant commissioner in 2001 and a deputy commissioner in 2002. In June 2016 he was named in the Queen's Birthday Honours List and became an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia. The role of police commissioner, as we can all appreciate, is one of the toughest jobs in New South Wales. It is not an exaggeration to say that many of the decisions Commissioner Scipione had to take would have been about matters of life and death—both for the officers who served under him and for the general public.

Almost all categories of crime are down. People can feel safer as they go about their daily lives. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Commissioner Scipione for his outstanding work as commissioner. Today is a very important day for New South Wales, especially for the NSW Police Force. I thank the many outstanding candidates who put themselves forward for the position of police commissioner. I am delighted that so many exceptional individuals did. The process of selection was difficult and robust, and I am thrilled and pleased that we have been able to appoint a person as highly commended as Assistant Commissioner Mick Fuller to be the new Commissioner for Police in New South Wales.

I am very pleased to announce that today Cabinet officially appointed Assistant Commissioner Mick Fuller as the new New South Wales police commissioner. He is an exceptional police officer. He has an extensive operational background and has served 16 of his 29 years in the NSW Police Force in senior positions, with the past seven years spent in the executive. He joined the force in 1987 and was promoted to detective sergeant in 2000 and then to the rank of inspector in 2002. He has been an Assistant Commissioner since 2010. Since joining the executive he spent two years as Commander of the Southern Region of New South Wales and a further two years serving as Assistant Commissioner in the Professional Standards Command. Assistant Commissioner Fuller has led the response to the insidious crime of domestic violence and has overseen programs that take the pressure off victims and put offenders on notice that their crimes are not private but are matters of serious public concern.

Assistant Commissioner Fuller has also played a key role in reforms to criminal exhibits and police powers, and was the architect of the Regional Enforcement Squad initiative to work across commands targeting mid-level metropolitan crime. He has led emergency response operations to some of the State's worst fires, floods, protests and terrorist incidents, and had a command role in major events such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] meeting and World Youth Day. I am more than confident that this background and experience equips him to deal with anything that the community will confront in the future. I am confident also that he has the experience and skills to deal with the dangers that we know terrorism poses to all communities.

This is clearly one of the most important appointments that a government can make and I want to thank the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services, Troy Grant, and the entire Cabinet for making this appointment come to fruition. The new commissioner has been appointed after a rigorous merit-based process and I look forward to him starting his post on Monday. Although we have as a community made great strides in combating crime there remain challenges—we all know that. Whether it is illicit drug use—especially ice—whether it is violent organised crime, whether it is to keep the road toll to a minimum or whether it is the threat of terrorism, we know these challenges exist and will continue to exist, and I know that Assistant Commissioner Fuller when he takes on the commissioner role will be dealing with these as swiftly as possible. I stress that the Government has always backed our Police Force with the resources necessary to do a very difficult job, and this will continue. [*Extension of time*]

It is at times like this that we thank the 16,000 men and women of the NSW Police Force who literally put their lives on the line, day in and day out, to support the community and to keep us all safe. I am pleased to say also that when it comes to police resourcing the police budget this year is \$3.4 billion with a record capital works budget of \$218 million. The Government is determined to deliver to the police the state-of-the-art technology and resources they need to do their jobs. Since we have come to government I am pleased to say also there are an extra 1,170 police officers on the beat. I say to the members of the NSW Police Force that all members of this House give you our full support. We appreciate the job you do and we commend to you your new leader, Assistant Commissioner Fuller. We wish him and the force well. We will continue to support the police in the great job they do for the community.

MEMBER FOR DRUMMOYNE

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:33): My question is directed to the Premier. Did the Parliamentary Secretary for the Premier and Cabinet, the member for Drummoyne, buy the land alongside the Cudgegong Road Station, or was he gifted it?

The SPEAKER: Order! I am not sure that question is in order. I am not sure the Premier is expected to know that.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:33): I refer to my previous response and I am happy to repeat it. Of course, all members of Parliament are expected to make the appropriate declarations and disclosures, and I understand that the member has done just that. There are a number of disclosures we know the Leader of the Opposition has not made, and I will continue on those as in my previous answer. As Doug Cameron was saying on that occasion regarding his relationship to Ian Macdonald:

...I reject completely the view that's being perpetrated out there that Luke Foley was some white knight and everyone and I kept Macdonald alive.

There was a consensus position adopted and Luke Foley was part of that consensus and he should have opposed the two years.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 73. A member cannot be impugned like that without a substantive motion. If you want to do that, bring it on.

The SPEAKER: Order! The imputations against the member for Drummoyne are substantial. That point of order should not be raised.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am repeating what one of the Leader of the Opposition's colleagues said about his relationship with Ian Macdonald. Mr Cameron had more to say:

The situation from my point of view is, if Luke Foley had such great concerns then he should have raised them at the meeting and people would have done something about it.

This is not a Liberal member saying this.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: We know this Premier needs to read everything.

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

Ms Jodi McKay: It is under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is a direct quote, and you have to read direct quotes. I do not spend my time memorising quotes when I come down to the Chamber; I have a State to run. This is not a Liberal member casting doubt on the Leader of the Opposition's moral integrity. Mr Cameron continues:

In fact my union, the AMWU that I led at the time, feel quite betrayed that if Luke Foley had those points of view and he had any evidence of corruption we should have known...

...why is it... if he felt so strongly about it did he agree to the consensus position, and why did he say nothing about Mr Macdonald's conduct for almost three years after that meeting?

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will keep her point of order short or be placed on three calls to order. What is the member's point of order?

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question was not about Luke Foley; the question was about the member for Drummoyne.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is remaining relevant to the question she was asked. The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. There is no point of order.

Ms Jodi McKay: Am I on one or two calls to order?

The SPEAKER: One.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Given the member for Strathfield keeps interjecting—I will continue my work on the Leader of the Opposition if I am given the opportunity—it is interesting that the member claims she has nil real property on her registry, yet claims a rental income. It would be appropriate for the member to disclose what that is.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: I am very happy to provide the Premier with my most recent disclosure.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield can make a personal explanation. There is no point of order. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the second time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: More of that later, but I will finish the quote from Doug Cameron:

If Luke Foley had those points of view and had any evidence of corruption we should have known.

...why is it...if he felt so strongly about it did he agree to the consensus position and why did he say nothing about Mr Macdonald's conduct for almost three years after that meeting?

NSW POLICE FORCE

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (14:38): My question is addressed to the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services. Will the Minister please update the House as to the future of the NSW Police Force?

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services) (14:39): I thank the member for Myall Lakes for his question, for his interest in policing in New South Wales and for his strong support for his local police in the beautiful Manning Valley. I begin by echoing the sentiments of the Premier in expressing my sincere gratitude for the service of Commissioner Andrew Scipione, APM, AC, in an outstanding decade as the Commissioner of Police and an outstanding four decades of service to the community of New South Wales. He has experienced some of the most incredible situations and events that anyone could ever be called on to manage and he leaves a wonderful legacy for the NSW Police Force following his wonderful career.

Today, as the Premier said, we are very proud to have announced the appointment of the new New South Wales Commissioner of Police—Michael Fuller, APM, who is an Assistant Commissioner with extensive experience in the executive, extensive operational experience, and who, through the recruitment process for this most important position, demonstrated not only his capacity to fulfil the role of leading a \$3.4 billion law enforcement agency—the largest in Australia and one of the largest in the world—but also a future vision to harmonise the NSW Police Force following the issues with which it has been confronted recently. He has mapped out his vision for the future structure and service that he will provide under his leadership for the communities of New South Wales, putting the communities first.

We have great confidence in the new commissioner's plans and I thank the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Minister for Police for acknowledging and warmly welcoming the new commissioner to his role in their press conference shortly after the announcement. I know that the new commissioner will share bipartisan support when he brings plans forward to re-engineer the NSW Police Force. Those plans include changing the way that the NSW Police Force is resourced, how it is deployed, where those police are located and what they are able to do. He plans to give the organisation more flexibility to meet community demands and to meet the challenging changing types of crime that the police are facing.

The organisation was last structured in 1997 under the local area command model. It was a one-size-fits-all structure that really restricted the capacity of the organisation to reflect the communities it serves. That will soon change. It is not a dramatic change—moving boundaries, upsetting people or physically relocating hundreds and hundreds of officers. This is about giving the organisation the ability to ensure that the communities in the south-west of Sydney, for example, have the types of policing resources that they need, such as multicultural resources, and somewhere west in New South Wales where there may be more need for Indigenous-type supporting roles and that sort of work.

I have great confidence, as do the Premier and Cabinet, that the new commissioner will be able to deliver a platform that will continue to lower crime rates that in recent times have been the lowest in 20 years. With the police's new capacity and continued support from this Government with resources, their crime solving not only will remain at a record high level; their crime prevention will take on a whole new front. Crime prevention is diverse. The Cessnock Local Area Command within the Central Hunter command is a different place from the Rose Bay Local Area Command or part of the 531,000 square kilometres that encompasses the western region of New South Wales. The challenges in each of those communities could not be more diverse. That diversity and the deployment of those resources are what the NSW Police Force is working towards.

Mr John Robertson: That's from the 16 cops.

Mr TROY GRANT: I note the interjection from the member for Blacktown. By way of history I think it is important for me to inform the House that whilst the member for Blacktown was a member of the Labor Government, in 16 years the NSW Police Force put up five different types of resource allocation models to ensure that the police were allowed to be deployed where they were needed. The police allocation model was one of them.

Mr John Robertson: They're deployed to all your electorates now.

The SPEAKER: Order! This is not a debate. I call the member for Blacktown to order for the first time. I call the member for Blacktown to order for the second time.

[Extension of time]

Mr TROY GRANT: A police allocation model was designed on the back of the New South Wales Police Association—those charged with looking after their members and ensuring that officers were not left stranded when they were underresourced or they needed to be resourced. Then there was the workforce allocation model, once again prepared and submitted by the organisation to the Labor Government, and rejected both times. When I was in the human relations part of my career there was the constable allocation model.

Mr John Robertson: Is that when you did the shift rosters?

Mr TROY GRANT: That interjection is specifically what I want to address.

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

Mr TROY GRANT: We developed the constable allocation model, which the Labor Government would not allow the NSW Police Force to implement. I wonder where those resources were needed? This is the sort of legacy that the Labor Government left us to pick up, like many legacies it left across government. This is the sort of legacy that the re-engineering process finally will put to an end with the resources for our burgeoning population. Whether it is in the Wollondilly and Camden areas, whether it is the different crime types in Lakemba and those sorts of suburbs, the police finally will have a platform of resourcing that will be supported by this Government to meet those community needs.

The only hope Blacktown has ever had is the hope we are giving them—not the hope that was continually denied them every time the opportunity was presented to the Labor Government. I am proud that we have a commissioner who shares the vision of this Government and who is keen to resource Blacktown not only with the numbers of police they need but also with the police resources that suit that community. That work is well underway and I look forward to supporting the new commissioner, as those opposite should. The future of New South Wales and looking after our police never has been more secure than it is today.

MEMBER FOR DRUMMOYNE

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (14:46): My question is directed to the Premier. Was any disclosure made under clause 16 of the Ministerial Code of Conduct in respect to the interest of the member for Drummoynes in 38 Cudgegong Road, Rouse Hill, prior to the decision to zone it high density in mid-2015?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:46): I refer the member for Liverpool to my previous answers on the same question. The member for Strathfield is sitting next to the member for Liverpool and perhaps he should be asking her the following—and there could be a very innocent response, but I believe the House deserves to hear it. In the 2016 Legislative Assembly disclosures the member for Strathfield stated she had nil real property. That is fine; however, the disclosure says that "Ms McKay stated that she receives rental income as a source in the other income section of the same disclosure."

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say, respectfully, that there might be a logical answer, but typically if a member of Parliament is getting a rental income from a property it is usually appropriate to disclose what that property is. So before those opposite choose to question integrity issues, we ask the Leader of Opposition why he did not come clean on Ian Macdonald for three years, as was stated by his colleague, and we ask the member for Strathfield why she does not explain to the House for what property she is receiving rental income.

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES (Barwon) (14:48): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. What is the New South Wales Government doing to ensure the future of the agricultural sector's workforce?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:48): I thank the member for Barwon for the question—a good question that indicates his understanding of the importance of the agricultural sector to the regional, State and the national economy and, more importantly, the importance of having the workforce that underpins the sector not only for today but also for the future. I acknowledge the five young women in the gallery today, who are part of the National Women's Mentoring Program and who come from diverse communities right across regional New South Wales. I also acknowledge Jess Price-Purnell, who is leading this group of young girls

here today and showing them that there are opportunities within politics for young women right across New South Wales and through The Nationals.

The agricultural sector in New South Wales contributes approximately \$12 million to the New South Wales economy. Off the back of our great winter crops last year we are seeing almost \$8 million in exports. With cotton picking underway in the Barwon electorate, in places such as Wee Waa, Walgett and Bourke, it is important to ensure that we have a strong workforce, not just for today but for the future. That workforce needs the skills associated with the changing landscape in agriculture. Agriculture has always been a sector of innovators looking to innovation and technology. We must ensure that we invest in the skillsets that allow that sector to grow and that the workforce has the skillsets for the needs of today and tomorrow. It is a great story about agriculture right across the nation.

Some recent figures have shown that agricultural growth has surged by an extraordinary 27.6 per cent across Australia. When one sees agriculture in double digit figures and compares that to the traditional areas of mining, which grew at only 4.6 per cent—or retail or manufacturing, which is just staggering along—it is clear that agriculture is underpinning the prosperity of this nation and the economy. The farming boom looks set to continue and contribute to export earnings, especially in cotton, which is projected to skyrocket by 56 per cent. Wheat will increase by 25 per cent and sugar by 23 per cent. There is a strong future for agriculture in Australia and New South Wales. To use the words of the Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the Federal Nationals, the Hon Barnaby Joyce, "regional areas have saved the economy". It is a great thing to see that regional areas are saving the economy.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: To make sure that we have the skilled workforce, earlier this year, together with the member for Northern Tablelands, I was in the great town of Moree on a warm day when we announced the New South Wales Government's commitment to both the grain and cotton industry with the announcement of the AgSkilled Training Strategy. The strategy is a \$14.7 million investment aimed at attracting new workers and upskilling and retaining the existing workforce. This investment by the New South Wales Government is aimed at ensuring we have a workforce that is able to meet the needs of the job, today and in the future, with skills being taught relating to the use of drones, data and satellites and the management of a farm business. These are critical skills that are required to see continued growth in the agricultural industry—an industry that will be underpinned by the investment of the New South Wales Government.

Since the announcement in Moree in January, I am pleased to note that Cotton Australia and the Grain Research and Development Corporation—our partners in this strategy—have started work on an industry-wide training needs analysis already. This process will assist them to identify the Smart and Skilled training providers that are best placed to meet the training demands of their industry for the future. This is about upskilling the workforce, an opportunity for young people to remain in regional New South Wales and our communities, and to make sure our regional and rural communities continue to grow. I have as an example a young man, Will Turner, who comes from a grain farming family from Narrabri. [*Extension of time*]

It is great to see on this side of the House the interest we have in agriculture and the interest we have in relation to a skilled workforce in regional and rural New South Wales. We live, play and raise our families in regional New South Wales and we are passionate about regional New South Wales. It can be seen that those opposite have no interest in the issue of agriculture, even though tonight they will walk to Woolworths to get a steak or a bit of lettuce and wonder where it has come from. They just interject—they are not interested in the communities in regional New South Wales.

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

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. I am interested in going to Woolies and getting Australian fish. So why are you not supporting commercial fishers?

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Will Turner has enrolled in the RuralBiz training program, in partnership with the University of New England [UNE] where he will study vocational education and training [VET] units online. He can do that as a full-time student at UNE or on the farm. This is about keeping kids in the regions on the farm and making sure they gain the necessary skills. Will's motivation to study agriculture came from growing up on his family's farm and he would eventually like to take over the reins of the farm from his parents. Will is an example of the next generation of farmers, the next generation of business owners and the next generation that is going to look at the agricultural sector, underpinned by innovation and technology.

The SPEAKER: Order! If members wish to have private conversations they should do so outside the Chamber.

MEMBER FOR DRUMMOYNE

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (14:56): My question is directed to the Premier. Will she consider strengthening the disclosure requirements so that the community can know what the member for Drummoyne paid to Southern Han Pty Limited for his 10 per cent interest in 38 Cudgegong Road, Rouse Hill?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:56): I thank the member for Liverpool for his second question today. On this side of the House we maintain the highest level of public expectation in relation to disclosures and in relation to what members should not only be doing but also be perceived to be doing. We are always making sure we comply with that requirement. The member for Liverpool should ask the Leader of the Opposition why he announced every two months that he was going to publish his diary. It was only after I made the observation in this House that he had not published his diary for seven months—after he had promised every two months to publish it—that he decided to do it. I asked my team whether he had published his diary and they told me he had last published it seven months ago. If that is how those opposite act in opposition, how will they act if they ever return to government? A member of his own party has asked why he remained silent for three years while Ian Macdonald went around doing what he was doing. The public expects the highest level of service, work ethic and obligation from members of Parliament—that is what matters to them.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I assure the community that at all times Government members will not only work hard on their behalf but also make sure that they make the required disclosures and fulfil all their obligations.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say to the community: How can they trust a Leader of the Opposition who cannot keep his promises in opposition about disclosure?

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

WESTCONNEX

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (14:59): I address my question to the Minister for WestConnex.

The SPEAKER: There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I cannot hear what the member is saying.

Dr GEOFF LEE: Will the Minister explain to the House why WestConnex is a vital project that will futureproof our motorway network and keep Sydney moving?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (14:59): The member for Parramatta, a representative of Western Sydney, understands how important it is to invest in a motorway network for the future. The member's electorate has had a motorway that does not allow people to move around in a way that is demanded by a modern city. It means that they cannot get to and from work and small businesses do not have the road network that is necessary for them to be successful. That is why this Government is investing in the WestConnex project.

Three motorways merge three different roads into one forming a 33-kilometre road. The first section, the M4, will be widened from Church Street to four lanes above ground and link with the M4 East three-lane tunnel that links to the City West Link—a missing piece of the M4 for 20 years. Every community across Western Sydney knows that the M4 East tunnel connection has been the missing piece but that is what this Government is delivering. The M5 was not big enough from the day it opened and it cannot maintain future growth. On the day it opened everyone knew that it was too small.

Twenty years later this Government is fixing it. As part of WestConnex the three-lane M5 tunnel will be duplicated in each direction. That will provide extra capacity for everyone who lives in the south-west and they now will have access to that important road network. The crucial point is that traffic from the outer suburbs of Western Sydney has to be redirected to different locations or the traffic banks up along the two motorways. The M4 to M5 link is an important futureproofing exercise that will enable traffic to be redirected off the M4 and M5 with the creation of the Rozelle interchange, which will largely be built below ground. It will connect with the Iron Cove Bridge, the Anzac Bridge and provide a south-bound connection and the first pylon for the western harbour tunnel.

The key difference between this Government and the Labor Government is that the infrastructure being built today will account for future growth and allow for future investment such as the western harbour tunnel. The southern portion of the M4 to M5 link will be the forerunner for the F6, which will provide connectivity for southern Sydney and the southern parts of this State. When infrastructure is planned properly and there are up-front strategic business cases we get the funding model right. That includes a combination of up-front funding as well as user pays funding with tolls. Without this project Sydney will grind to a halt.

When considering the WestConnex project it is important to look at the alternative policies available for New South Wales. The suburbs in the south-west must have access to a widened M5 and central Sydney suburbs must have access to the widened M4. We are aware of the importance of the M4 to M5 link. I have the Labor policy document entitled "A Better Way", which is Labor's infrastructure plan. It refers to completing the M4 and the M5, which sounds reasonable. It states further, "Start construction of the second harbour crossing." We are doing well. After turning a couple of pages I come to point 5, which states, "Do not proceed with the proposed tunnel linking the M4 and the M5." Under Labor's policy there would be no F6 or western harbour tunnel. There is no mechanism to distribute the traffic off the M4 or M5. Labor's Sydney transport plan is "carmageddon". *[Extension of time]*

Let us explore that further. Labor's published policy is not to build the M4 to M5 link. The policy includes widening the M4, building a new tunnel, duplicating the M5 and then keeping drivers trapped in their cars. It would be the largest paid car park in Sydney for the next 25 years. Labor's own policy document states that it does not want to build the M4 to M5 link. I urge those Opposition members who live along the M4 and M5 corridors to explain to their communities where the cars will go, according to Labor's policy position.

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

Mr STUART AYRES: Those opposite have not learnt anything.

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

Mr STUART AYRES: The Opposition has no way of funding the M4 to M5 link because it does not support the economic policies of this Government. Labor does not support the duplication of the M5 or the building of the M4 tunnel. The only way to build the western harbour tunnel has been rejected in Labor's own policy document. Labor has sold out the south of Sydney. The F6 will not be built by Labor, according to its own policy statement.

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

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (15:07): I direct my question to the Premier. Will the Premier inform the House whether the Government agrees with the statement by Barnaby Joyce that the Australian Capital Territory renewable energy target is "completely insane", given an Australian Capital Territory power purchase agreement signed under the Australian Capital Territory renewable energy target is helping to finance the Sapphire wind farm near Glen Innes and creating 265 jobs?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:07): I thank the member for her question and note her interest in these matters. I emphasise that the Government is ensuring reliable, affordable and clean energy for the people of New South Wales. The Government is not only ensuring it for today but for the future. The best way to achieve this is to provide a clear market framework that will give the private sector confidence to invest in new supply. This needs to occur at a national level. We must support the national renewable energy target in creating the framework for private investment. I am pleased to say that New South Wales is attracting billions of dollars in investment from the private sector for renewable energy projects across New South Wales. It will create thousands of jobs and contribute to securing the energy future for households and businesses.

A critical issue for New South Wales is not just securing energy but also ensuring accessibility and affordability for households and businesses. I understand that AGL is the owner of Nyngan and Broken Hill solar farms. Hundreds of jobs in regional New South Wales were created during their construction. Eleven more solar farms with a combined installed capacity of 400 megawatts have been approved for construction in New South Wales and five of them will be completed by the end of year. We have a good record in New South Wales. We will continue on all matters regarding energy sources. We support the National Large-scale Renewable Energy Target. We are committed to supporting the National Plan for Reducing Greenhouse Emissions by 26 to 28 per cent by 2030 as part of Australia's commitments under the Paris Climate Change Agreement. Again, consistent with

the Paris agreement, the New South Wales Climate Change Policy Framework contains an aspirational target of net zero emissions by 2050, which is also consistent with the Federal Government.

This State Government has a proven track record and is very fair and balanced in this area. It appreciates the challenges that exist and is working hard to make sure it is always a step ahead. It is important for us to support these initiatives not just in words but also in actions. We know that our economy will be strengthened by providing certainty of investment. I cannot let the week go by without expressing my surprise—because ordinarily I credit The Greens for always standing by principle and being consistent—to learn that in Gosford The Greens are preferencing the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party ahead of the Liberal Party.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The member for Newtown will cease interjecting. The member for Newtown will remove herself from the Chamber until the end of question time.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Newtown left the Chamber at 3.11 p.m.]

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I sincerely say if I am incorrect I am happy to be corrected, but when I last saw commentary in the media it said that The Greens were preferencing the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party at number four and the Liberals at number five.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about renewable energy.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier remains relevant to the question she was asked. There is no point of order. I call the member for Swansea to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I hope it is wrong and I stand to be corrected. The media commentary said number four was the Shooters and number five was the Liberals.

FEDERAL POLITICS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (15:13): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning. What are the latest developments in State and Federal relations, and will the Minister inform the House of any other related matters?

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will not take a point of order on relevance. That question encompasses everything.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State) (15:13): I thank the member for Ku-ring-gai for his keen interest in the constitutional separation of powers between New South Wales and the Commonwealth because he, like me, has been observing the question time strategy of the Labor Party over the past two weeks with a certain amount of curiosity. On this side of the House we have some of the finest legal minds of their generation. They have been scratching their heads at how the Australian Labor Party could possibly be unaware of what constitutes a Federal matter and what constitutes a State matter. I am wondering what has brought this on. To that end, I consulted my little book. It indicates there is movement afoot, the drums are beating, there is elevated comms chatter, smoke signals are going up, or, as they say in Canberra, "It's on." It's on like Donkey Kong.

Government members are passionate about New South Wales. We love this State, we love this community and we want to have a great economy. We want great prosperity. We want a great State. But those opposite just want a great career in Federal politics. We know this because we have the intelligence. The little birds have been chirping. We have the member for Goulburn out on the highway with a clicker to count the road trips by Labor members to check out their numbers with their factional mates in Canberra. Minns click, McKay click, Daley click—three off to Canberra.

Some are even going further south, now they have so many friends to visit at the prison farm in Cooma. In fact, Eddie and Macca are finally eligible for Country Labor membership now that they are down on the farm. The two of them indeed have doubled the membership of Country Labor. In the past the Labor Party has had problems with multiple members registered at the same address. But it is okay; the Minister for Corrections has assured me that he will advise Sussex Street that it is all above board in this case. What members opposite really want is to be based in Canberra permanently. I think we can all agree we can take their question time strategy in the past two weeks as a vote of support on all the important issues in this State that we are looking at. They are backing us on infrastructure, planning and the economy.

It is quite clear that they have checked out. They are waiting in the exit lounge for the QF457 to Canberra. They are awaiting their orders from Bill Shorten. Why? Because we now know Linda was sent as the vanguard. She is signalling. She has picked up the phone and said, "It's time." It is time for members opposite to go down and share in a big plate of Mongolian lamb on a lazy Susan at the Hoang Hau. It is time for those opposite to

dance the night away in Canberra at Mooseheads. New South Wales is not good enough for members opposite. They want to be in Canberra leaking to David Speers. Next they will want their own panel show. Speaking of panel shows, maybe there is an opening coming up. Maybe there is a spot with Ross Cameron and Rowan Dean on *Outsiders* that they could apply for.

I thought I might as well give them some assistance so I gave Ross a shout I asked for the selection criteria. It says that presenters of *Outsiders* have to be deplorable, they have to have extreme views that everyone else thinks are idiotic and they have to have no regard for the wretched company they keep. I wracked my brain for who could fit the bill. I found some correspondence from concerned members of the Jewish community concerning the activities of the member for Granville, who thinks it is appropriate to speak at rallies surrounded by Hezbollah flags and swastikas. Almost as bad: she appeared on a podium next to The Greens member David Shoebridge.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: Pursuant to Standing Order 73 if the Minister wishes to attack a member he should do it by way of substantive motion. He has not done that and he should stop talking.

The SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: Obviously, it is a lapse of judgement to appear on a podium next to Shoebridge. It is an even greater one to be associated with repellent, pro-terrorist, Iran-backed, anti-Semitic jihadists. I think that qualifies some members opposite to replace Mark Latham. [*Extension of time*]

If Labor members continues down this path of irrelevancy in question time maybe they do not deserve any questions and maybe we want to hear more from the crossbench. We are asked great questions from the member for Lake Macquarie, the member for Orange and even the member for Ballina, who asked today about energy. Labor could certainly put question time to better use by asking questions about New South Wales and not about Canberra.

Personal Explanation

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (15:19): By leave: During question time the Premier made comments about me. I refer members to the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption titled, "Investigation into the conduct of Ian Macdonald, John Maitland and others". On page 28 of that report Commissioner Ipp said:

Mr Foley gave evidence carefully and candidly ... The Commission regards him as a reliable witness and accepts his evidence.

At page 31 Commissioner Ipp said:

Mr Foley testified that ... he put to Mr Macdonald "directly" that he should resign ... Mr Foley's evidence is consistent with the evidence of the telephone records, and is accepted.

It did not suit the Premier to refer the House to the official report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Mr Adrian Piccoli: Point of order: The Leader of the Opposition has gone well beyond the scope of a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order.

MEMBER FOR STRATHFIELD

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (15:21): By leave: During question time the Premier made comments about properties owned by me. I have three properties—one at Gloucester, which is a beautiful place apart from being the heart of The Nationals; one at Waverton; and my home at Ashfield. I have disclosed those properties. I am happy to provide the Premier with a copy of my recent pecuniary interest disclosure, which was lodged about six weeks ago. Unlike others in this place, I disclose my rental income. I have no interest in any development or in any company associated with development. I am also not a Minister or parliamentary secretary. Finally, I categorically reject any assertion that I have done anything wrong in regard to the ownership of these properties.

The SPEAKER: Order! This is not a debate. The member for Strathfield will resume her seat.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

The CLERK: I announce that the following petitions signed by fewer than 500 persons have been lodged for presentation:

Pet Shops

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

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**.

Surry Hills Light Rail Station

Petition calling on the Government to build a second light rail station in Surry Hills at the Wimbo Park-Olivia Gardens site, using appropriate landscaping to minimise visual and noise impacts and provide a quality park for the local community, received from **Ms Jenny Leong**.

Ferry Services

Petition requesting new inner-city ferries, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Bus Service 389

Petition requesting a more reliable 389 bus service, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Elizabeth Bay Marina Ferry Services

Petition requesting the inclusion of a new ferry service as part of the Elizabeth Bay marina upgrade, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Bail Laws

Petition requesting the review of the laws relating to bail conditions for serious offenders, received from **Mr Daryl Maguire**.

Social Housing

Petition requesting that the Sirius building be retained and its social housing function be continued, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Inner-city Social Housing

Petition opposing the sale of public housing in Millers Point, Dawes Point and The Rocks, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

The CLERK: I announce that the following Minister has lodged a response to a petition signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Melinda Pavey—Harrington and Cooperbrook Flyover—lodged 23 February 2017 (The Hon. Leslie Williams)

*Committees***LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE****Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 33/56**

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): The question is that the House take note of the report. Consideration of the report is postponed and set down as an order of the day for a future day.

*Matter of Public Importance***HARMONY DAY**

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (15:26): I am proud to introduce this matter of public importance. Harmony Day was established in 1999 and it coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The message of Harmony Day is "everyone belongs". Happily, members on both sides of this Chamber endeavour to champion that value every day. Harmony Day is held on 21 March, and each year I and members of all political persuasions join in this celebration of our State's cultural diversity. As the shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, and a passionate promoter of multiculturalism, over the past month I have attended a number of Harmony Day events, including an event at the Gosford Anglican Church that was referred to as a world food fair. Liesel Tesch and Anne Charlton also joined me at that event. I also attended an event organised by the Al Minia Charitable Association on behalf of the Lebanese community of New South

Wales. In addition, I have attended events organised by my local council with a number of schools. Last Friday I attended the prayer assembly at St Mel's Catholic Primary School where harmony was discussed.

I congratulate all those who received awards at the 2017 Premier's Harmony Dinner. The 2011 Census revealed that about one-quarter of our State's population were born overseas. That data shows that in New South Wales we have 121 ancestral groups, 47 religions and speak 83 languages. That makes this State one of the most diverse in Australia. We mark Harmony Day by not only recognising our differences but also celebrating them. These events continue to bring diverse communities closer together. Like many new migrants deciding to call Australia home, my parents came to Australia from Greece in the 1960s. This is a story that we hear time and again. Indeed, over the past few months I have attended many citizenship ceremonies to welcome several of our new Australians. People from all over the world now call New South Wales home. I want to be able to share this important story every day. I am calling on members to join me tomorrow at 5.00 p.m. at Lakemba to take part in the Walk for Respect.

I feel that I speak on behalf of everyone here in saying that all Australians are beneficiaries of multiculturalism and that diversity strengthens our nation. Other nations look to us as a unique example of how diversity can be made to work. Today we recognise Harmony Day, an event that seeks to do what its name implies—promote harmony and inclusion throughout our entire community. It is a message of love, compassion, inclusion and multiculturalism that we must promote each and every day. Many of our forebears worked on very big infrastructure projects such as the Snowy Hydro. They worked, ate and socialised together. That is how our multicultural nation came about.

We work very hard to ensure that people are treated with respect. That is why we must stand against the shameful proposed changes to section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act that are intended to attack multicultural Australia and its values. Earlier today, alongside Labor leader Luke Foley and Ernest Wong, I attended a press conference—we have been holding a number of press conferences—to call on the Berejiklian Government to stand up to its Federal counterparts and stop the changes to the Racial Discrimination Act. I implore the Premier to follow in the footsteps of former Premiers O'Farrell and Baird in rejecting these changes and to stand against the bigotry and idiocy that is coming from One Nation supporters. [*Time expired.*]

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (15:31): I thank the member for Canterbury for bringing this issue to the attention of the House. On Tuesday 21 March people across Australia came together to celebrate Harmony Day, which is dedicated to celebrating Australia's cultural diversity and is timed to coincide with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The John Howard Coalition Government introduced Harmony Day in 1999. The message of Harmony Day is that everyone belongs. The day is aimed at encouraging people to participate in their community, respect cultural and religious diversity, and foster a sense of belonging for everyone.

Some interesting data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics highlights the success of diversity in our country. Around 45 per cent of Australians were born overseas or have at least one parent who was. We identify with about 300 ancestries. Since 1945 more than 7.5 million people have migrated to Australia. Some 85 per cent of Australians agree that multiculturalism is a good thing for Australia. Apart from English, the most common languages spoken here are Mandarin, Italian, Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Vietnamese, Tagalog—the language of the Philippines—Spanish and Hindi. More than 60 Indigenous languages are spoken in Australia. In New South Wales, we come from 245 ancestries and 125 religions, and we speak 215 languages. These statistics speak for themselves and highlight the incredible work of our Government to promote diversity.

Our migration story is a hallmark. I applaud our community leaders and the work of our diverse communities. There are many unsung heroes among us. They are the everyday mums, dads and professionals who contribute to a more cohesive society. Our Premier's story is an inspiration. The child of migrants, she worked hard and now holds the highest office in our State. Our commitment to Harmony Day was highlighted by the Premier's Harmony Dinner held on 16 March 2017. On the night, the Government recognised the achievements of many community leaders and organisations that have done great work to promote social harmony. One example of such great work is the Moving Forward Together project, which was established by volunteers to plant the seed of harmony and cooperation between organisations and individuals. Their annual harmony poster and songwriting competitions have been highly successful, attracting between 4,000 and 6,000 entries from school students. The 2016 theme "Stop, Think, Consider Others" was particularly successful. We should never forget that in this country there is much more that unites us than divides us.

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (15:34): I acknowledge the shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, the member for Canterbury, and thank her for proposing Harmony Day, which was celebrated on Tuesday 21 March, as today's matter of public importance. It was a significant occasion for many in my electorate of Bankstown. I had the opportunity to attend wonderful community harmony celebrations at Yagoona Public School that morning. I also had the pleasure of attending a lovely cultural dance and celebration at the

Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre. Many members of the community were asked to bring their traditional cultural dress along to the event. It was wonderful to sing along with the many Australians of Chinese or Arabic heritage who were there. The many different cultures from which Australians come have made our community much richer. In response to the member for Heathcote, however: Premier Berejiklian's story would be inspirational were it not for the fact that she does not have the courage to stand up to her Federal colleagues and oppose the watering down of section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act.

Mr Mark Coure: That is ridiculous. Shame on you!

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK: The member for Oatley can tell his constituents that the Premier's story would be far more inspirational if she had the courage to stand up to her Federal colleagues—as her predecessor Barry O'Farrell did in his time. He stood up to his Federal counterparts when he saw that their behaviour was going to divide our community. That is what is happening now with our Prime Minister in Federal Parliament. It is interesting to note that Harmony Day was on Tuesday—the very day the Federal Liberals introduced their attempt to water down section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act. It was appalling. The Prime Minister chose the very day our schools and communities around this nation come together to celebrate our harmonious community and our rich cultural diversity to showcase how much he cares about our multicultural community by introducing his disgusting watering down of legislation that has protected the rights of people of diverse backgrounds for many years. As I have said, the Premier's story would be far more inspirational if she had the courage to condemn the actions of her Federal colleagues.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Before I call the member for Oatley, I remind members that the topic of this discussion is Harmony Day. I am not seeing too much harmony in the Chamber at the moment. Participants in this debate will be more respectful.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:38): By leave: Harmony Day is a day of reflection and a day to celebrate the success of multiculturalism in this country. Throughout Sydney, New South Wales and Australia people speak 200 languages and come from thousands of cultures. My multicultural story is similar to millions of others. My grandparents came to Australia immediately after World War II to start a new life. My grandparents were from different ends of the globe: from Ireland, Egypt and Malta. Their parents—my great-grandparents, who were unknown to each other—settled in Australia Avenue, Matraville. Opposite ends of the globe came to opposite ends of Australia Avenue, where my parents met before getting married and settling in my electorate of Oatley.

Their story is no different to the millions of other stories of multiculturalism. They came to Australia for a better life to ensure the next generation was brought up without the challenges that my grandparents and great-grandparents lived with. They worked hard to put food on the table and a roof over their head. Harmony Day is a day to celebrate the many communities that make up Australia, and in particular Sydney. We are a nation of multiculturalism—a nation that was built by the working men and women from different corners of the globe. We might be from different cultures and different ends of the globe but there is a common thread that ties us all together, and we are here building what this country is today—and that is a great country. I support multiculturalism—I am glad those on the other side have stopped interjecting through my speech—and I also support Harmony Day. It is a day to celebrate the success of multiculturalism that has made Australia the great place it is today.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (15:41): By leave: I appreciate leave being granted to speak about Harmony Day, such an important event. People in this place often hear me speak about harmony and the effects of community. Our better Australia is an Australia where every single person plays a part. We have talked about the different types of stories but our 24 million stories ultimately come together to create the great Australia story. Whether you trace your heritage all the way back to Mungo Man or Mungo Lady or to people who arrived only a couple of weeks ago, who we become as a nation is the sum of their parts. I have a child, as do many others here. He is working on some Harmony Day projects, and what he said was amazing. I know that anybody who has children would hear them saying, "It's not Harmony Day today; it's Harmony Day every day." When you hear it from the mouths of babes you know it is the truth.

Because we have the privilege that others do not have, we have a responsibility in this place to do everything we can to ensure that we live in the most harmonious of societies. There will be people who try to divide us but we cannot let that become the main narrative because the narrative that we share in Australia is better than that. I proudly sit in this Chamber with many other people whose own personal stories return in some way to migration. Anybody can do well—good luck to them—and that is a wonderful thing. That is what Australia is. Let us be clear: Harmony Day is not just for people who do not speak English; Harmony Day is for everybody. That is our Australia—where every single person belongs and is valued and whose contribution is important. I know there is not a member in this place who would argue against that. We need to make sure that we do not let

comments that are divisive and offensive and that incite hatred go through to the keeper: When we let such comments go through to the keeper, we are actually giving a green light for more than that.

That is not our better Australia, the Australia that we help to shape. Every member who walks through these doors and sits on these important benches knows we all have a role to play in building a better Australia. A Harmony Day event celebrates first and foremost the fact that we are Australian and we bring different threads to the tapestry. That is what makes a tapestry beautiful. It is not one particular thread, or one thread over another; it is the interweaving of the threads so that regardless of what you believe in, regardless of what colour you are or of whether you trace your heritage back to Mungo Man or somebody who came to help build the Snowy Mountains Scheme, all of those threads combine to make our better Australia—a place we all celebrate. On Harmony Day we see the beauty of it. It starts with a smoking ceremony and people proudly dressed in costumes that perhaps their grandmothers would have worn. You also see the diggers who fought for us as a nation. That is what Harmony Day is. It is not about a person who does not speak English; it is about every single one of our threads combining to say, "This is the Australia that we know and love. This is the better Australia that we can be."

My colleague and very good friend, the member for Canterbury and shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, spoke of the Walk for Respect tomorrow in Lakemba. We will walk from near the pub in Lakemba to Parry Park. We will finish off with a community picnic, face painting for the kids and jumping castles. It is not a protest or demonstration. It is a walk for respect and along the way we will see people who do not get many others speaking up for them. My favourite part is that we will start with a smoking ceremony and along the way we will have people of all different cultures. I am hoping the bagpipes, the Irish dancers, the Korean group, the boys from Belmore with their school group drumming band and the Polynesian dancers from Wiley Park will all come along. That is what harmony is. We do not need to demonise people because they are a bit different, because difference is all right. The most important thing is that we unite under the principles of a better Australia. We do that only when we are together and we value every thread.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (15:46): By leave: I make a short contribution to this matter of public importance. Harmony Day is 21 March, and it is a day when we celebrate all that make up the Australian people, all the different cultures and peoples who have made this nation of ours. Since World War II something like 7,500 people have emigrated to Australia. In this country of ours all those cultures have gone into this great melting pot. We have been lucky enough in Australia to have taken the very best of the English culture, such as their common law, and rejected other parts, such as their class system. We have taken the best of other cultures. Because of that, Australia is what it is today and a great place in which to live. We recognise that Australia is made up of many different cultures. For anyone to say that one culture or one race is better than another one is absolutely ridiculous.

This country has been built on immigration, whether it be, as the member for Lakemba said, 40,000 years ago when our Indigenous population, according to some scientific thought, walked across the land bridge of Indonesia to settle in Australia, or whether it be the first fleet and thereafter. The great Snowy Mountains Scheme was mentioned and the post-World War II boom in immigration which this country needed. It is a vast land and we needed people to settle here, make it their home and make something of their lives and something of this country. Without all those people coming here, we would not be the wonderful place we are today. Harmony Day is a day when we can reflect on that, do away with the old prejudices that were in existence when I was a child, and embrace the cultures that we have.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (15:48): By leave: Harmony Day is one of the most important days in our calendar. It is the time to reflect and show how successful multiculturalism has been in Australia. It is an experiment which started a number of years ago but it has continued to give great benefits to everyone living in this country and provides an example to the rest of the world of how different people can live together. I will use the example of my own electorate of Prospect and touch on the number of different nationalities and the number of people from different cultures who live in Prospect and the surrounding areas. In the north is the largest Tamil community, certainly in Western Sydney if not Australia, made up of people who fled Sri Lanka during the civil war and economic migrants who have come here from Tamil Nadu. There is also a large Indian population in the northern suburbs of Prospect, and those people have come from throughout India and the subcontinent. A significant Irish population has been there since the establishment of the British colony.

A large number of English migrants still live around Toongabbie and the surrounding suburbs. A big Maltese population came here in the 1950s and helped to build many of the northern areas around Toongabbie and Greystanes, and they still play a significant part in the farms there. A significant number of Filipinos live around Blacktown. Sudanese people have fled the civil war in Sudan and now live in the Blacktown area. A large number of Palestinians and people from Lebanon and other parts of the Middle East live in the electorate. People with an Italian background live in Bossley Park. Italian people came here as farmers, and to work in industries and on the Snowy Mountains Scheme, and have made parts of Prospect their home.

A large number of Chaldeans and Assyrians who fled Saddam Hussein live in the Prospect electorate, as well as 5,000 or so people who came here from Northern Iraq after fleeing from Islamic State. We also have a large South American population from a number of different countries, and increasing Vietnamese and Chinese populations. Then, of course, we have Indigenous Australians, who have been in that area since before the New South Wales colony began, and a sizeable number still live in the area. I have just mentioned more than 15 different nationalities, and they all live in harmony.

To prove that multiculturalism works, I ask: When was the last major racism-related riot in Western Sydney? I cannot think of one—not in my lifetime—and I do not believe anyone here could think of one ever. All these races have lived in harmony. It proves that harmony works in Western Sydney and it works in Australia. We must do whatever we can to ensure it stays that way. It saddens me that the Federal Government is talking about changing section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act, but I know that we will all work together to ensure that harmony is maintained. [*Time expired.*]

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (15:51): By leave: I join all members in this place in supporting Harmony Day, on which we celebrate the differences that make us the same in this country. Those differences enrich our country and our local communities. Many Italian immigrants live in my electorate of Wollondilly. There is also a big Estonian community, and they have certainly enriched the electorate of Wollondilly along with many, many other nationalities. I am sure that enrichment is the case in electorates of many members in this Chamber.

I also mention the Indigenous people. As someone with Indigenous heritage, from the Awabakal nation, I recognise the Aboriginal community as well. I know a number of members in this place have Aboriginal heritage and it is close to my heart and my family's heart. My mother's mother—my grandmother—was part of the stolen generations, together with her brother. They were considered at the time to be half-castes, and they were taken away. They were separated and it was only later in life that they were able to find one another. In many parliaments in many places, we as governments have said sorry for those past wrongs by former governments and former communities, but when we speak about Harmony Day we must not forget the Indigenous people of this country. I support Harmony Day and commend it to the House.

Ms KATRINA HODGKINSON (Cootamundra) (15:54): By leave: I add my two cents' worth to this matter of public importance relating to Harmony Day. I represent the large electorate of Cootamundra, which consists of 35,000 square kilometres in the Central West, southern and Riverina parts of rural New South Wales. It is a melting pot. It might come as some surprise to some members of this Chamber to know that we have some reasonably sized mixed communities in the electorate, particularly in the township of Young, which has a very strong Muslim population. The Muslim population has been an intrinsic part of Young for a couple of generations and they perform wonderful work within our community.

The Muslim population first started to come to Young about 30 to 40 years ago, primarily as fruit harvesters in this rich agricultural part of regional New South Wales, and I am very proud to say that in my time as the member for Cootamundra—and as the member for Burrinjuck for many years before the redistribution of electorates—Young has been in my electorate since 2007, following the second of three distributions. I was very pleased to welcome Young into the electorate and I am very proud to be able to say that in that time Young North Public School has achieved the Harmony Award on two separate occasions.

Mr Mark Coure: Very impressive.

Ms KATRINA HODGKINSON: It is impressive. As the member for Oatley rightly says, it is very impressive. Young North Public School is not without its own challenges. There are some social issues surrounding that area and the headmasters of that school have been absolutely extraordinary. I visited the school a couple of weeks ago to sit down with the headmaster and some staff and students to discuss, in a quiet sort of way, activities of the school and to see how things were going. I continue to be impressed with the staff at that school, who go above and beyond their duty not only to teach the students and to give them the best possible education but also to ensure extra services are provided that those students might need, such as counselling and making sure students get home safely from appointments. Suffice it to say, for Young North Public School to receive that Harmony Award on two separate occasions—in a small country town in the middle of New South Wales—is a great achievement. I am extremely proud of the staff and students as their local member and I congratulate them.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (15:57): By leave: I will use my contribution to this matter of public importance as a reply to an article called "The Great Divide", which was published last weekend in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Both my parents served in the Australian Defence Force, I went to the local Catholic school, I played football for the local team, and I am the first member of my family to get a university degree. I worked hard and I saved to build my

first home. I enjoy a beer and a chicken schnitzel at the local pub, and I am the Liberal member for Penrith. My electorate office is on the corner of High Street and Station Street in Penrith—and, yes, it is the High Street, and Station Street does lead to the train station. It is the coalface of Australian politics. It is real and dynamic. It is often confronting, but it is always inspiring.

The most important things are hard work and respect. Flashy words in Penrith very rarely get anyone anywhere—they fade fast in my community. People either get the job done or they do not. Somewhere in life I picked up the phrase "talk straight and listen hard". As a local Member of Parliament, I live by it. In communities like Penrith, so-called mainstream politics must stand and fight against the populists. The populists are quick to identify a problem and even quicker to blame a minority group for its existence and take extreme actions, yet they never seem capable of making the hard calls to deliver a solution.

In the 20 years I have been a member of the Liberal Party I have not yet found a false prophet, independent or micro-party who has delivered a thing for Penrith other than stereotypical offerings and disappointment. They have not built a school, redeveloped a hospital, supported a police station, widened a road, built a bridge, upgraded a train station, released land for new homes, supported small businesses or delivered the economic conditions that have lowered the unemployment rate in Penrith to 4 per cent. These things only ever get delivered in Australia by the sensible centre. The sensible centre understands that you can have economic progress and a growing population. The sensible centre also understands that you can have a diverse community and maintain Australian values of mateship and a fair go.

This happens because communities such as Penrith are not reactionary. They wholeheartedly reject extremism and want their politicians to do the same. Penrith has welcomed workers from all over the world—from Greece, Italy, Croatia, Malta, Lebanon, Syria, Vietnam, China and India—bringing communities together. Over time the countries of origin become less relevant and those people become contributors to our communities—builders, labourers, brickies, concreters, doctors, dentists, bakers, truck drivers and teachers. They make a massive contribution to our community. In Penrith it has never been about one's background or religion; it has always been about one's contribution. When the sensible centre of politics is focused on productivity, creating jobs, wage growth, improved health and education outcomes, reactionary issues become irrelevant, populism wanes and, for both sides of this Chamber, voters return. It is time for politicians on both sides of the House to listen hard and talk straight.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (16:00): By leave: I speak on the importance of Harmony Day. Everybody in this Chamber would agree that Australia's prosperity and future is dependent upon the wonderful diversity of our community. In Parramatta approximately 55 per cent of residents were born overseas. If you want to see an example of the prosperity and good things that multiculturalism has to offer, we need look no further than Parramatta. We have some wonderful communities, including the Indian-Australian community. I pay tribute to the Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Sanstha [BAPS] community in my area, which has a temple in my area and looks forward to the expansion of its temple further west. The community has purchased a new block of land on which it hopes to set up a great temple in Western Sydney.

I also pay tribute to the Asian community in my electorate, especially the Chinese community. They do a wonderful job, especially the Buddha's Light International Association [BLIA]. They also have a temple in my electorate. They are famous for the Nan Tien Institute and the Nan Tien Temple near Wollongong. They are certainly one of the most organised community segments. I pay tribute to the Nan Tien Institute for their wonderful work at assisting in the establishment of the first degree program in Buddhism. The Australian-Lebanese community also does a fantastic job in my electorate.

The Australian Maronite community and its co-cathedral, Our Lady of Lebanon, is in my electorate. The community is doing a wonderful job and I pay tribute to the leadership of Bishop Tarabay for his continued work within the community. I look forward to celebrating mass with him on Sunday at Our Lady of Lebanon church. A growing segment of our community is the Korean-Australian community, which is doing wonderful things, setting up many churches in cooperation with the traditional Anglican churches. I am sure everyone in this place will agree that Australia welcomes anyone who wants to make a productive contribution to this country and to this State. Some of our best Australians were born overseas or have heritage from overseas lands. Parramatta is an example of a harmonious community and should be held in the highest esteem. I commend Harmony Day to the House.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (16:03): In reply: I acknowledge all the members who have contributed to discussion on the matter of public importance in relation to Harmony Day. I thank the members for Heathcote, Bankstown, Oatley, Lakemba, Myall Lakes, Prospect, Wollondilly, Cootamundra, Penrith and Parramatta. I thank them for their contributions and the stories they have told of people within their electorates and also of their contributions as promoters of multiculturalism. I am disappointed that the Minister for Multiculturalism did not contribute. I take this opportunity to urge Multicultural NSW, an independent statutory

authority, to make a public statement standing up for multiculturalism and standing against the comments that Pauline Hanson and her supporters have been making, particularly against the Islamic community.

I urge the Chair of Multicultural NSW to make a strong statement in good faith in the same terms as his predecessor, Mr Stepan Kerkyasharian, who would come out on many occasions and fight for multiculturalism and diversity. I urge the chairman of this independent statutory authority to make those statements. I again thank everyone who has contributed. I urge people to come with us tomorrow for Walk for Respect. I thank all the people who have contributed to making New South Wales the wonderful State that it is and who have contributed to not only our diversity but also our schools. A number of languages are spoken and taught in our schools because of the strong advocacy of our multicultural leaders.

I pay tribute to our pioneers—those people who, speaking little English, arrived in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s, before we had the Racial Discrimination Act and when we did not have the rights and laws we have today. I pay tribute to those pioneers who stood up against the bigots and racists who called them names. Many of them changed their surnames so they would be accepted, and they called on their politicians to undertake law reform 40 years ago. I would like to commend those ethnic leaders and I thank the Labor Party, our former Prime Minister the late Gough Whitlam and former Premier Neville Wran who was the Minister for Ethnic Affairs for their contribution to multiculturalism.

Community Recognition Statements

PREMIER'S REGIONAL COMMUNITIES MEDAL RECIPIENT ROBBIE MACKINLAY

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (16:07): Congratulations to Robbie Mackinlay, Cricket NSW Murray Region development manager, on receiving the Premier's Regional Communities Medal for his contribution to cricket. Robbie received the award from Premier Gladys Berejiklian at the Premier's Harmony Day Dinner for establishing the Albury Bhutanese Cricket team, which is made up of young Bhutanese refugees. He helped build up the team, sourced playing equipment through donations and a government sports grant, and created a positive and welcoming environment in the local cricket community.

Robbie helped organise the first national Bhutanese Big Bash League T20 event, which was held in Albury in January, with participating refugee teams travelling from Adelaide, Cairns, Sydney and Tasmania to compete. This event was a great success. Robbie is involved in coaching at local and elite levels from Holbrook and Lavington to the Riverina Cricket Academy, Cricket Albury Wodonga Country Academy and the NSW Indigenous Imparja Cup team. I thank Robbie Mackinlay for his vision and commitment to cricket. He is great asset to our community and a very deserving recipient of the Premier's Regional Communities Medal.

WORLD'S GREATEST SHAVE

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (16:08): Constable Stephanie Swan from the Marrickville Local Area Command was one of hundreds of people who took part in the Leukaemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave earlier this month. The Leukaemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave began in 1998 and is now one of Australia's largest fundraising events, with people like Constable Swan shaving their head to help fund research into and support for those with blood cancer. I was proud to attend the Greatest Shave event in Marrickville's Alex Trevallion Plaza and to cheer on Constable Swan as she first lost her ponytail and then had the rest of her hair shaved. Not only did Constable Swan raise over \$3,000 to help beat blood cancer, far surpassing her goal, but she looks fantastic with her new hairstyle and has won the cheers of people from all across Marrickville. The Leukaemia Foundation reports that more than 12,000 Australians will develop leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma each year. That is 35 people each and every day, including children. I congratulate Constable Swan, the Leukaemia Foundation and all those in the community who went the shave for a good cause.

KIDNEY RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:09): I commend Deidre and Maurie Stack of Taree who raised funds to assist kidney research through the provision of a scholarship. Their grandson, Jack Wilson, was born with a congenital kidney defect. Through the Rotary Club of Taree on Manning they raised money to fund an Australian Rotary Health PhD scholarship named the Jack Wilson Kidney Research PhD Scholarship. It is expected that a research candidate will be selected later this year. It was World Kidney Day on 9 March. I commend Deidre and Maurie Stack for their hard work.

HARMONY DAY

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:09): I recognise the significant number of Harmony Day events to which I was recently invited, many of which I was able to attend. On 21 March I attended a Harmony Day reception organised by the Lebanese Community Council of New South Wales under the presidency of Liverpool deputy mayor Ali Karnib. The Lebanese Community Council has done significant and useful work in south-west

Sydney for many years. On 22 March I attended Harmony Day celebrations at the Liverpool Girls High School. The school has students from 60 different ethnic and racial backgrounds and is a living example of harmony and diversity. It was a pleasure to attend.

On 24 March I attended the Hoxton Park High School Harmony Day with school captains Chris and Grace as the masters of ceremony. That is another impressive example of multicultural New South Wales. All of these events celebrated cultural diversity. The day coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. I thank the schools for the invitations to attend those events. At none of the events I attended was any support expressed for the Federal Government's changes to section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act.

GLENQUARRY PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:10): I congratulate the Glenquarry Public School on a very effective program aimed at giving students a better idea of what is involved with raising and caring for chickens. The program is part of a broader plan to provide young students with a greater understanding of nature, and how to be responsible citizens. Students take delivery of the birds while still in the egg, and then continue to monitor them through various stages of life as they grow and become either roosters or hens. I commend the program for demonstrating to children the need for caring and responsibility. The aim of this program is to make them understand that eggs do not come from supermarket shelves and that in order to produce eggs chickens need to be nurtured and cared for. It also introduces students to the concept of full lifecycles—how things live and die—which leads to further discussion about nature. It is the smallest school in my electorate but it has a big heart.

NSW HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD RECIPIENT KEN HABAK

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:11): I congratulate an icon of the Illawarra's migrant community and recipient of the 2017 NSW Human Rights Award—Karim Habak, or Ken as he is more commonly known. The award pays tribute to a person who has made a meaningful and lasting contribution to the advancement of human rights and there is no more fitting recipient than Ken Habak. Since arriving with his wife, Salma, from Lebanon in 1970, Ken has set about advancing human rights, largely in a voluntary capacity, for a diverse range of communities, including the Lebanese and Arabic speaking communities.

The long list of offices that he has held includes: founding President of the Australian Lebanese Association; President of the South Coast Lebanese Association; and treasurer and now chairperson of the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra. Ken also founded the first Arabic School for Lebanese Australians in Wollongong, which supported many new migrants with voluntary translation support. He remains a passionate advocate for the rights of individuals and communities in the Illawarra and is a respected voice in and for multicultural communities in our region. Congratulations Ken—this award is well and truly deserved.

LIONS CLUB REGIONAL YOUTH OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:12): Recently I had the privilege of attending the Lions Club Regional Youth of the Year Awards held in Yamba. This program is designed to help develop leadership and other citizenship qualities in young people. The candidates are judged on academic attainments, sportsmanship, general knowledge and public speaking, among other things. I congratulate Crystal Piper of Maclean High School on being named this year's winner and Jordan Smith of Grafton High School, who won the Lions Club regional award for public speaking. They are two outstanding young people from my electorate to whom I wish every success. It is testament to a bright future with young people of this calibre taking leadership roles.

WE CARE UNITING

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:13): Every journey begins with the first step. We Care Uniting began in a garden shed in 2011 with a few people sharing their no longer needed children's clothes with families in need. As the word spread more people brought gifts and more families in need received a helping hand. Contributions expanded to nappies and then to cots and prams and the range of goods continues to increase. The Central Coast region is burdened with poverty and need with more than 9,000 children living below the poverty line. We cannot just ignore these children. The program is driven by overwhelming need and the humanitarian imperative that when a person suffers We Care experience the compassion to reach out and help. We Care Uniting is 100 per cent volunteer based. It takes thousands of hours to collect, sort, pack and distribute everything that it gives to vulnerable families. Volunteers are the strength of their program and many people devote their time and energy to assisting. Every donation goes to a family in need as part of a package of support from a trained community worker.

REGIONAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING CHALLENGE

Ms KATRINA HODGKINSON (Cootamundra) (16:14): Henry Lawson High School's 2017 science and engineering team in Grenfell has excelled once again by winning the regional Science and Engineering challenge for the eighth consecutive year. The event is run by the Young Rotary Club in conjunction with the University of Newcastle and attracted 170 students from the South West Slopes including West Wyalong, Cootamundra, Grenfell, Boorowa and Young. Through assigned activities, students experience aspects of science and engineering that they would not usually see in their school environment. The goal is to inspire year 10 students to consider a future career in science and engineering by choosing to study the enabling sciences and mathematics in years 11 and 12. The team from the Henry Lawson High School was credited for its teamwork, excellent communication and thoughtful ideas as it progressed through the series of challenges. It constructed a catapult that hurled a ball a whopping 20 metres and developed a Mars rover which conquered a mission to Mars course in an incredible 9.8 seconds.

But the clincher, and a highlight of activity in the challenge, was the bridge building competition where teams were asked to create a bridge that was both strong and light. The students from the Henry Lawson High School may not have produced the lightest bridge but they did have the strongest structure capable of holding five ingots of weight. That carried them to first place in the competition. Congratulations to the participating students and teachers of the Henry Lawson High School on their enduring success. It is testament to its commitment to science programs and its encouragement of students to think outside the box. I wish students well at the State level of the competition to be held in Newcastle. Congratulations also to Young Rotary Club on its enthusiastic support for this annual event, which it has hosted since 2010.

HARMONY DAY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:15): On Tuesday I was delighted to join the National Rugby League to celebrate Harmony Day at Merrylands with more than 100 boys and girls from schools across Western Sydney. Those students participated in the National Rugby League cultural diversity and social inclusion programs last year, including students from the Holroyd Special School in my electorate. Heavy rain caused the event to be postponed for a week, but that did not dampen anyone's enthusiasm. The celebrations included a morning of coaching drills and games of touch footy, followed by delicious food. These fantastic programs focus on teamwork and mutual respect. They include wheelchair rugby league as well as enabling people to play rugby league together, which the students loved. The National Rugby League has a long history of supporting multiculturalism and grassroots rugby league. I commend it for its support for Harmony Day and for promoting the great game of rugby league with local schools to ensure that children with disability from different backgrounds have an opportunity to play sport together.

SURF LIFE SAVING CENTRAL COAST

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:16): I congratulate the inaugural members of the Surf Life Saving Central Coast [SLSCC] Unmanned Aerial Vehicle [UAV] Surf Rescue Service. On Tuesday 28 February 2017 they were presented with their CASA Remotely Piloted Aircraft [RPA] Operators Certificate at a ceremony in Port Macquarie organised by Little Ripper and Surf Life Saving NSW. Over the past five months James Irwin from Umina, Chris Fillingham from Toowoyn Bay, Michael Lawton from Shelly Beach, Matias Trehwela from North Avoca, Paul Kenny from Terrigal and Brett Beswick from Avoca have undergone extensive training with the Little Ripper lifesaver group.

The training included 14 modules of theory units, an extensive exam on aviation knowledge, a practical flight exam and many hours of supervised flying and specialised beach operations training. This is a significant achievement as it makes this new support operations team the first team Australia-wide to be accredited. This resource will further boost the ability of Surf Life Saving Central Coast to save lives on Central Coast beaches. The new service will significantly assist the Central Coast's 15 surf clubs and branch support operation teams in major search and rescue incidents.

SYDNEY SOUTHERN REGION RESCUE COMPETITION

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:17): I congratulate the Marrickville unit of the State Emergency Service which recently earned first place in the annual Sydney Southern Region Rescue Competition hosted at Allianz Stadium. The entire SES unit has gone from strength to strength in its new world-class headquarters as a result of the great effort and generosity of the former Marrickville Council. Rescue team members were placed third in the competition in 2015 and are now regional champions. The rescue competition is a gruelling 10-hour long test of skill and strength, simulating real-life scenarios such as storm damage, urban search and rescue, and flood rescue. Congratulations to team members Adam Jones, Bridget Canham, Garrett Parker, Alison Tyler, Chris Lowien, Benita Adams and Liam Hogan on their magnificent effort. The team will now proceed to the State

competition in October this year. We wish them the best of luck; they will do us proud. I commend their efforts to the House.

MILTON SHOW

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (16:18): I congratulate and thank the committee of the Milton Show on its 148th year. It presented yet another wonderful show. The Milton show is described as the "drought breaker" and this year was no exception. It poured with rain the day before, on the morning and in the evening. The rodeo had to be cancelled along with a few other events, but generally all the horse events went ahead. The pavilion was at its finest; I have never seen it look better. I congratulate Sarah Smith, a young woman I know for her beautiful iced cakes, and the nationally renowned Eileen Scriven who wins at the *Land* Royal Easter Show with her iced cakes. I congratulate everyone involved in the Milton Show; it is a wonderful show. My kids have been involved with horse events over the years. It was great to see all the members of the Milton-Ulladulla Men's Shed. I congratulate Gloria Scott-Aitken for her prize-winning beautifully crafted pens.

ST JOHNS PARK BOWLING CLUB

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (16:19): The St Johns Park Bowling Club, which has been serving my local community for more than 60 years, will play host to the World Champion of Champion singles event in October this year. International bowls players from far and wide will descend on St Johns Park at that time to take part in this singles championship. These days many people from all ages take to the lawn bowl greens for leisure and competition, and some just to clear their minds and get some fresh air. I am also pleased to report that in time for the singles event in October the St Johns Park Bowling Club will receive \$20,000 from the Department of Sport and Recreation for new scoreboards on the outside greens. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the continued leadership and hard work of Brett Murphy as bowls administrator as well as the efforts of all the staff, board members and players at St Johns Bowling Club. I hope that it continues its great tradition of being one of our local area's top entertainment venues.

ROSE BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (16:20): On 21 March 2017 I joined the year 6 school leaders group from Rose Bay Public School on their visit to the New South Wales Parliament. I always enjoy the visits from young students and I enjoy answering the great questions from them on civics and citizenship. I thank teacher and assistant principal Ms Rebecca Jones, Mr Jason Everett, Miss Georgie Carter and Miss Jasmeen Jacob who joined the students on the day as they learned more about the Parliament. I thank Principal Gai O'Neill for giving year 6 students an opportunity to tour the Chamber. I appreciate the school taking time out of its busy curriculum to visit me. I look forward to continuing to work with the principal, students, teachers and parents in 2017.

TRIBUTE TO LEONIE DAY

Mr JOHN ROBERTSON (Blacktown) (16:20): I congratulate and commend Ms Leonie Day, a local primary school teacher at Marayong Public School, for her 39 years of service to the New South Wales education system and, quite extraordinarily, 39 years of service at the same school. I will quickly read a couple of comments onto the *Hansard* record from colleagues of Ms Day, which highlights the level of respect Ms Day received from her colleagues. Mr Russell Hawkins said, "Leonie is hugely appreciated for her deep commitment to kids and families over a lifetime of tireless efforts supporting kids, staff, families, extended families and principals." The principal Mrs Deborah Bleakley said, "Of particular note are Leonie's outstanding efforts in creating an inclusive environment at Marayong Public School, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity or socio-economic standing. Throughout her work with immigrant and refugee families and students Leonie fosters a sense of belonging and acceptance." I congratulate and commend Leonie Day to this House. I hope she enjoys retirement at the end of term one this year.

BLOOD CANCER FUNDRAISING

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (16:22): I am always pleased to hear about successful local fundraising stories. Today I draw attention to one of the local high schools in my area that recently pledged to support those with blood cancer. The Asquith Boys High School raised a whopping \$4,550 for the Leukaemia Foundation, with 20 students plus a couple of teachers who took the brave step of shaving their heads, in addition to a mufti day that encouraged gold coin donations. Notably, my good friend Sabar Attar, the school captain, the head prefect, Zoltan Snead, and Riley Gibson, the vice-captain, led those other courageous students and sacrificed their hair, shaving it all off to support those who suffer from blood cancer. Amazingly, the vice-captain, Riley Gibson, was able to raise \$1,200 by himself, showing admirable dedication to a good cause. I congratulate the school and those involved in the fundraiser on their incredible work. Creating awareness of such a horrible cancer among young people is something that should be highly praised, and

to have raised such a significant amount is remarkable. I am proud that the Asquith Boys High School is located in my electorate and I am proud of the work that it continues to do to support great causes.

TRIBUTE TO PHILIPPINE CONSUL GENERAL ANNE JALANDOON LOUIS

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (16:23): I pay tribute to the service of the outgoing Philippine Consul General Anne Jalandoon Louis for her incredible service to the Filipino community in New South Wales over the past six years. As a member who represents large communities of Philippine Australians, I have come to know Anne very well in this time. She has served as consul general with distinction and I have grown to greatly admire her leadership, strength and unwavering support of the growing Filipino diaspora in Australia. In particular I note Anne's commitment to forging strong bonds in local communities, in particular, in Western Sydney. We will miss you, Anne. Thank you so much for your service. Thank you for the beautiful scarf I am wearing that you gifted to me yesterday. I say to Ann, "Maraming Salamat Po."

GERRINGONG MEN'S SHED

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:23): On Tuesday 14 March 2017 I had the great honour of presenting the Gerringong Men's Shed with \$12,525 in funding to upgrade its facilities and provide a defibrillator machine. This funding will enable the installation of soundproofing in the recently erected 12 metre by 12 metre metal shed which, in turn, will ease the reverberation levels within this area, making it more comfortable for those using the space. I acknowledge the President of the Gerringong Men's Shed, Ian Woodlands, secretary Laurie Woolcott, and Terry Whelan and Ken Cadogan who all do a tremendous job at the Men's Shed.

I also acknowledge my long-term family friend, Brian Arbury, for his advocacy on this particular project. Men's sheds are a fantastic social initiative that provide a space for men of all ages and from all walks of life to get together, socialise, learn new skills, meet new people and participate in projects that benefit the community. I congratulate Gerringong Men's Shed, which is still in its infancy but which will continue to grow and make an outstanding contribution to our local community.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS MITCHELL

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:25): A few weeks ago I was bowled over when I read in the local newspaper, the *Lakes Mail*, that Thomas Mitchell from Valentine had bowled a perfect 300 score in tenpin bowling. At 11 years old, this made him the youngest person in Australia ever to have bowled a perfect score. To get a perfect score, one has to bowl 12 straight strikes, which he did, despite nerves and a large audience. Thomas is currently in year 6 at the Valentine Public School and has been bowling for six years, though he only took it up seriously less than two years ago. I offer Thomas my sincere congratulations on his achievement. I also recognise his coach, Peter Zambelis, who helped Thomas transition to a modern two-handed grip, which significantly improved his average. Well done, Thomas, and congratulations on being an Aussie record holder.

MARIA TERHAAR 100TH BIRTHDAY

HEATHER COLE 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (16:25): I recognise and congratulate Maria Terhaar, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday with her family and her friends at Borella House, Albury. Maria was born in the Netherlands on 24 February 1917. She was one of 11 children. Maria met her husband, Albert, in Amsterdam while working as a cleaner and a nanny in 1940 during World War II. In 1956 Maria and Albert decided to migrate to Australia with their eight children and arrived at Bonegilla Migrant Centre, Wodonga. During the 1960s the family moved to Melbourne for work but returned to Albury when Albert retired. Maria believes her longevity is due to always looking on the bright side of life and never looking back. Congratulations to Heather Cole, who also celebrated her 100th birthday with friends and family. Heather was born in Northcote, Melbourne, on 10 March 1917, married Geoff in 1936 at St Matthew's Church, Albury, and had four daughters, Beverley, Wendy, Coralie and Julie. We wish Maria and Heather a happy 100th birthday and hope that they enjoyed their special day.

EARLWOOD BUSINESS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (16:26): I acknowledge the important work of the Earlwood Business Chamber of Commerce and commend it for its work and its strong advocacy. Small businesses are the lifeblood of my community. The Earlwood Business Chamber of Commerce recently raised many important issues when I addressed its meeting a few weeks ago, including access to public transport, local road congestion, the need to focus on local job creation, setting up community hubs, and issues surrounding community renewal and revival. This includes more community involvement of local business chambers in respect to State planning policy development, regulation bodies and increased utilisation of existing infrastructure and incubators. I know that the Earlwood Business Chamber of Commerce will continue to champion these causes and I stand alongside it. I thank the Earlwood Business Chamber of Commerce and its executive for all their work. We need to work

together with the local council to ensure that we get the Earlwood Festival back in Earlwood and involve all our community members. We will fight strong.

OPERA BY THE LAKE

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:27): I inform the House that a crowd of more than 700 enjoyed the second annual Opera by the Lake on Saturday 4 March. There is no event like it on the mid North Coast—a magnificent display of opera talent against the beautiful setting of Wallis Lake. The audience gave the performance a standing ovation and despite the threat of rain refused to depart early. In its second year, the success of the event is testament to the number of people pulling the strings to make it all work, primarily from the Rotary Club of Great Lakes. They were supported by two Liberal-Nationals grants totalling \$23,000, including an incubator start-up grant.

The sound was perfect as organisers brought a technician from Sydney, who specialises in opera music. The professional set-up was also complemented thanks to Nyaree Donnelly of the Great Lakes Creative Network. Busloads of people travelled from Sydney to attend the event. One bus travelled to Gloucester after the show to continue its tour of the mid-North Coast and another saw the sites of the Great Lakes on the *Amaroo* cruise and had a barbecue at the Bullring swimming pool. The President of the Rotary Club, Mr Brian Bruton, said the event will continue with the current aim being to develop a core following. I had the pleasure of attending the event and I cannot wait to see what the organisers pull off in 2018.

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (16:28): For 40 years the Redfern Legal Centre has been a beacon of justice for disadvantaged and marginalised people across inner Sydney. The centre operates with a small paid staff, law students getting real life experience and volunteers, academics, community workers and activists working together for access to justice. Vulnerable people get help with a wide range of legal problems including tenancy, housing, health services, employment, consumer and money difficulties, domestic violence, policing, discrimination and government. Outreach services help international TAFE and postgraduate students.

When established in March 1977, Redfern was the first community legal centre in New South Wales and only the second in Australia. Sadly, community legal centres are facing massive Federal funding cuts. They are gearing up with fundraising programs underway and I am proud to support Redfern's funding campaigns. I thank all those who have made Redfern such a vital place over the years. Everyone involved should be proud of their service and history helping those most in need.

CAITLIN AND ZACHARY GOODARD SOCCER SCHOLARSHIPS

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:29): It is with much pleasure that I recognise Silverdale twins Caitlin and Zachary Goodard, who have accepted a full scholarship to play soccer in the United States. The talents of the 17-year-olds were spotted during a recent tour of San Diego and Dallas, where they were taking part in showcase tournaments. Caitlin will study education and Zac will study an athletics degree at Sterling College in Kansas. This is a dream come true for both of them. A number of other colleges were interested in offering the twins places, which is a great testament to their talents and abilities. I am also pleased to inform the House that the twins will complete their Higher School Certificates before embarking on this fantastic opportunity early next year. I am certain both will be excellent ambassadors for our region and I look forward to tracking their progress over the coming years.

PHYSIO PLUS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:30): I recognise an outstanding service in my electorate, Physio Plus, which has been providing quality physical rehabilitation to residents of the Northern Rivers for more than two decades. They have evolved from primarily providing physiotherapy services to becoming a comprehensive provider of allied health services, including physiotherapy, exercise physiology, paediatric occupational therapy, pain management and many others. Physio Plus was the well-deserved winner of a 2016 NSW Business Chamber of Commerce Award in the health and aged care category. As an unexpected patient there recently myself due to a netball injury, I was blown away by the professionalism, expertise and kindness of the staff. I can assure the House that its facilities are also world class. With a friendly administration team and a highly experienced clinical team, we in my electorate are incredibly lucky to have such a quality and community-focused business in our backyard.

TERRIGAL ELECTORATE ARTISTS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:31): Local artists in my electorate have been given an opportunity recently to display their artwork. Simone Dennis, who is the owner of the Ruby Samadhi Gallery at Kincumber, has provided exhibition space and assistance to young artists under the age of 30. It has been a chance for these

emerging artists to display their artistic flair and creativity. Artworks of different style, size, medium and theme were on display for four weeks throughout February. Natalie Verriest, one of the exhibiting artists, recently spoke of the need for support from galleries to help young artists get up and go. Whilst it is easier to self-promote in the age of digital media, real-life exhibitions give artists the opportunity to connect and network with members of the community. I congratulate all those involved in allowing young artists to get their feet in the door. This is a great community-led initiative aimed at enabling young people to kickstart their art career. Well done to Simone Dennis of the Ruby Samadhi Gallery at Kincumber.

WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' EMERGENCY CENTRE

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:32): I draw the attention of the House to the important work of the Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre [WAGEC], which is based in Redfern. WAGEC started nearly 40 years ago as a small inner city drop-in centre, assisting women and girls in crisis. It has grown to deliver a range of activities from early intervention to offering crisis accommodation and support services to women, children, young people and families who are experiencing or who are at risk of homelessness and/or domestic and family violence across the city and inner west. I was very pleased that WAGEC was the recipient of a Community Building Partnership grant this year, which will fund upgrades to its facilities. The project will revamp an outdoor space to assist with client support and services. I commend the work of its chief executive officer, Helen Silvia, and the entire WAGEC team for their commitment and work to empower clients and provide them with support in times of need.

GALSTON VILLAGE PHARMACY AND GALSTON NEWSAGENCY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (16:33): I recognise the staff at the Galston Village Pharmacy and Galston Newsagency, who acted quickly to help Kristie Cavaleri when she was having an anaphylactic shock to a prescribed antibiotic. Kylie Pace, who works at the Galston Newsagency, saw Kristie in the supermarket and noticed that she looked unwell. Kylie walked Kristie to the pharmacy and notified the staff of how unwell Kristie seemed. Following the realisation that Kristie was having an anaphylactic shock, the pharmacy staff acted quickly to administer an EpiPen until the ambulance arrived. The attentive and considerate nature of Kylie Pace from the newsagency and the immediate and fast-thinking help from the pharmacy staff is reflective of the kind and helpful spirit of the local community that I am proud to represent. I thank the staff and community members who helped during this emergency for their amazing assistance. I wish Kristie Cavaleri a speedy recovery.

INDIAN DIASPORA COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:34): I recognise the Indian Diaspora Council of Australia and in particular the event it held on Saturday 18 March at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre. This was an event to commemorate the centenary of the abolition of the indenture system involving what amounted to slave labour by Indians in many parts of the British Empire, including South Africa, the Caribbean, Mauritius and, most significantly for my electorate, Fiji. Many of my constituents of Fijian-Indian background have ancestors who were "girmityas". The practice was ended in 1917 after a campaign led by Gandhi.

An end to the practice was agreed to by London only because they desperately wanted more Indian help for the British Empire to fight other empires in the mad and abysmal carnage of the First World War. Australian commercial interests, represented by Mr Knox, argued against the abolition of indenture—they were making good money from it. Girmity was a central feature of Indian experience in Fiji and is still an important part of the cultural background and history of Fijian-Indian communities in Sydney and Liverpool. I congratulate the organisers on the work done for the event, including Dr Satish Rai and Anup Kumar.

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:34): Members of the Myall Lakes community have gone above and beyond to clear our electorate of garbage as part of Clean Up Australia Day. More than 120 people turned up to participate in the small community of Old Bar alone. Pastor Gary Woolnough of the Old Bar Beachside International Network of Churches called off the church's regular 4.00 p.m. Sunday service on Sunday 6 March. Instead, the congregation came together to participate in Clean Up Australia Day and members of the Old Bar community were invited to lend a helping hand. Gary reported that they were able to cover most of Old Bar by dividing the town and the participants into sections.

The community collected two full trailer loads of rubbish. I have heard similar stories coming from right around my electorate where hundreds used the day to take part in a selfless task. Schools also joined in the initiative with students and teachers clearing their grounds and nearby roadsides. Students from pre-kindergarten to year 6 at the Manning Adventist School spent some time clearing rubbish from Bucketts Way, while other

community groups such as the Friends of Browns Creek cleared rubbish from our dams and creeks. Everyone who took part should be thoroughly proud of their contribution.

TRIBUTE TO SALLY HILL

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (16:35): I pay tribute to the extraordinary commitment of Ms Sally Hill to the State's public education system. I place on record my appreciation and thanks for her tireless works and effort. In December last year Sally Hill was recognised by the Department of Education for the extraordinary achievement of teaching in our public school system for 64 years. Sally spent 34 of those years teaching at the Canterbury South Public School. I congratulate Sally and admire her dedication and her achievements in educating multiple generations of local students from my electorate. Sally's commitment is a simple demonstration of her compassion for all her students and their families.

Teachers are one of the most important people in our society and local community. It is important to celebrate the dedication, hard work, commitment and compassion of all teachers. I attended the Canterbury South Public School and it brings me great joy to see that the school is still a place filled with dedicated educators who really do make a difference in local children's lives. I understand that Sally will finally enjoy her retirement. I wish her well for her future and thank her again for her years of service.

TRIBUTE TO PAIGE WILSON

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:36): I recognise the great achievements of Paige Wilson, one of Wollondilly's rising sporting stars, from the Frensham School at Mittagong. Paige has proven herself as a talented high jumper after she switched from equestrian to athletics four years ago. Paige's parents are national titleholders in Australian stock horse events and campdrafting. Up until the age of 13, Paige won various national and State equestrian titles. When Paige commenced at Frensham in 2012 she decided to focus on athletics and high jump. Under the guidance of her coach, Michael Hamly-Harris, Paige has won three national high jump titles. She won her first title at Townsville in 2014, her second at Melbourne in 2015 and her third at Canberra last year. During these competitions she also set new high jump records and secured State titles. Her goals for the future are to make the Australian team for the 2018 Commonwealth Games as well as being part of many Australian teams. I wish Paige all the best in her future endeavours and commend the Frensham School for supporting her.

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SYDNEY

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:34): I inform the House about the work of Soroptimist International Sydney, which is part of a global movement to improve the lives of women and girls. I recently joined members of the organisation at the presentation of the Soroptimist Sydney Education Grants for Girls. I congratulate the grant recipients from my electorate of Newtown: Tabassum Ghani, Alexandria Park Community School; Aliki Tsopanian, Dulwich Hill School of Visual Arts and Design; Omull-Baneen Moosawee, Holroyd High School; Bilkisu Koroma and Sarah Le, Marrickville High School; Keiko Grantham, Sydney Secondary School; Sara Nazar, Tempe High School; and Beate Akhter, Newtown High School of the Performing Arts. I thank Doreen Todd and Janet Scott from the Soroptimist International Executive Committee, past President Nerida Murray, current President Lyn Moir and all members of Soroptimist International Sydney. It is wonderful that Soroptimist International Sydney provides these grants to promising young women in inner city and inner west secondary schools to assist them to complete their final years of schooling.

Private Members' Statements

KURDISTAN AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:39): Tonight I wish to address issues of importance to Kurdish constituents of mine, in particular those concerned and interested in the area covered by the Kurdistan Regional Government [KRG]. The capital of the KRG is Erbil. It is located in what some would describe as northern Iraq. Kurdistan is probably best known to Australia as being the source of Peshmergas—Kurdish freedom fighters who previously fought Saddam Hussein's regime and have more recently been the most effective on-the-ground military force opposing Daesh, as it is known. Australians may be more familiar with Daesh by the English acronym ISIS. I have many Kurdish constituents, some of whom were part of an earlier generation of Peshmergas. Appropriately, the official KRG representative in Australia, Haval Syan, has his official office in Liverpool, above which the Kurdish flag flies proudly. The office is diagonally opposite my electorate office.

This month marks the twenty-ninth anniversary of one horrific event in Kurdish history. On 26 March 1988, Saddam Hussein's forces launched a chemical weapons attack on the town of Halabja in an eastern part of the KRG. It is worth remembering—because many in what we call the West fail to remember it—that those chemical weapons were largely supplied to Saddam Hussein by the West. He was of course, the West's agent in Iraq's war against Iran.

At about 3 p.m. on 16 March, Iraqi jets commenced dropping chemical weapons on the town, reportedly leaving a smell of sweet apples. Five thousand non-combatant men, women and children died within only minutes of exposure, with a further 7,000 being injured. It has been described by Human Rights Watch as an act of genocide. That seems an accurate description to me of what happened. That word can also be used to describe operation Al-Anfal by Saddam Hussein's regime against the Kurdish people, bearing in mind the deaths, injuries and displacements that were caused by it.

The significance of Halabja for Kurds cannot be underestimated. I came to understand that when I journeyed to Kurdistan in 2013 to participate in the KRG's commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Halabja attack. I flew into Erbil, and subsequently flew to Slemani—also known as Sulaymaniyah—which was a focus of the Kurdish uprising in 1991. I saw there the hall of mirrors, which is a hallway lined with 182,000 shards of glass, each one representing each victim of the Al-Anfal campaign. The ceiling has 5,000 lights, each one representing a Kurdish village destroyed in Al-Anfal. There also were real and replica prison cells and torture chambers. We subsequently drove to Halabja for the formal commemoration of the attack.

As I have indicated, the gassing at Halabja was one part of the Al-Anfal campaign. It was pursued at the end of the Iran-Iraq war, which ended in August 1988. The operation commenced in February 1988. The operation was spearheaded by Saddam Hussein's cousin, Ali Hassan Al-Majid. It was this operation that gave this man his nickname Chemical Ali. Al-Anfal means "spoils of war". Kurds were killed and ethnically cleansed, with many of their lands being distributed by Saddam Hussein to others. Al-Anfal was clearly genocidal. Many thousands of villages, some 2,000 schools and 300 hospitals were destroyed. Saddam Hussein's regime also caused the deportation or forced relocation of tens of thousands of Farsi Kurds, and the abduction and execution of many, many thousands of others—including many who were buried in mass graves.

Fears remained about the impact of the gassing for a very long time, particularly with respect to food, water and soil contamination. These are very immediate concerns for constituents of mine even today. This was their land of origin and this is where many of their relatives live. In 1988 these events were made worse because there was only minute coverage of it in the West. Saddam Hussein was using ordnance supplied by the West. He was the ally of the West. That only changed when he went after Kuwait's oil.

The attack on Halabja is history's largest chemical weapons attack against a civilian populated area. It should not be forgotten, nor should be the Al-Anfal operation. They certainly will not be forgotten by my constituents. The KRG's relation with much of what is still called the Western World is now much better. As I said earlier, Peshmergas, including those from the KRG, led the fight against Daesh. Forty-four countries, including the USA and Britain, have diplomatic representatives in Erbil, the capital of KRG. Unfortunately, Australia does not. To say that that is unfortunate is an understatement. Certainly, Australia has representation in Baghdad, but that is neither Erbil nor Kurdistan. Not even an outreach service is provided from Baghdad to Erbil.

Apart from the symbolism of a presence in Erbil, there are practical problems that this results in for constituents of mine. Moreover, when Australian officials and representatives visit Baghdad, they do not take the option of the 20-minute flight to the much safer Erbil to consult with KRG officials. That hardly need be a complex operation—there are excellent facilities for such meetings located at the airport at Erbil. I have seen them myself. Other officials and representatives have not been reluctant to visit the area. The French President, for example, has visited Erbil three times.

There seems an imbalance between Australia's relations with the KRG and Iraq. For example, when Australia trained Iraqi special forces, a ridiculously small proportion were Kurdish, and Australian aid for Kurdistan goes to the Iraqi Government to be doled out by them to the KRG rather than going directly to the KRG. I think there should be formal recognition that the Al-Anfal campaign constituted genocide. That is more appropriately an issue for the Federal Parliament. I note that British, Swedish, Norwegian and South Korean Parliaments have all recognised that the Al-Anfal campaign constituted genocide. As a country we can do better in our relationship with Kurdistan.

PREMIER'S ANZAC MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:44): I speak about one of two Premier's Anzac Memorial Scholarships awarded to students from Ku-ring-gai. It is a sad truth that during almost a quarter of the Commonwealth of Australia's first 50 years members of the new nation's armed forces were engaged in wars overseas, from which many would not return. At the same time, however, Australian services personnel quickly established a reputation for bravery and reliability that earned both them and their country widespread respect as champions of justice and defenders of freedom.

Their experience also served to reinforce our early settlers' ethic of egalitarianism and fostered the spirit of mateship that has shaped Australia's unique national identity to this day. In short, the successes and failures of

military campaigns involving Australian troops have had a strong influence on the way Australians think about themselves. The annual Premier's Anzac Memorial Scholarships provide a group of New South Wales students with an enviable opportunity to reflect on our place in history. In 2017, 21 of them will gain valuable insights into Australia's involvement in World War I through undertaking a 12-day tour of significant battlefields in Belgium and France, including Villers-Bretonneux, Bullecourt, Fromelles and Ypres.

Nicholas Trobec, a year 10 history student from the Knox Grammar School, is one of the 21 recipients of a Premier's Scholarship as a result of Knox's success in a ballot entered last year by more than 130 government, Catholic and independent schools from across the State. Nicholas was chosen to represent Knox after his impressive narrative, titled "A day in the life of a tunnel ratter", was judged to be the outstanding entry in a competition to capture the Anzac spirit that was conducted by the school's history department. "Tunnel ratting" was a perhaps little-known—but nonetheless extremely dangerous and terrifying—activity for an Australian soldier in Vietnam. It involved entering and investigating subterranean tunnels that had been dug by the Viet Cong to enable them to engage in surprise and undetected attacks on their chosen targets.

As Nicholas highlighted in his narrative, a particular network of tunnels, in an area in Vietnam known as the Iron Triangle, was over 400 kilometres in length and "concealed a labyrinth of living quarters, armaments, hospitals, factories and even a theatre". These tunnels allowed the Viet Cong to carry out their raids and then quickly vanish from sight. A tunnel ratter's unique role was to crawl, often with a faithful canine companion, through these very dark, narrow, poorly ventilated and booby trapped tunnels and to locate and kill the enemy before sealing or destroying the tunnel itself.

Although the work was considered absolutely essential, it was claustrophobic and extraordinarily stressful, and ratters had a mortality rate of over 30 per cent—one of the highest among Australian troops in Vietnam. The job was, as vividly described in Nicholas's work, a "deadly game of ... hide and seek"—a frequent journey into the perilous unknown, which psychologically destroyed many of the ratters and continued to haunt all of them for the rest of their lives. While the central character in the narrative is fictitious, Nicholas meticulously incorporated into the story key facts and locations from Australia's deployment in Vietnam to create an authenticity that both veterans and young readers can undoubtedly appreciate. It is a compelling and evocative tale of courage, duty and resilience and a fitting tribute to those who have served with distinction.

The Minister for Veterans Affairs, the Hon. David Elliott—who is in the Chamber now—and I visited Knox on 10 March this year to congratulate Nicholas. It was exciting to hear him speak so passionately about studying history, having been inspired at an early age by his father making models for him. He demonstrated both a pride in his country and a fascination about its past, particularly the sacrifices that have been made by previous generations. He is a first-rate young man. I wish Nicholas well for what will no doubt be an unforgettable and, I strongly suspect, life-changing experience. I thank the Minister for joining me in that visit to Knox and in meeting Nicholas. Another Premier's Anzac scholarship, also awarded through the ballot, went to a student from Abbotsleigh, and I hope to say more to the House about that student in due course.

MANNING BASE HOSPITAL

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:48): I rise to update the House on the Manning Base Hospital and to commend the hospital for the continued improvement in its performance. The latest Bureau of Health Information report reveals a 21 per cent decrease in the number of patients leaving without treatment or without completing treatment and notes that 81 per cent of patients were treated, admitted, discharged or referred within four hours—which is better than the State average and exceeds the target key performance indicator [KPI].

There has been a noticeable staffing increase at the hospital recently. An additional registrar and a senior residential medical officer in paediatrics have been appointed, as have a second oncologist, two new ear, nose and throat [ENT] surgeons, an additional GP, a procedural trainee in obstetrics and gynaecology, an additional medical registrar to approve the evening duty roster, and an additional career medical officer in the emergency department. That is clearly significant. I congratulate the general manager, Jodi Nieass, the director of clinical services and the emergency department, Jim Wills, and the rest of the staff including doctors, nurses and allied health on their ongoing effort to provide the best services to our area.

I thank the board and its chief executive officer, Michael DiRienzo, for their support in increasing the budget allocation to allow for further specialists to be provided. The staff of the hospital and the community can be justifiably proud of their hospital. The hospital is undergoing redevelopment. Stage one will cost \$20 million and is underway. It will provide a new oncology area and a new renal dialysis unit. There are two further stages of redevelopment, the estimated cost of which is \$120 million. I call on the Government to fund stages two and three of the hospital redevelopment. Even with the best bricks and mortar in the world, if the services are insufficient it is of concern.

Recently leading trauma specialist in Australia and overseas, Professor Zolt Balogh, provided a report confirming that the hospital meets the requirements of an acute hospital. It also meets the standard of a local hospital under the New South Wales trauma plan. We can be very confident in the medical services at the Manning Base Hospital. The Manning Base Hospital staff have been working hard to reach the target 81 per cent of patients being treated, admitted, discharged or referred from its emergency department within four hours. The hospital is now seeing the results of that work: 81.9 per cent of patients who presented to the emergency department between September and December were either treated and admitted or discharged within four hours. That is notwithstanding a 7 per cent increase in the number of people presenting to the emergency department in the same period last year to 7,807. Over a 12-month period that means there were more than 30,000 presentations to the emergency department. In that respect the hospital is exceeding the State's requirements.

The hospital is ahead of the target of 81 per cent with an almost 10 per cent increase when compared to the same period last year. As I said, that is despite the 7 per cent increase in the number of presentations. The median time to leave the emergency department of two hours and 29 minutes is down slightly from the same period last year. The average time from triage to treatment in the emergency department was down across most categories. These are results of which hospital staff can be justifiably proud. The community can have absolute confidence that this Government supports the hospital. It is developing stage one now—I am fighting for stages two and three. At the same time the Government is increasing the recurrent funding to boost the number of specialist nurses, doctors and allied health workers at the hospital. I congratulate the Manning Base Hospital and its staff.

CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:53): I raise an issue that is disappointing and quite disturbing. In the electorate of Wyong many volunteers work very hard to provide services to the community and support our facilities. One of the better programs of this and the previous Government is the Community Building Partnership program. I am a little disturbed at feedback I am receiving from many community groups that the Wyong council—or the Central Coast Council, since the merger—is failing to provide development applications [DAs] to community groups for facilities they have applied to build through the program.

For many years I have been involved with the historical Alison Homestead. Unfortunately, its museum was burnt down by an arsonist a few years ago. It was rebuilt but without an office, which is needed to store records. A men's shed, which has many enthusiastic members, was also built on site. In 2014 the homestead volunteers applied to the former member for Wyong—who was a member of the Government at the time—for grants to increase the facilities at the museum to house an office. They were granted \$32,823. In 2015 they also received a grant for \$12,596 for the men's shed. For some reason the then Wyong council, which is now the Central Coast Council, has not provided DAs for those projects. Their explanation is that the council wants to prepare a plan of management for the site. That is hardly the fault of the volunteers. The volunteers give up their own time and run a great facility.

They wrote to me this morning to tell me that unfortunately they have had to contact the Community Building Partnership program because they were not given an extension on their grant. I wrote a letter in support of an extension. They have had to give the project money back. In all of our electorates communities are excited and pleased when they receive State government grants. It is disturbing that we now have a council that is not passing DAs and the grant money is having to be returned. The community group that applied for the money is missing out on the project but other groups who were not successful—because there was only \$300,000 available—have also missed out. The council is creating a double jeopardy where community groups on the Central Coast are missing out on important State government money. I do not think Government or Opposition members would be happy if that happened. I also received an email from a member of the Berkeley Vale Soccer Club, who writes:

Hi David, my name is Brad Campbell and I am associated with Berkeley Vale Soccer Club. I am writing this letter venting my frustration with the amount of time it has taken Wyong Shire Council, now Central Coast Council, in signing off on our development of Kurraba Hall into a clubhouse.

In 2012 we were given a grant from the NSW Community Building Partnership and along with Berkeley Vale Soccer Club funds proceeded to apply to Wyong Shire Council to develop Kurraba Hall into a clubhouse containing change rooms, toilets, hot water, sun shade and a canteen.

We are the only club on the Central Coast that does not have change rooms for players to get changed in. Players currently change either in the toilets or on the side of the fields.

This is disturbing:

Young girls and women players have to go into the trees on the edge of the ground to get changed.

In 2012 the Government gave money to the soccer club to develop these facilities. Five years later they still have not got a DA from the council. It is absolutely unacceptable and I will be taking up it with the local media. I will be asking all members from electorates on the Central Coast to make representations to the Central Coast Council to make sure that DAs get approved so that hardworking volunteers and community groups can use the grants the State Government gave them and not have to give them back.

BAULKHAM HILLS ELECTORATE EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (16:58): I remind all those in this Chamber that this Government believes in the value of education for the people of New South Wales that will continue. In my electorate of Baulkham Hills the education footprint is expanding more and more each day. The Baulkham Hills TAFE campus will offer a flagship masters of business administration [MBA] program in partnership with the Federation University Australia. This will provide a fantastic opportunity for local businesses and students to complete a world-class MBA qualification close to home with the flexibility that TAFE provides. This Government understands that education providers such as TAFE are imperative to equip jobseekers with the skills they need to contribute to our thriving economy. That is why the 2016-2017 budget delivered \$1.82 billion to TAFE NSW out of a total skills budget of \$2.2 billion. Unlike those opposite, we are committed to ensuring that TAFE funding is directed to the front line, so that teachers and students, and not administration, are the beneficiaries.

I also acknowledge the contribution that private education providers have made to expand the Hills' district's capacity to provide topnotch education services to the people of Baulkham Hills. Since 2013 the University of Notre Dame's School of Business has been offering postgraduate business courses at the Norwest Business Park. These qualifications arm students with the skills to make their mark in the business community. Norwest Business Park is now home to the headquarters of some of Australia's largest companies, and these courses allow the business leaders of tomorrow to get their foot in the door. This stands in stark contrast to Labor's contribution to education in Baulkham Hills over 16 years, the grand total of which was telling the Baulkham Hills High School to pay for its own school hall.

In less than six years, the Coalition has brought new tertiary institutions to the Hills, expanded tertiary operations at existing colleges and committed to a new primary school in Bella Vista, which will provide not just new educational facilities for our community but also more sporting fields—thanks to an innovative and collaborative approach between the Department of Education and The Hills Shire Council. Those local advances in the education sector, alongside the construction of the Sydney Metro Northwest, are empirical evidence that this Government is revitalising New South Wales. The Berejiklian-Barilaro Coalition Government is committed to providing local communities with the infrastructure to cultivate growth, which stands in stark contrast to the embarrassing failure of 16 fruitless Labor years.

PARRAMATTA ELECTORATE ORGANISATIONS

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (17:00): I recognise Marco Capobianco and Chris Lee who co-founded the Conviction Group. This organisation plays an important role in helping to shape young men's attitudes and guiding them to make good life decisions. Tomorrow they will host their Young Men's Health Forum, Sydney, in my electorate of Parramatta. The forum will address very important issues that are pivotal to young men's health, including body image, violence, mental health, healthy relationships and leadership. This is Marco and Chris' fourth forum and such is their reputation that it will be attended by more than 240 year 10 male students.

The forum gives students a unique opportunity to hear from speakers including Father Chris Riley, who is the founder of Youth Off the Streets; the Parramatta Eels chief executive officer Bernie Gurr and the former National Rugby League player Nathan Hindmarsh; Melinda Tankkard Reist, an author; Dr Scott Griffiths, a National Health and Mental Research Council Fellow at the University of Melbourne; and notable speaker Mrs Kelly. Having lost two sons in very tragic circumstances, Mrs Kelly will talk about the consequences of alcohol-fuelled violence and mental illness and their impact on families and communities. I am delighted to have the opportunity to attend this event and to recognise Chris and Marco for their dedication and commitment to helping young men achieve good health and healthy attitudes at a very important time in their lives.

Another great local organisation is the Parramatta District Cricket Club. I congratulate the Parramatta District Cricket Club under 21s for their impressive victory in winning the Poidevin-Gray Shield. I also had the opportunity to join the Minister for Sport, Stuart Ayres, club President Greg Monaghan, club members and first grade captain Nick Bertus to congratulate the club on receiving a sports grant. The club received \$20,000 towards a new digital scoreboard at the historical Old Kings Oval. The club not only is one of the oldest clubs in Australia, first founded in 1843, but also is recognised for fostering some of the finest players in cricket's history—and it is still going strong today.

I recognise the work undertaken by Fitted for Work. Last week I had the opportunity to visit Fitted for Work at its premises where I met Elizabeth Trehwella, who is the manager of Sydney programs, as well as staff and volunteers. Fitted for Work received \$49,914 under the Stronger Communities program for its Woman Kind project. This is a six-month pre-employment program that works directly with disadvantaged women to help them to gain confidence and learn the skills necessary to get work. Elizabeth told me that the project will fill an important gap in service delivery in Parramatta. It will provide women with a series of face-to-face, confidence-building workshops and activities that are designed to act as a powerful catalyst for creating positive life changes in simple and sustainable ways.

I understand that the course is now full and they have already started a waitlist. Elizabeth was keen to mention that the organisation relies upon the many volunteers to meet ever-growing demand. I commend the Fitted for Work Parramatta team for their dedication and commitment to helping women in need to get work and, even more importantly, to fulfil their potential. I recognise Hope Connect of Telopea, which has been successful in being awarded a Stronger Communities grant of almost \$7,000 towards its Play 'n' Grow Parenting Group for the purchase of new outdoor and active play equipment. Earlier this month I had the opportunity to visit the centre and see the kids take the equipment through its paces.

The new equipment not only contributes to creating a safe and inviting space for children to play but also helps to build their social interaction skills, which will be really important in later life. I commend the good work done at the centre. It brings families together in a positive and fun way. I take this opportunity to recognise former minister Pastor Craig Wood—who was an exceptional leader—and all his staff who have played a big, pivotal role in shaping the centre into what it is today. I also welcome incoming Pastor Phil Ravesteyn and wish him very well. I know that Hope Connect in Telopea will go from strength to strength and I look forward to participating in and being an integral part of the new community in Telopea, following our plans to revitalise the whole area.

WOMEN'S BIG BASH LEAGUE SYDNEY SIXERS

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (17:05): Today a wonderful reception was held in Parliament House for the triumphant WBBL/02 Sydney Sixers. I acknowledge my parliamentary colleague the member for Summer Hill, co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Cricket Group, who is an outstanding supporter of the Sixers and patron of the club. She did a great job in helping to organise the reception today, for which I thank her. It was a fantastic way to acknowledge wonderful women in sport, and many great things will come out of today's reception. The Sydney Sixers were an over away from winning the Women's Big Bash League [WBBL] final last year. The Thunder girls got up on that occasion, which I was extremely happy about. But there is an old adage that you must lose one to win one, and the Sixers came out strongly in WBBL/02. Their resounding final's victory was a fantastic effort.

I acknowledge some of the people who attended the reception today: John Warn, Cricket NSW chairman; Andrew Jones, Cricket NSW chief executive officer; Marshall Rosen, Cricket NSW board member; and the Hon. Patricia Forsythe, board member and executive director of the Sydney Business Chamber. I acknowledge those four people because for too long women's sport has played second fiddle. That is wrong, and I am extremely proud that Cricket NSW led the charge last year in breaking down barriers. The Lendlease Breakers made women's cricket professional—it was the first sport to do so—and other codes are following. I acknowledge John Warn, the Hon. Patricia Forsythe, Marshall Rosen and Andrew Jones for the leadership they have shown in this sphere. Cricket Australia has just got on board with an outstanding announcement and we have seen the rise of the Australian Football League Women's competition, which looks great.

I acknowledge Dominic Remond, the Sydney Sixers' general manager. He is a great guy and an outstanding general manager. The way he has improved the club culture is fantastic. Well done, Dominic. Our Premier also attended the reception. She is a patron of the Sixers and is very proud of the team's achievements. I thank the Premier for her time. This was a bipartisan event and the Leader of the Opposition also was present. Like me, he is a Thunder man at heart, but we both supported the Sydney Sixers and are very proud of what the ladies have achieved. The Hon. Tanya Davies, the Minister for Women, is an exceptional supporter of women in sport. Tanya had a meeting with Dominic Redmond and the Sixers afterwards and spoke about a wonderful leadership program they are piloting. I hope that the program can grow further because of that meeting.

I congratulate the Sixers women on doing a great job and mention the four players who were there today. It was great to see Lisa Sthalekar, a former Australian stalwart of New South Wales Australian cricket. She has taken part in eight Test matches, 125 one day internationals [ODIs] and 54 Twenty20 [T20] matches. Alyssa Healy, who is the captain, Australian wicketkeeper and an outstanding individual has taken part in two Test matches, 44 ODIs and 72 T20s. Sarah Aley had tremendous bowling figures on the day and was the Sixers' leading wicket taker for both seasons—a great effort. It was also wonderful to have Emily Leys here. I congratulate her—she has a huge future ahead. I commend the Sixers for all their achievements and look forward to a Sixers versus Thunders final next year.

CANTERBURY HOSPITAL

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (17:11): At the 12 November 2016 by-election, the good people of Canterbury elected me as their strong voice in the New South Wales Parliament. Most importantly, the people of Canterbury sent an emphatic message that day that the Canterbury Hospital will not be left behind. This Government talks a lot about progress, plans for the future and growing the State of New South Wales. But it seems that talk and no action is all we can expect from this Government, despite the community of Canterbury telling the Government time and time again that the Canterbury Hospital needs to be upgraded.

In 2013 the O'Farrell Government released the Canterbury Hospital Strategic Plan 2013-2018, which earmarked the need for a redevelopment of the hospital by 2017. However, this much-needed upgrade continues to be delayed by the New South Wales Government. The plan outlined the need for a redevelopment of the hospital but the Government has wilfully ignored its recommendations. I invite the new Minister for Health to join me in Canterbury: If he will not take note of his own strategic plan, maybe he will listen to the people of Canterbury. Canterbury locals know firsthand that our hospital needs an upgrade if our local health services have any chance of providing an adequate service to our growing population.

The Government's planning proposal allows for large-scale mass development, which we have already seen along Canterbury Road. The proposed Sydney Metro development will exacerbate this problem. The Berejiklian Government's urban renewal plan has a target of 36,000 extra dwellings along the Metro corridor over the next 20 years. This includes over 7,000 dwellings in the suburb of Campsie alone—the suburb in which the Canterbury Hospital is situated. Population growth is inevitable, but how can this Government place such a ludicrous population target on our area without considering the social and health infrastructure that must accompany any growth of this magnitude? This is how stupidly the Government has behaved over the last six years. The Government talks about social and public infrastructure but it has allowed mass development without any consideration of the need for the hospital upgrade, the ageing health services, the multicultural health needs or the needs of young families who move into the area. We are not seeing the investment needed in our area.

The Government talks about caring for New South Wales. This should not be a political issue—and members should not see this as unimportant because it does not relate to their own electorates. This is about the integration of the whole system. The Government needs to invest in the Canterbury Hospital. The Government's failure to adhere to its own strategy documents to ensure that our health system and hospitals are running smoothly means that my local community will suffer as our population ages and the demand for health services increases. It is fairly easy to see that without a commitment from the Berejiklian Government to upgrade the Canterbury Hospital and without guaranteed adequate future funding, the quality of services provided by our local health system to an ever-growing patient base will only deteriorate.

The independent Bureau of Health Information's latest quarterly report found that emergency presentations had increased by 8.3 per cent compared with the same period a year earlier. Patients wait an average of 214 days for non-urgent surgery, which is a 15.4 per cent increase on the year before. Patients wait 189 days for ear, nose and throat surgery, 291 days for a knee replacement, and 315 days for a septoplasty, or nose surgery. Most telling is the fact that 39.1 per cent more people than at the same time last year left without or before completing treatment in the Canterbury Hospital's emergency department.

I am grateful that during the by-election campaign the Leader of the Opposition committed to deliver a \$9 million upgrade for the emergency department and to undertake planning to provide the resources required to cope with the expected population growth in the area. I call on the Government to do the same. I am most concerned about our ageing multicultural health services. Along with the executive of the Korean Society, I recently visited St Basil's Homes, Greek Orthodox Community Aged Care and the Chinese Australian Services Society to talk to them about how we can better integrate their efforts and assist in providing aged care services.

BUNKER CARTOON GALLERY

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (17:16): I draw the attention of the House to City Hill and the Bunker Cartoon Gallery in Coffs Harbour. The city is lucky to have a cartoon gallery in an old Second World War bunker. The gallery was set up by John Champion and the Coffs City Rotary Club in 1996. A past Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Gough Whitlam, who served in the bunker during the war, returned to visit the gallery, which has a number of cartoons featuring him. The gallery has more than 21,000 cartoons in storage in the bunker as a result of the annual contest it holds that attracts cartoonists from throughout the world because of the substantial prize money on offer. The Coffs City Rotary Club, which still oversees the bunker, has been informed by the Coffs Harbour City Council that the \$80,000 in annual funding it receives will be reduced by \$5,000 a year over the next three years. That is appalling.

City Hill was sold to the Coffs Harbour City Council by the Federal Government for a nominal amount on the condition that the artefacts, the bunker and other assets would be retained. In the early 1990s, the council set aside \$5 million for the construction of an entertainment centre, an art gallery and a library on the site. I understand that some people in the community would prefer to have an art gallery and entertainment centre in the centre of the city. However, I believe City Hill is the ideal location for a facility of which we can all be proud. Of late, rumours have abounded that the council intends to sell the land despite the fact that it was sold to the community in the 1990s on the basis that it be retained as a cultural centre.

The late John Smith, who was the mayor of Coffs Harbour, provided security for the local bridge club to establish a club on the site, which is very well attended. The club borrowed money to construct its facility, which I believe was paid off within four years of the money being guaranteed. It has done a great job. I believe that we should stick with the original plan and turn City Hill into a cultural centre incorporating a library, an art gallery, an entertainment facility and any other cultural facilities the town may need.

It saddens me to see the councillors slowly defunding the Bunker Cartoon Gallery, which is the only one of its kind in New South Wales. It reinforces my and my community's suspicion that the council wants to sell it off. A number of years ago, one of the councillors proposed it be sold off to fund a nursing home or other facility. I compliment Margaret Beckett, whose husband was the deputy mayor of Coffs Harbour for a number of years when the money was set aside. That \$5 million from City Hill seems to have disappeared. I commend Margaret and a group of her supporters who are pushing to ensure that there is a cultural facility set up. The council must stop looking for something that it cannot afford.

Coffs Harbour does not need a glass house. It needs something that can be supported financially by the locals and visitors. You could put a hotel on that site to provide accommodation for visiting artists and musicians. It is close to the airport and provides an opportunity for people to utilise the hotel for overnight stays. The income could assist in running not only the Bunker Cartoon Gallery but also other cultural facilities. I say to the council: hasten slowly. There is not enough parking in the centre of town and what is needed is a facility that covers all the needs of Coffs Harbour. Do not flog it off to the highest bidder. Support the Cartoon Gallery, Paul McKeon, and others, to ensure that the original intent of the gift by the Federal Government to the council is maintained.

MAITLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (17:21): This week I have been contacted by a number of parents who are concerned about an ongoing mould problem at the Maitland Public School in my electorate. This school is a wonderful community. The teachers and principal, Mr Greaves, are all dedicated, caring people who want to ensure the best for our young learners. However, they are not being adequately supported to be healthy in their school. Mr Greaves wrote to parents at the beginning of March to advise them of the issues regarding the mould. His letter raises many concerns at the lack of action by the Minister for Education and the failure to resolve these issues quickly for the health and safety of staff and students. The principal wrote:

There is a direct impact of mould on our classrooms and learning areas but the secondary, and major impact for us, is the quality of our air and learning environment. We know there is a "damp feeling" in our buildings and that the air is heavy. This impacts on our staff and students in amplifying symptoms of any colds, asthma, tiredness or respiratory issues that we might have. Students may experience multiple absences in which they go home and feel better and then return and feel worse...

The principal advised that four teachers:

...are currently away and hope to return soon. Staff do not have the opportunity to "rotate" in and out of classrooms as students do and long hours at the beginning of the year have led to some health impacts from the work environment.

I have had a number of parents and grandparents contact me with their concerns about the impact of the mould on students. One lady told me her 9½-year-old granddaughter had had two days off this week with bad headaches. Her granddaughter's regular teacher had been off for "months and months", and another child with asthma had "coughed so much in class she actually vomited". This grandmother was concerned and said that teachers and staff are "really at risk, serious risk". I fear she is right. According to the Department of Health's website:

In order to reproduce, mould produces tiny particles called spores. Spores are carried in the air and may cause health problems if inhaled by people who are sensitive or allergic to them. These include a running or blocked nose, irritation of the eyes and skin and sometimes wheezing. Occasionally, people may have more severe reactions. Very rarely, people may develop a mould infection, usually in the lungs...For people with asthma, inhaling mould spores may cause an asthma attack.

These are all things that I have heard from parents. Another mother with two sons at the school told me she had spoken with a teacher who had informed her that:

The mould is all through the school and is really bad. She said that if she had kids who went to this school, she wouldn't send them. So as a parent I'm really concerned about the health and safety of not only my children but everyone else's. This parent told me she was "really thinking of pulling the kids out of school." My electorate has 21 schools with outstanding maintenance requests of at least \$10,000. The exact figure is up around \$12 million across my electorate. Data shows that as at the beginning of the current school year, four schools have an individual maintenance backlog in excess of \$1 million. Ten schools have a backlog of more than

half a million dollars. Maitland Public School is one of those and its backlog for the last financial year has been nearly \$700,000, or \$689,406. It beggars belief that a school with a maintenance backlog such as this would have the resources to combat such an important mould problem. Apparently the department has had hygienists at the school three times in the past eight months, and has an extensive capital works program scoped out.

However, I am concerned about reports in the *Maitland Mercury* and *Newcastle Herald* that stated "a SafeWork NSW spokesman said the organisation had not been contacted about the mould problem." This is a really big problem in my electorate and I urge the Minister for Education to meet with me about this matter. Last week I wrote to Minister Stokes and sought an urgent meeting with him in relation to this issue. I have not yet heard when he will be available. I urge him to consider coming to Maitland to look at the school and meet with some of the parents and teachers to explain to them exactly what he is going to do. This situation is just not acceptable. It is having educational impacts on our students, and health impacts on our students and our staff. It must be resolved immediately.

BARANGAROO WORKPLACE DEATH

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (17:25): I refer to a workplace death at Barangaroo. On 1 March this year Timothy Macpherson was killed at work while he was working on the new Ferry Hub at Barangaroo. Tim was only 32 years old and was working as a rigger or a dogman to earn money to secure the future for his young family. Tim is survived by his wife, Ashleigh and their son, Jack. Sadly, Tim's wife is pregnant with their second child, who will never meet their dad. Accidents in workplaces are often entirely avoidable. Tim was a rigger. A crane lifts different pieces of equipment and moves them around a work site and on this particular occasion it was an incredibly large and heavy steel beam. The rigger's job is to attach the load to the bottom of a crane, allow it to be lifted and then the rigger or dogman at the other end will unattach the load.

On this occasion when the steel beam just secured by Tim was being lifted, it bumped another steel beam that was sitting on some pylons that had not yet been secured and that steel beam fell onto Tim and another workman who was still on the deck of the boat. Tim was crushed and killed instantly. I recognise that on that day within the hour the New South Wales Minister for Transport passed on his deep sympathies and condolences to the family and said that various New South Wales government departments—icare, SafeWork, Transport for NSW and any other agency—would be willing and able to engage in the review process.

Some questions must be asked whenever these types of deaths occur in a workplace, the first and most fundamental of which is whether the death could have been prevented. In asking that question we need to ask questions about safety mechanisms such as whether people were where they should have been, whether equipment was secured as it should have been and whether there were any lapses in safety measures—the list goes on. In this instance the barge being used was known as the *Maeve Anne*. On a number of occasions the *Maeve Anne* had failed safety inspections and had been given exemptions to operate. It will be uncomfortable for some people, but the question about the condition and suitability of that barge must be addressed. Only a full inquest into Tim's death will provide the answers to these questions for his wife, his son, his parents, his family and his friends.

It is hoped that the New South Wales Coroner will conduct such an inquest. I am advised that photos taken of the workplace after Tim's death reveal a number of problems with the condition of the barge. Where are the safety regulators when these accidents occur? I appreciate that the safety regulators cannot be everywhere. In that regard, unions play an important role because they become the safety regulators when they inspect work sites. It is reported that in November last year, four months before Tim's unfortunate death, the union was refused entry to the work site and access to the barge to complete its inspection.

Workplace safety should be paramount in the minds of every employer and every worker. Every individual relies on workplace safety to protect them and their fellow workmates so they can do their work properly, go home each day and return the following day. Safe workplace conditions are not and should not be optional. In the past, and now, too many lives have been and are being lost through workplace injuries. On average one worker dies every week in Australia. Whether it is the result of greed, carelessness, lack of training, lack of monitoring, or whether it is an unfortunate accident, an inquest must provide the answers. Every worker is entitled to carry out their duties at work in safety.

RECREATIONAL CANNABIS USE

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:30): My private member's statement follows a direct request from a constituent to raise this important issue in Parliament. The possession and use of cannabis for recreational purposes remains a criminal offence in Australia with New South Wales having one of the strictest applications of the law. Internationally, many jurisdictions are relaxing cannabis laws and a number of constituents have contacted me in support of sensible cannabis reform. I welcome the Government's advancement with medical marijuana with further reforms proposed by the Opposition, but this is only for very ill people. We must ask whether the current laws that criminalise people who use cannabis recreationally are fair and effective.

The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research identified that there were 26,767 recorded incidents for cannabis possession and use in the 12 months to September 2016. This is comparable to the previous 12 months. However, in the year before that an increase was recorded. The number of recorded incidents for cannabis possession is significantly higher than for other drugs, representing almost double the combined number of incidents for use and possession of the amphetamine and other drugs categories. This is not surprising, given that cannabis use is much higher in the community than that of other drugs. The 2013 National Drug Strategy Household Survey identified that of 35 per cent of the Australian population, more than 14 per cent had tried cannabis in their lifetime, with 10.2 per cent having tried it recently. Despite the high level of use within the community, particularly when compared with alcohol and tobacco, the contribution of cannabis to poor health and injury is small. Tobacco's contribution to disease has been estimated at 40 times greater than that of cannabis, despite low and declining smoking rates.

Clearly the threat of criminal prosecution has not reduced access to cannabis or people's willingness to use it. Given what is happening internationally, we must ask whether the criminal approach remains appropriate. Cannabis use does not harm third parties, it does not arouse aggression, and it is not addictive or expensive enough to encourage crime, or impact on people's work or social life. Most cannabis users consume the drug occasionally. Criminal sanctions and the cost of fines and legal representation can have major repercussions, including those on a person's job prospects and liberty. The enforcement costs to the State from policing, court time and legal aid are high and divert resources away from more serious crime, including drug trafficking. In New South Wales, police can use their discretion and issue a caution, but this is not the default position, which is limited to two cautions per person. One can still receive a conviction for personal possession and use of marijuana.

Cannabis use has been decriminalised in South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. In the United States, recreational cannabis use has been legalised in Colorado, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Massachusetts, Nevada and, recently, California. The Californian laws apply to people over 21 and ban smoking in public. However, in future, licensed premises will exist for people to smoke cannabis and alcohol will be prohibited. Portugal decriminalised recreational drug use in 2001, with even the possession of hard drugs attracting a small fine and referral to a treatment program. Drug use has not soared as a result, human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] infection has dropped and the use of legal highs is lower than in any other European country. While many factors make it difficult to confirm how drug use has changed as a result of the laws, the fears that it would escalate have been disproved.

There are many reasons why people take mood enhancing and illicit drugs. The 2013 National Drug Strategy Household Survey found that 66 per cent of people say they first tried drugs to see what it was like, 30 per cent continued to use to enhance experiences and 17.5 per cent used to do something exciting. There is a growing acceptance that this is not criminal activity, and one in four Australians believes that personal use of cannabis should be legal. It is acceptable for adults to want to use cannabis and for them to do so in a responsible way. The risks of legalising or at least decriminalising cannabis use and possession are low but the gains are high, with fewer resources wasted in the criminal justice system for recreational drug use and fewer impacts on people's lives. I call on the Government to consider a more appropriate approach to cannabis use that does not criminalise recreational users or squander police and court resources on a widespread activity that harms few.

TRIBUTE TO IAN ROBINSON

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:35): Tonight I inform the House of the passing of the Hon. Ian Robinson. He was a staunch advocate for regional New South Wales and a longstanding and proud Nationals member. Ian's long, distinguished and enviable parliamentary career spanned 37 years. He spent years in this Parliament as the member for Casino. He was first elected to the New South Wales Parliament for the Casino electorate in 1953. He was re-elected at subsequent elections until he resigned in 1963 to contest the Federal seat of Cowper. In that year he defeated the sitting Australian Labor Party member for Cowper and was returned at subsequent elections until the creation of the Page electorate in 1984. Ian remained as the Federal member for Page until 1990. He contested and won 15 elections. What a remarkable achievement. That length of service has been exceeded only by Sir Earle Page, who served for 42 years.

During his parliamentary career Ian held ministerial and shadow Minister roles. He served on a record number of parliamentary committees and delegations. He participated in and led delegations from the Federal Parliament to New Guinea, London, Tokyo, Manila, the European Parliament in Strasbourg as well as missions to the United States and Russia and other places of importance to Australian trade and diplomatic contact. But he did not ignore his electorate. He and his late wife, Cynthia, were familiar figures throughout the electorates of Cowper and Page. They attended local functions and meetings, both formal and informal. His commitment to his electorate is demonstrated by a long list of achievements.

Some of Ian's more notable achievements include: flood mitigation protection for the city of Grafton and the town of Maclean as well as surrounding areas; a Federal grant to the sugar industry at a critical time, which

helped save the local industry from impending difficulties; the development and upgrading of Grafton, Casino and Coffs Harbour airports; providing much-needed grants to the general community for schools, homes for the aged, and many other ongoing services in the fields of health, local government and community organisations; the upgrading of telecommunications and many other services for the electorate as a consequence of his determined representation.

Ian was true-blue. He was born in Coraki nearly 92 years ago and he never forgot where he came from. He was a staunch advocate for the region for all his political career and beyond. In fact, he was heavily involved in community issues up until the day he passed away. He was constantly on the phone to me advocating on behalf of constituents or giving me advice, which I always found to be sound and carefully considered. Even though he was suffering from prostate cancer and was under medication, his mind was as sharp as a tack and his commitment to serving the community he loved remained resolute. He was a staunch member of the Country Party, becoming the secretary of the Coraki Branch in 1945. He was delegate to electorate councils, annual conferences and the State Council for the following 65 years.

In 2010 Ian was awarded life membership of the National Party for his long and distinguished service to the party. He did not fade away when he retired. Both he and his wife, Florence, provided untiring support to Nationals candidates during election campaigns. His support is legendary, and testament to his love for The Nationals and for the community that he loved all his life. Many candidates owe Ian a debt of gratitude for the support and mentorship he gave them. I am one of those candidates. He mentored and supported me in a number of campaigns. I will miss his friendship and his counsel, and I know that the community will sorely miss his staunch advocacy. On behalf of this House I offer my sincere condolences to his wife, Florence, and to his family. Vale Ian Robinson.

WILLINGA PARK EQUESTRIAN CENTRE

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:39): As some members may recall, one year ago I spoke in this House about Terry Snow's vision to create a facility where "interests, passion and quality fuse to create a property that enriches the environment, complements its surroundings and is home to the best Australian stock horses and equine facilities in the country". Since that time, that vision has been realised. Much has changed in the last 12 months, and I am really pleased to announce that on 18 March this year, I participated in the open day and spoke alongside Terry Snow, whose vision has become a reality at Willinga Park, Bawley Point, in my electorate. Many people may not have heard of Bawley Point because it is a very small village. It is a beautiful village and Willinga Park is one of those diamonds of the South Coast. The more people visit, the more people will realise that this is a very special part of Australia.

Terry Snow and his team have created everything they set out to achieve—a state-of-the-art equestrian centre that is the envy of the State and, dare I say it, the envy even of the country. A philanthropist and business leader from Canberra, Terry Snow came to the area looking for a place to build a home. What he discovered instead was a perfect area for him to combine his two passions, Australian native plants and Australian stock horses, which is exactly what he has done. By transforming 860 hectares of previously degraded property Terry Snow now has a world-class equestrian facility and nature reserve. Terry's love for the Australian stock horse comes from the strong part this breed of horse plays in the historical narrative of Australia, and so it is no wonder that this is the horse that is now part of the Willinga Park breeding program, with over 100 mares producing about 30 foals each year through a combination of natural breeding and an embryo transfer program.

Terry's second passion is for Australia's native vegetation, and he has excelled in this area as well. With help from the Australian National Botanic Gardens he has produced a rich habitat for native flora and fauna. One particularly remarkable outcome of this project has been the growing numbers of the endangered green and golden bell frog, which is vulnerable throughout the rest of the State. Their numbers have grown to well over 50 at Willinga Park. So that is well done too. Terry has created not only the equestrian centre but an environmental habitat at Willinga Park. The centre was designed by Philip Cox and Associates, and includes state-of-the-art equipment and technology.

One ground-breaking example is the development of a new underground water system in operation at the centre, which uses an innovative ebb-and-flow technique to control the surface pressure of the sand in the arena. It is vital that an arena be able to adjust to suit these multiple performance styles because different riding techniques, such as barrel riding and show jumping, require different surfaces. This is something that is now being looked at by other equestrian facilities. This is a first in Australia.

I see that the Premier is in the House. I will be inviting her to visit Willinga Park. Along with Terry Snow—who, as many members would be aware, has been involved in the development of the Canberra Airport—I will be delighted to welcome her and any other members to give them a tour. The park is something to behold. On Saturday we gathered to look at all the new facilities. I had turned the first sod for most of those facilities.

There had been torrential rain in the area but that did not deter nearly 3,000 people participating in the open day at Bawley Point. There were dressage competitions, show jumping, campdrafting demonstrations and garden tours. It really was something to behold. Master classes were held in the main arena where dressage riders demonstrated techniques. Double Dan, Roger Fitzhardinge, Brett Parbery and blind dual Paralympian dressage rider Sue-Ellen Lovett demonstrated their knowledge and skill in horsemanship. It was a wonderful day.

The member for Wagga Wagga is in the Chamber. He should come and have a look at this centre. I invite him and all members because unless they see it they will have no idea of the scope of this facility. My heartfelt congratulations go to Terry Snow. When someone embarks on investing this much money in something so large there are always barriers that governments, councils and individuals put in the way. Terry has worked his way through all of those barriers. This has been fantastic for the Bawley Point community. The people of the men's shed were on the gate welcoming people. I found some funding for the men's shed and that is now operating.

For beautiful little Bawley Point this is something special. I cannot emphasise more to the members in this place, to the community and to everybody in New South Wales that they have to go and see Willinga Park. Even people who are not interested in horses or equestrian events will enjoy the beautiful, natural gardens that Terry Snow has created. I dare say that it is a first for Australia. I am so proud to have been associated with that open day a couple of weeks ago. Well done, Terry Snow.

Question Time

WOY WOY UNDERPASS

Supplementary Answer

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (17:44): By leave: I acknowledge what the member for South Coast has just said. I would love, at some stage, to accept her warm invitation to see for myself that wonderful facility and what Mr Snow has done for the local community. Yesterday during questions I was asked a question about the Woy Woy Underpass. During that answer I advised the House that the current youth unemployment rate on the Central Coast was 12.9 per cent. I am now advised that the correct figure for the current youth unemployment rate on the Central Coast is 15.6 per cent, whereas the Labor Party said it was 18.3 per cent. These numbers are provided on a 12-month average basis. I also verify that under Labor the peak youth unemployment rate was over 23 per cent—a figure provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the month of September 2002.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 17:45
until Tuesday 4 April 2017 at 12:00.**