



New South Wales

Legislative Council

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 7 June 2018

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, 7 June 2018

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. John George Ajaka) took the chair at 10:00.

The PRESIDENT read the prayers.

Bills

COMPANION ANIMALS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Returned

The PRESIDENT: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly returning the abovementioned bill without amendment.

Motions

PORT STEPHENS GRAFFITI ACTION TEAM

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:02): On behalf of the Hon. Scot MacDonald: I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) the Port Stephens Graffiti Action Team, made up of volunteers, has worked tirelessly since May 2009 with Port Stephens Council and the police to remove and prevent graffiti in the Tomaree Peninsula region;
 - (b) the team was founded by the late Keith Brabham with the assistance of then Councillor Sally Dover due to the then increase of graffiti in the area, and its cost to the community;
 - (c) Ted Bickford, the "Graffiti Buster" from Forster inspired the formation of the group;
 - (d) the team includes representatives from each area of the Tomaree Peninsula, from Fingal Bay, Shoal Bay, Nelson Bay, Corlette, Salamander Bay, Soldiers Point, Boat Harbour, Anna Bay and Lemon Tree Passage;
 - (e) since Keith Brabham's passing, the team has been led by Mr John Bell, with Mr Ken Smith, Vice President; Ms Judy Washington, Secretary; Mr Nryan Gibson, Mr Charles Gerussi and other volunteers;
 - (f) each day, members inspect their area for graffiti and remove it as quickly as possible;
 - (g) the cost of chemicals, paint and insurance are covered by council and equipment has been purchased with grants or proceeds from sausage sizzles run by members;
 - (h) Destination Port Stephens and two of its member firms donated a trailer to the group for its equipment;
 - (i) the team has worked with the Police Local Area Command in Operation Eraser to apprehend serial graffiti perpetrators, a number of whom are adults, and to discourage young offenders; and
 - (j) a number of serial offenders, largely adults, have been apprehended and charged and a larger number of school age youth have been discouraged from involvement with them and their antisocial behaviour due to the work of the team.
- (2) That this House acknowledges and commends the outstanding work of the Port Stephens Graffiti Action Team for its proactive work in removing graffiti, and its monitoring and prevention measures that have resulted in a reduction of graffiti crime on the Tomaree Peninsula.

Motion agreed to.

TRIBUTE TO FREDA WHITLAM

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (10:03): I move:

That this House expresses its condolences to the family of Freda Whitlam who died on Wednesday 30 May 2018 aged 97.

Motion agreed to.

LEBANESE DIASPORA ENERGY CONFERENCE - OCEANIA

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:03): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) on 9 and 10 March 2018 the Lebanese Diaspora Energy Conference—Oceania hosted by the Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, His Excellency Mr Gebran Bassil, and organised by the Embassy of Lebanon in Canberra was held at Doltone House, Australian Technology Park, Eveleigh and was attended by over 1,000 members and friends of the Lebanese-Australian community;

- (b) the conference was one of a series held in Lebanon and internationally with the purpose of strengthening Lebanon's ties with communities of Lebanese background throughout the world in such fields as education, cultural enrichment, trade and investment; and
- (c) those who attended as guests at the opening ceremony of the conference included:
 - (i) His Excellency Mr Gebran Bassil, Lebanese Minister for Foreign Affairs and Emigrants;
 - (ii) Dr Nabil Hani, Chairman and General Manager of the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon;
 - (iii) Dr Salim Sfeir, Chairman and CEO of the Bank of Beirut;
 - (iv) the Hon. John Ajaka, MLC, President of the Legislative Council;
 - (v) Senator the Hon. Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, representing the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP, Prime Minister;
 - (vi) the Hon. Michael Sukkar, MP, Assistant Minister to the Federal Treasurer;
 - (vii) the Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite, MP, shadow Minister for an Australian Head of State, representing the Hon. Bill Shorten, MP, Leader of the Federal Opposition;
 - (viii) the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane, MLC, Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council;
 - (ix) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice;
 - (x) His Excellency Mr Milad Raad, Ambassador of Lebanon to Australia;
 - (xi) Mr Charbel Macaron, Consul General of Lebanon in Sydney;
 - (xii) Dr Ziad Itani, Consul General of Lebanon in Melbourne;
 - (xiii) Mr Anthony Torbey, Honorary Consul of Lebanon in Brisbane;
 - (xiv) religious representatives from the Lebanese-Australian community;
 - (xv) representatives of the Australian-Lebanese Chamber of Commerce and the Australian Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
 - (xvi) representatives of numerous Lebanese media outlets in Australian and Lebanon; and
 - (xvii) representatives of numerous Lebanese-Australian community, professional and commercial organisations.
- (2) That this House:
 - (a) congratulates the organisers of and participants in the successful Lebanese Diaspora Energy Conference—Oceania held in Eveleigh on 9 and 10 March 2018; and
 - (b) commends their efforts in promoting and strengthening ties between Lebanon and the Lebanese-Australian community and the wider Australian community as well.

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS ARTS AWARDS RECIPIENT THOMAS KELLY

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (10:04): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) the National Indigenous Arts Awards were held on Sunday 27 May 2018;
 - (b) the awards celebrate the significant contribution First Nation artists make to the vibrancy of Australian arts and recognise the works and achievements of both established and emerging artists;
 - (c) Thomas E. S. Kelly from the North Coast received the Dreaming Award for emerging artists aged 18 to 26; and
 - (d) Thomas is a graduate of the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association Dance College, and his choreographic works include *[Mis]Conceive* which will be shown in late June 2018 at Northern Rivers Performing Arts, Lismore.
- (2) That this House congratulates Thomas for being recognised with this prestigious award and wishes him all the best for his future career.

Motion agreed to.

SYDNEY COLLEGE OF DIVINITY GRADUATION CEREMONY

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:04): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) on Saturday 14 April 2018 the thirty-fourth graduation ceremony of the Sydney College of Divinity was held in the Great Hall of the University of Sydney;

- (b) the graduation ceremony was led by the President of the Sydney College of Divinity and Chair of its Council, Mr Peter King, BA, (Hons) (Syd), MA (Oxford); with Professor Diane Speed, BA (Hons), MA (Hons), MTh (Hons), PhD LSDA, Dean and Chief Executive Officer of the College;
- (c) those who attended as guests included:
 - (i) His Grace Bishop Seraphim of Appollonias, Sub-Dean of St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College;
 - (ii) His Grace Bishop Daniel, Diocese of Sydney and Affiliated Regions, Coptic Orthodox Church;
 - (iii) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice;
 - (iv) Professor Alanna Nobbs, OAM, Macquarie University;
 - (v) Reverend Alan Galt, OAM, New South Wales College of Clinical Pastoral Education;
 - (vi) Dr Michael Horsburgh, AM, Honorary Associate Professor, University of Sydney;
 - (vii) Professor Rifaat Ebied, Foundation Professor of Semitic Studies, University of Sydney, FAHA;
 - (viii) Emeritus Professor Robert Gascoigne, Australian Catholic University;
 - (ix) Professor Isabell Naumann, ISSM, President of the Catholic Institute of Sydney;
 - (x) Associate Professor Stephen Smith, Principal of the Australian College of Ministry Studies;
 - (xi) Dr Leonard Smith, Principal of the Australian College of Christian Studies;
 - (xii) Reverend Dr Daniel Fanous, Dean of St Cyril's Coptic Orthodox Theological College;
 - (xiii) Reverend Professor Gerard Kelly, Vice President and Chair of the Academic Board of SCD, Chair of the Faith and Unity Commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia; and
 - (xiv) Reverend Dr Honam Kim, Dean of Studies SCD, Korean School of Theology;
- (d) degrees, graduate certificates, diplomas and prizes were awarded to approximately 250 graduands;
- (e) the occasional address was delivered by Dr Scott Stephens, the ABC's Online Editor of Religion and Ethics, and musical items were provided by Dr Brett McKein, organist, the choir of St Marks Anglican Church, Darling Point led by Dr William Clark and the Melisma Ensemble performing a Byzantine chant, led by Dr Dimitri Koubaroulis; and
- (f) the college is a self-accrediting Higher Education Provider incorporated in 1983 comprises the following ecumenical theological colleges:
 - (i) Australian College of Christian Studies (Sydney and Perth);
 - (ii) Australian College of Ministries (Sydney);
 - (iii) Catholic Institute Sydney (Sydney and Auckland);
 - (iv) Eva Burrows College (Sydney);
 - (v) Nazarene Theological College (Brisbane and Auckland);
 - (vi) New South Wales College of Clinical Pastoral Education (Sydney);
 - (vii) St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College (Sydney);
 - (viii) St Cyril's Coptic Orthodox Theological College (Sydney);
 - (ix) Korean School of Theology (Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne);
 - (x) Graduate Research School (Sydney College of Divinity); and
 - (xi) Salvation Army Booth College (Sydney).

(2) That this House:

- (a) congratulates those who were awarded a degree, graduate certificate, diploma or prize at the thirty-fourth graduation ceremony of the Sydney College of Divinity held at Sydney University on Saturday 14 April 2018; and
- (b) commends the Sydney College of Divinity for its mission in providing high quality, accredited courses in theology and related disciplines from undergraduate to postgraduate levels including research degrees.

Motion agreed to.

NSW FOUNDATION OF COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS STATE CONFERENCE

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:05:0): I move:

(1) That this House notes that:

- (a) on Saturday 28 April 2018 the New South Wales Federation of Community Language Schools Inc. held its 2018 State conference at the University of Sydney, attended by 700 delegates and friends of the federation;

- (b) those who attended included:
 - (i) the Hon. Ray Williams, MP, Minister for Multiculturalism and Disability Services;
 - (ii) the Hon. Victor Dominello, MP, Minister for Finance, Services and Property;
 - (iii) Mr Jihad Dib, MP, shadow Minister for Education;
 - (iv) Mr Albert Vella, OAM, President, New South Wales Federation of Community Language Schools;
 - (v) Mr Michael Christodoulou, AM, CEO, New South Wales Federation of Community Language Schools;
 - (vi) Emeritus Professor David Nunan, University of Hong Kong, keynote speaker;
 - (vii) Professor Ingrid Piller, Macquarie University, keynote speaker;
 - (viii) Mr John Sidoti, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Cabinet;
 - (ix) Mr Mark Coure, MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Infrastructure;
 - (x) Ms Jodi McKay, MP, shadow Minister for Transport;
 - (xi) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice;
 - (xii) the Hon. Ernest Wong, MLC; and
 - (xiii) representatives of 131 community language organisations.
- (c) the 2018 State conference of the federation was the largest yet held with a record number of participants including 568 language teachers, delegates from 131 community languages organisations representing 49 languages and 33 separate workshops being held.
- (2) That this House:
 - (a) congratulates the federation's President Mr Albert Vella, OAM; Chief Executive Officer Mr Michael Christodoulou, AM; and staff together with all the participants for a successful 2018 State conference; and
 - (b) commends all those who give their time to organise, teach or assist with our State's network of community language schools.

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL DAY OF CYPRUS

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:05): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) on Sunday 22 April 2018 the National Day of Cyprus was celebrated at a function held at the Cyprus Community Club, Stanmore attended by members and friends of the Cypriot and Hellenic communities;
 - (b) the function was hosted by the President Mr Soteris Tsouris, OAM, JP, and the Board of Directors of the Cyprus community of New South Wales; and
 - (c) those who attended as special guests included:
 - (i) Her Excellency Mrs Martha Mavrommati, High Commissioner of Cyprus in Australia;
 - (ii) Mr Christos Karras, Consul General of Greece in Sydney, representing Her Excellency Mrs Ekaterini Xayorari, Ambassador of Greece in Australia;
 - (iii) Dr Prokopis Vanezis, former High Commissioner of Cyprus in Australia;
 - (iv) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice;
 - (v) Councillor Anna York, Inner West Council, representing the Mayor Councillor Darcy Byrne and Ms Jo Haylen, MP, member for Summer Hill;
 - (vi) Mr Michael Christodoulou, AM, Chief Executive Officer of the New South Wales Federation of Community Language Schools and President of the Federation of Cyprus Communities of Australia and New Zealand;
 - (vii) Mr Jack Passaris, OAM, President of the Justice for Cyprus Co-ordinating Committee of New South Wales and Vice-President of the Ethnic Communities Council of New South Wales;
 - (viii) Mr Paniko Achilleous, President, Cyprus Hellene Club;
 - (ix) Mr George Angelopoulos, Co-ordinator of the World Council of Hellenes Abroad (New South Wales);
 - (x) Mrs Popi Mallianou, President, Hellenic Writers and Artists Association of Australia;
 - (xi) Mr George Lazaris, OAM, former President of the Cyprus Community of New South Wales and the Cyprus Helene Club;

- (xii) Mr Jim David, former President of the Justice for Cyprus Co-ordinating Committee of New South Wales; and
 - (xiii) representatives of numerous Cypriot and Hellenic community organisations.
- (2) That this House congratulates members of the Cypriot-Australian community on the occasion of the National Day of Cyprus and commends them for their ongoing and positive contribution to New South Wales and Australia.

Motion agreed to.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (10:05): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) between 13 and 14 May 2018 a series of poorly-written anti-immigration and racist signs appeared across Top Ryde;
 - (b) the racist posters called for an end to 457 visas, a ban on Asian immigration and on foreign business owners;
 - (c) in February 2017 similar signs were reportedly attached to a Chinese-Australian property investor's billboard advertisements at a construction site in Ryde; and
 - (d) in a motion moved by the Hon. Ernest Wong, MLC, the Legislative Council on 23 May 2018 reaffirmed its resolute stance against acts of racial discrimination.
- (2) That this House calls for greater vigilance in fighting racist abuse and religious vilification and in maintaining respect for all in our harmonious multicultural multi-faith New South Wales

Motion agreed to.

AUSTRALIAN MIDDLE EAST MEDIA GALA DINNER

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:05): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on Friday 27 April 2018 Australian Middle East Media [AMEmedia] held its seventh annual gala dinner at Doltone House, Pyrmont, attended by approximately 600 guests;
 - (b) those who attended included:
 - (i) Mr Walhan Wehbe, Chairman of AMEmedia;
 - (ii) Mr Rehme Wehbe, General Manager of AMEmedia;
 - (iii) His Excellency Mr Milad Raad, Ambassador for Lebanon in Australia;
 - (iv) Mr Charbel Macaron, Consul General for Lebanon in Australia;
 - (v) His Eminence Mr Malatius Malki Malki, Patriarchal-Vicariate, Syriac Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia and New Zealand;
 - (vi) His Excellency Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay, OLM, Bishop of the Maronite Diocese of Australia;
 - (vii) His Grace Bishop Robert Rabbat, Eparch of the Melkite Eparchy of Australia and New Zealand;
 - (viii) His Eminence, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Basilios Kodseie, Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines;
 - (ix) Reverend Father Louis Ferkh, Principal of St Charbel Convent;
 - (x) Sheik Shasiq Khan, Al-Faisal College;
 - (xi) Sister Josephine Wehbe, Principal, St Maroun College, Dulwich Hill;
 - (xii) Sister Elham Geagea, CEO of the Maronite Sisters of the Holy Family Nursing Village;
 - (xiii) the Hon. David Coleman, MP, Federal member for Banks, Assistant Minister for Finance representing the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP, Prime Minister;
 - (xiv) Ms Michelle Rowland, MP, Federal member for Greenway, representing the Hon. Bill Shorten, MP, Federal Opposition Leader;
 - (xv) the Hon. John Ajaka, MLC, President of the Legislative Council, representing the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, Premier;
 - (xvi) Mr Jihad Dib, MP, shadow Minister for Education, representing Mr Luke Foley, MP, Leader of the Opposition;
 - (xvii) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice;
 - (xviii) Mr John Sidoti, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to Cabinet;

- (xix) Dr Geoff Lee, MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Western Sydney and Multiculturalism;
 - (xx) Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, MLC, Assistant President of the Legislative Council;
 - (xxi) Mr Chris Minns, MP, shadow Minister for Water;
 - (xxii) Mr Glen Brooks, MP, State member for East Hills;
 - (xxiii) Ms Julia Finn MP, State member for Granville;
 - (xxiv) Councillor the Hon. Philip Ruddock, Mayor of Hornsby;
 - (xxv) Councillor Khal Asfour, Mayor of Canterbury Bankstown; and
 - (xxvi) representatives of numerous Arabic-speaking community, religious, cultural and commercial organisations.
- (c) AMEmedia is the largest Arabic language media organisation in Australia and publishes the daily *El Telegraph*, the weekly *Al Anwar* and the monthly *Anoujoum* and provides a variety of online news services.
- (2) That this House:
- (a) congratulates AMEmedia, including its Chairman Mr Walhan Wehbe and its General Manager Mr Rehme Wehbe, together with all its staff on the occasion of its recent seventh annual gala dinner; and
 - (b) commends AMEmedia for its ongoing service and success in providing media services to Australians of Middle Eastern heritage and also to the wider Australian community.

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL DAY OF POLAND

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:06): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on Friday 4 May 2018 the Consul General of Poland in Sydney Mrs Regina Jurkowska hosted a celebration of the National Day of Poland at the Mosman Art Gallery, Mosman attended by members and friends of the Polish-Australian community;
 - (b) the National Day of Poland, also known as Constitution Day, celebrates the proclamation of Poland's first Constitution 227 years ago which was also the first Constitution proclaimed in Europe;
 - (c) those who attended as guests included:
 - (i) His Excellency Dr Attila Gruber, Ambassador for Hungary in Australia;
 - (ii) Reverend Fathers representing the Order of St Paul, Berrima, the Order of St Francis and the Society of Christ;
 - (iii) Ms Felicity Wilson, MP, State member for North Shore, representing both the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, MP, Premier, and the Hon. Ray Williams, MP, Minister for Multiculturalism and Disability Services;
 - (iv) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice;
 - (v) Mr Albert Vella, President of the New South Wales Federation of Community Language Schools;
 - (vi) Mrs Malgorzata Vella, Polish language teacher at the Department of Education, Saturday School of Community Languages and Coordinator for teaching methods at the Polish School in Randwick, Sydney;
 - (vii) consular representatives for Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Spain, Thailand and Turkey and Ukraine; and
 - (viii) representatives of numerous Polish community organisations.
 - (d) a program of Polish and Australian composed music was provided by pianist Mr Jonathan Wilson and vocalist Mr Blake Parham; and
 - (e) during the function Mr Albert Vella and Mrs Malgorzata Vella were each presented with the National Education Commission Medal by the Polish Consul General on behalf of the Polish Minister for Education for their voluntary work within ethnic schools in Australia, their contribution to education and their encouragement of new generations of students.
- (2) That this House extends greetings and best wishes to the Polish-Australian community on the occasion of the National Day of Poland, celebrating the 227th anniversary of the proclamation of Poland's first Constitution.

Motion agreed to.

BYRON YOUTH SERVICE THIRTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (10:06): I move:

- (1) That this House notes:
- (a) this year marks the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Byron Youth Service;
 - (b) Byron Youth Service was established in 1983 by a group of like-minded community members who wanted to support young people in Byron Bay;
 - (c) at the time the youth service was established, Byron Bay was going through a cultural shift which left young people in the community facing isolation, unemployment and homelessness;
 - (d) the youth service was established to provide educational support, social activities such as arts and music, sporting activities and support for those at risk of homelessness; and
 - (e) today Byron Youth Service is a major social hub in Byron Bay providing support for young people facing life's challenges and assisting them to reach their full potential.
- (2) That this House congratulates:
- (a) Jan and Clint Dawkins and all the founders of Byron Youth Service for establishing this wonderful service; and
 - (b) President Lyn McCormick and the whole Byron Youth Service team for all their work in running the youth service and providing ongoing support to the youth of Byron Bay.
- (3) That this House acknowledges the importance of youth services, particularly in regional areas, in providing support for young people.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

MODERN SLAVERY BILL 2018

Returned

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

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I move:

That the Legislative Assembly's message be considered in the Committee of the Whole stand an order of the day for a future day.

Motion agreed to.

Committees

STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT

Report: Regional development and a global Sydney

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: I table report No. 42 of the Standing Committee on State Development, entitled "Regional development and a global Sydney", dated June 2018, together with transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, and correspondence relating to the inquiry. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (10:07:0): I move:

That the House take note of the report.

Debate adjourned.

Documents

TABLING OF PAPERS

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I table the following papers:

- (1) Defamation Act 2005—Report of the NSW Department of Justice entitled "Statutory Review: Defamation Act 2005", dated June 2018.
- (2) Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002— Report of the NSW Department of Justice entitled "Statutory Review: Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002", dated June 2018.

I move:

That the reports be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Committees

STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT

Report: Defence industry in New South Wales

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: I table report No. 43 of the Standing Committee on State Development, entitled "Defence industry in New South Wales", dated June 2018, together with transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, and correspondence relating to the inquiry. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (10:10:0): I move:

That the House take note of the report.

Debate adjourned.

Documents

AUDITOR-GENERAL

Reports

The CLERK: According to the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of a Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General, entitled "HealthRoster benefits realisation", dated 7 June 2018, and authorised to be printed this day.

Business of the House

POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I move:

That Business of the House Notice of Motion No. 1 be postponed until Tuesday 14 August 2018.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: I move:

The standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow the moving of a motion forthwith relating to conduct of the business of the House this day.

Motion agreed to.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: I move:

That the order of Private Members' Business for today be as follows:

- (1) Private Members' Business item No. 2051 outside the Order of Precedence standing in the name of the Hon. Ben Franklin relating to Anzac Day 2018.
- (2) Private Members' Business item No. 2025 outside the Order of Precedence standing in the name of the Hon. Mark Pearson relating to the live animal export industry.
- (3) Private Members' Business item No. 2268 outside the Order of Precedence standing in the name of the Hon. Ernest Wong relating to a Select Committee on homelessness.
- (4) Private Members' Business item No. 1956 outside the Order of Precedence standing in the name of Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile relating to violence in South Africa.
- (5) Private Members' Business item No. 2142 outside the Order of Precedence standing in the name of the Hon. Taylor Martin relating to the Central Coast Food Futures Forum.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (10:15): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) 25 April is Anzac Day—Australia's most important national day of commemoration;
 - (b) 2014-2018 is the Centenary of Anzac, marking 100 years since Australia's involvement in the First World War; and
 - (c) this year, 2018, marks 100 years since the end of the First World War.
- (2) That this House acknowledges and honours the:
 - (a) contribution, service, sacrifice and bravery of our original Anzacs at Gallipoli and during the First World War; and
 - (b) men and women who have defended our country in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations over the past century.
- (3) That this House recognises that communities across our country, both urban and regional, will come together to mark Anzac Day with dawn services, marches and other community events in memory of those who sacrificed their lives for our country.
- (4) That this House encourages future generations to continue these Anzac remembrance traditions in honour of those who have served our country, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice.

It is with enormous pride that I speak to the importance of Anzac Day, one of the most significant days of commemoration for all Australians. It is a day to remember and honour the sacrifices made by our brave and stoic diggers, which have laid the foundations of our nation and kept us free. Since 2016 this Parliament and the nation have commemorated the centenary of the Anzac. This year will mark 100 years since the end of the First World War. Anzac Day commemorates a key milestone in Australia's history. It is the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War.

On 25 April 1915 Australia and New Zealand formed part of the allied expedition, which set out to capture the Gallipoli peninsula. It was then that the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps [ANZAC] was first established. When the Anzacs landed in Gallipoli they were met by a fierce Turkish resistance. The plan to capture Constantinople soon became a stalemate and thus began a campaign which lasted for eight months. The Anzac forces were evacuated at the end of 1915, after facing great hardship and suffering heavy casualties. More than 26,000 Australian and New Zealand soldiers were killed or wounded during the Gallipoli campaign—a devastating figure for two young countries. The news of the Gallipoli landing and the continued campaign was a significant moment in Australian history and it had a profound impact on Australians. That impact has resounded through the decades and still echoes just as loudly today.

It was for that reason that 25 April became the day for Australians to acknowledge and remember the sacrifice of those who lost their lives not only in the Gallipoli campaign but also during the First World War. The Anzacs were courageous and valorous and although the Gallipoli campaign failed in its military objectives, the actions of the Australian and New Zealand soldiers left us all a powerful legacy. Anzac Day does not commemorate a great military victory and does not glorify war. The Gallipoli campaign was a tragic failure and many lives were lost. For that reason, Anzac Day honours instead the triumph of courage, of solidarity, of resilience and of mateship. That is the spirit of Anzac.

Anzac Day is the day for all of us to remember and honour sacrifice and the high price paid for our freedom. But it is not a day just to honour our Australian diggers from the First World War. It is also a time to pay tribute to the proud service men and women from all conflicts in which our nation has served. For me it is a day imbued with significant personal meaning. My grandfather was a signalman in the Second World War and was killed on the Sandakan Death March in 1945. It is a loss that I have always felt keenly. His tragic and unnecessary death taught me three things: that we must always honour those who fell for us; that we must always support the families of those who do not return; and that, as a society, we have a moral obligation to provide whatever support is needed to those who have returned from conflict but still carry the mental or physical scars of their service to our nation.

Every year Anzac Day ensures that we turn our minds to each of them in a real and meaningful way. Anzac Day is marked with dawn services and marches across Australia, a tradition that continues each year. This year in my patch on the North Coast, services were held in Alstonville, Ballina, Bangalow, Brunswick Heads, Lismore, Evans Head and Byron Bay, just to name a few. I had the pleasure of attending a number of Anzac Day services across the Northern Rivers. On Monday, 23 April I joined with the residents of the Kokoda Retirement Village in Ballina to mark Anzac Day. The beautiful service brought together members the Ballina community—both young and old—to mark the day of commemoration and pay respects to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

I thank LifeCare At Home Northern Region General Manager John Ashby, Florence Price and Kay de Mestre for coordinating a moving and beautiful service. I particularly mention our local Ballina school

representatives who took part in the service, reading prayers, sharing quotes from Australian soldiers deployed in Afghanistan and laying wreaths. Those school leaders are continuing our Anzac tradition: Jade Grant-Britton from Southern Cross Public School; Mia Munro, Kate Goodman, Zach Irwin and Sasha Oxland from Ballina Coast High School; Eloise Hagate from Alstonville High School; and Calen Hagate from Trinity Catholic College—I thank them all. They are our future leaders and wonderful ambassadors for their schools.

With this year marking 100 years since the end of the First World War, the Anzac tradition is as strong as ever. It is important for this day of commemoration to continue for generations to come so that we can always remember those who served our nation and secured our freedom. I share with you the prologue from the Kokoda Retirement Village service which captures the value and importance of this day for Australia:

We are assembled here to commemorate that immortal day when the young men of Australia by their deeds and sacrifice demonstrated to the world at Gallipoli and during World War I that Australia was truly a nation. The sons and daughters of Anzac came forward without question, accepted gladly and discharged fully their responsibilities during World War II, Korea, Malaya, Vietnam, and later operations in the Gulf, Rwanda, Somalia, Iraq, Timor and Afghanistan, as well as many other peacekeeping operations.

On Anzac Day, I also had the pleasure of joining with the Byron Bay community for the Byron Bay dawn service. Byron Bay RSL President Rob Asquith has coordinated the beautiful service for many years and hundreds of locals join with visitors from all corners of the globe to attend it every Anzac Day. To hear the last post played as the sun rises and the birds awake at the newly refurbished memorial gates and cenotaph wall is a deeply moving experience. It is an experience that is a profound reminder of our values and our history, and it is one that stays in the hearts of those visitors who attend and then return to their homes throughout the nation or across the seas. On Anzac Day I also joined with the Ballina RSL sub-branch and members of the Ballina community for their local service. Thousands of proud Ballina residents lined River Street to watch the official Anzac Day procession towards the Ballina RSL, followed by a service at the RSL Club. I must acknowledge the extraordinary Ballina RSL sub-branch President Tony Tartaro and Parade Marshall Darren Murnane for coordinating the beautiful service.

I particularly acknowledge one of our local school leaders who participated in the service. From Richmond Christian College, Ayana Iwawaki gave the commemoration address. It was a beautiful and respectful address which was a clear demonstration of the continuation of the Anzac tradition for generations to come. I acknowledge the Ballina Christian Choir, the Ballina Shire Concert Band and the Ballina Pipe Band for making it a memorable and moving service. It was wonderful to join with hundreds of veterans for lunch at the Ballina RSL. To have the opportunity to meet with them, to hear their stories and to thank them for their service was an honour that I will not forget.

Of course, these events did not just happen on the Northern Rivers. Throughout Australia, in cities and towns, in churches and halls, at cenotaphs and cemeteries, united as a country we paused, reflected and acknowledged those who fought and those who died for what we treasure today. But an acknowledgement and a deep appreciation of the strength and courage and sacrifice of our service men and women is not just restricted to our national borders. The Anzac legacy is honoured around the world. There is no better example of that than the recent words of French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe who, while paying tribute to Anzac troops at the opening of the Sir John Monash Centre, said:

We cannot relive these stories. The mud, the rats, the lice, the gas, the shellfire, the fallen comrades, we can never truly imagine what it was like. So we must tell them. We must show them. Again and again. Show the faces of these young men whose lives were snuffed out in the mud of the trenches.

...

We will never forget their courage, we will never forget that they sacrificed their young, happy and peaceful lives to experience the horrors of war thousands of miles from their homes when they had no obligation to do so. We will never forget that 100 years ago a young and brave nation on the other side of the world made history by writing our history.

Sometimes it is important for this Parliament to stop, to step away from the day-to-day political contretemps and to take stock of the things that really matter. An acknowledgement of Anzac Day and all that it represents is one of those things. It behoves all members in this Chamber, as citizens and as legislators, to never forget everything that our service men and women have given to this nation, to always remember their service and their duty, their courage and their sacrifice, and their lives and their deaths. Lest we forget.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ (10:27): This year is the centenary of the end of World War I—a horrific war that cost the lives of many Australians. I acknowledge all those who served in the army, the navy, the Royal Australian Air Force, the merchant navy, and our police force that has served on peacekeeping contingents. There are also those who are providing humanitarian aid on frontlines, particularly through organisations such as Médecins Sans Frontières. I also acknowledge journalists who report from war zones to expose the atrocities that happen in countries in conflict and where many of them have lost their lives. Australia has been involved in many

conflicts since World War I through to modern conflicts in Syria and Afghanistan—Afghanistan being the longest war that we have been involved in, and Syria running longer than both World War I and World War II. That is because Australians have a deep, abiding hatred of inequality and brutality.

It is the stories of the battlefields of the First World War that particularly lie at the heart of Australia as a modern nation. Members may recall that last year I raised the case of Private Thomas Hurdis and the distress felt by many Australians that Private Hurdis's skull had been removed by an American surgeon and was in a museum in America while his body lay in France. Most Australians would find that distressing. I am able to inform the House that Brigadier Gabriel, the Australian Military Attaché to the United States, has written to me confirming that the remains have been returned to France and will be interred with Private Hurdis's grave in the near term under the control of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Brigadier Gabriel notes:

The care and respect for the remains of our historic casualties remains a priority for Defence and it has been extremely heartening to know that it is also of great interest to the Parliament and people of New South Wales.

I am sure the House will be pleased to receive that information. Private Thomas Hurdis had a brother, John Hurdis, and they both went off to war. Private John Hurdis, a soldier in the 54th Battalion, was also killed. He died on 20 July 1917. Those of us who have a knowledge of military history know what that date represents: he died at Fromelles, where the greatest number of Australian soldiers died in a 24-hour period. Their mother, Harriet, lost two sons. I will read from a letter she wrote on 22 January 1919:

Dear Sir, I received the cards, all safe with very many thanks for the same. I think they are very good. It was awfully sad the two sons went to the front with the A.I.F. and were both dead in less than two years, now I am all alone in the world. I remain yours respectfully, Mrs H Hurdis

Mrs Hurdis also had a daughter. I want to reflect on those who were left behind. We often talk about the soldiers who died in the most horrific way but it is important that we understand what it was like for the people who were left behind in Australia. Mrs Hurdis had to write a letter to find out what happened to her son Thomas. In October 1919, almost a year after his death, she wrote:

Dear Sir, As my son private Thomas Hurdis died of wounds in France on 3rd of October 1917, leaving his money and belongings by will to me his mother and his sister, do you know anything about his papers or anything belonging to him whether they have come back from staff pay master in London or not.

Private Hurdis's sister followed that up with another letter about her brother Private John Hurdis. She wrote to the officer in charge:

Dear Sir, My brother, Corporal J. Hurdis was killed in action in France on July 19th or 20th, he was in the reinforcements of second Battalion when he left in September last year and while in Egypt was changed to 54th Battalion. He left all his money with the military authorities. My mother being in a weak state of health is in need of the money, which is willed to her.

I have been to the Barracks here but can get no information, could you tell me how to get the money. We only want what our own dear boy has earned. Mother needs it more than the military.

This is about a woman whose two sons went off to war and were killed, in the days before women had any support or income. Two years later she and her daughter were writing to the military to try to get money owing. The remains of Private John Hurdis were never found. His mother wrote a number of times to the military trying to get information about his remains. The descriptions of the battle at Fromelles show that it was like a butcher's shop and bodies were obliterated. I can understand why Mrs Hurdis was never informed about a grave for her son but to be chasing her sons' pay two years later must have been very distressing for her. In August 1920, three years after Private John Hurdis died, the Australian Imperial Forces wrote to Mrs Hurdis, stating:

Dear Madam, It is noted that you are registered on the records of the late Lance Corporal J. Hurdis, 54th Battalion, as next of kin, but, in order that our file may be brought up to date, it is desired to learn whether the above-named soldier had any nearer blood relations than yourself ...

This is a letter to the mother of Private Hurdis asking whether there is a blood relative closer to him than herself—

For instance, is his father still alive, if so I shall be much obliged for his name and address at your earliest convenience.

Mrs Hurdis wrote:

Dear Sir, Your letter to hand today with reference to Lance Corporal John Hurdis ... The Father's name is John also but whether dead or alive is not known, as it is now about 14 years since I have seen or heard of him, and at the time his son was killed the military people kept me waiting twelve months for his Defence pay, so I can only conclude that trying to find the father was the reason, and every effort to find him seemed to fail.

That was appalling treatment of a woman who had lost two sons, particularly given what had happened to one of her sons, but it is indicative of what women went through following the First World War. We remember the sacrifices that our soldiers made, which were many—they were obliterated at Fromelles, Polygon Wood, the third battle of Polygon Wood in particular at Passchendaele and Pozieres—and how so many died. Many of these sons

never returned to their families. We remember also the women who were left to raise families alone with no means of support. That is why the memorials that were developed around the First World War are so significant to us.

The Hyde Park Anzac War Memorial was built at the urging of women who had lost their sons during the war as a place of quiet reflection where families could go to remember their loss. I note that the memorial is being upgraded for the centenary. It is important that we remember the origins of such places. Part of the Centennial and Moore parklands was used as a camp site for our soldiers before they went to Gallipoli. Anzac Parade is so called because that is the road on which they marched. Indeed, Anzac Parade is the first memorial to our soldiers. It is concerning to me that the obelisk has been moved back into the parklands rather than marking the road, but it is the road that is the memorial. Every time people drive along Anzac Parade they should remember that this road is a commemoration to our soldiers who marched off to war and that Moore Park is where they camped. The parklands are also important to our heritage. The area around Kippax Lake was a mortar range and the lake was filled with ammunition.

These landmarks, which are situated next to the Victoria Barracks, are significant historical sites. It is important that we maintain the ideals that formed the Hyde Park Anzac War Memorial and Anzac Parade. I am pleased to see the investment in the war memorial but we must remember it was built as a place of quiet reflection for the women who lost so much, who were left alone and who were provided with so little support. Mrs Hurdis sent sixpence worth of stamps to obtain a copy of a pamphlet relating to her son's war grave. For a woman in her circumstances, that expense would have been difficult for her. It is important to remember what those left behind went through and what they lost.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN (10:38): I acknowledge the wonderful contribution by the Hon. Lynda Voltz. I too acknowledge that we tend to focus on what was happening overseas. Certainly, those who survived suffered extreme pain, as was indicated in the letters referred to by the Hon. Lynda Voltz. I acknowledge the Hon. Ben Franklin for moving this motion. Charlie Lynn, a former member, was passionate to the cause of remembering our service people and the history of the wars. He has trekked the Kokoda Trail, at last count, about 75 times. Having trekked it once, Charlie's suit must have a big "S" on it for "Superman". It is an arduous walk. There are two types of treks: one is the tourism trail, which is approximately 90 kilometres long, and the other, where trekkers can soak up the ambience and hear about the history of the Australian service people who fought on the Kokoda Trail, is 152 kilometres long.

When I was a mayor, I had the privilege of leading a young team on a trek of the Kokoda Trail. The team comprised bright young people who were learning about leadership and others who were challenging, disengaged youth. We trekked 142 kilometres of the 152 kilometres. We missed out on the Golden Steps in the forest. I do not know if I could have made it up those steps. The opening scene of the movie *Kokoda* shows men trudging through mud that is similar to quicksand and pulling their mates up out of the mud with their rifles. They looked like pieces of pottery because they were plastered in clay.

As the Hon. Lynda Voltz said, the soldiers dealt with the mud and climbing the mountains as well as the decimation and disembowelling of their mates by bombs. It was a raw atmosphere. On the trail, trekkers stop at Surgeon's Rock to hear about the doctors who had to decide in an instant whether to place a soldier in the "living" or the "dying" line, whether to apply a tourniquet to a limb or to cut it off, and which men to allocate to the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels who would take them down the mountain. Once you see the rock and hear the stories you can feel the atmosphere of the Kokoda Trail.

Commodore Simon Hart, CSC, MSc, MA, who led our trek, lives and breathes the history of Kokoda, as does Charlie. Commodore Hart, who works as a team leader for Adventure Kokoda, is passionate about the history. When I stood at Surgeon's Rock, as a former nurse it was difficult for me to understand the speed of the triage and the decisions. We stopped to feel and consider what would have been happening at that time. All hell was breaking loose, they were under threat from snipers and the enemy was drawing closer. But at Surgeon's Rock—with blood pouring over the rock, down the mountainside and into the gullies and streams, and in an environment of tropical heat—they were making life-and-death decisions.

Those who have worked in a hospital and who have seen the death of tissue from gangrene and smelt the stench of decaying flesh would understand the price paid. There would have been mayhem on the side of those hills. To make things worse, the soldiers could not walk up the easy part of the ridge. As all bushies know, it is easier to walk up the ridgeline. But on the Kokoda Trail the soldiers were a prime target, so they had to travel around the ridge. By walking along the ridgeline, the bushies avoid the lantana and noxious weeds, but lantana covers the side of the mountain and that is the hardest way to go. However, the soldiers had to travel around the mountain for the sake of survival. Upon getting a sense of the heat, the decaying flesh, the blood running down the mountain and the chaos, the trekkers start to realise the deep price that these men paid.

One of the greatest privileges of being a politician is that I have gone through a journey from being a person who knew of Anzac Day to a person who is deeply honoured to represent the community on Anzac Day. Most members look forward to representing their community in remembering the price that was paid. Anzac Day marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War. This year, 25 April 2018, marked 100 years since our involvement in the First World War. This year I attended the remembrance ceremony at Greenwell Point where 5,000 people come to watch the sun rise over the horizon. When they do so they may get a sense of hope that the soldiers had on a new day that perhaps they had a chance for freedom and to get the hell out of there. That essence of hope and resurrection comes with the sunrise.

I reflect upon Australia's involvement at Gallipoli. Gallipoli was the first major battle Australians fought as a nation, with soldiers from every State of the newly federated Australia volunteering to fight. The sheer scale of casualties seared itself into our national soul. The battle lasted 8½ months, during which time 7,600 Australians and 2,500 New Zealanders were killed and 24,000 people were wounded. Gallipoli was not the first time that Australians had been in battle and by no means was it an outstanding success. In fact, Gallipoli was a battle we lost whereas Kokoda was a battle we won. It is an amazing story. People ask why we celebrate a defeat. It is very Australian to come together to remember a sacrifice that paved the way to our ongoing freedom.

I spoke of the privilege of being a politician. A further aspect is that our position causes us to investigate and learn more about history. I wrote to Canberra to find out about my pop, Private Edward George Phipps, who enlisted at Paddington, New South Wales, on 21 October 1941. My mum told me recently—which means any time in the last three years—that pop was leaving Ballina to catch a train to Sydney on the day that nan was giving birth. The train was held up so that pop could be there for the birth, meet the child and then join the train. That grace of goodwill ensured that he knew what he was fighting for. The train was held up as long as possible to ensure that spending time with his wife and child before beginning his journey would bring encouragement to his heart. Many young men were looking forward to the experience; they did not understand what lay ahead.

My pop joined the Australian 2/4th Battalion. I learned from my research at the Australian War Memorial that the 2/4th Battalion's first draft of recruits arrived at the Ingleburn camp on 3 November 1939, following the formation of its headquarters at the Victoria Barracks in Sydney the previous week. The Hon. Lynda Voltz talked about the value of the park and that soldiers camped there, which I did not know. It is rich information that supports the need to protect certain areas and understand their history. The battalion departed Sydney to serve overseas on 10 January 1940 as part of the 16th Brigade of the Australian 6th Division. While the battalion was en route for the Middle East, Australian infantry brigades were reorganised along the British lines with three platoons instead of four. This meant that the 2/4th Battalion was eventually transferred to the 19th Brigade but remained part of the 6th Division.

Arriving in the Middle East on 14 February 1940, the 2/4th Battalion trained in Palestine and Egypt in preparation for its campaign against the Italians in East Libya but it was more active during the battle of Tobruk from 21 to 22 January 1941. In early April 1941 the 2/4th Battalion, together with the 6th Division, was deployed to Greece to resist the anticipated German invasion. After training in Palestine, the 2/4th Battalion joined in the force garrisoning in Syria. The battalion completed its duty in mid-January 1942. On 12 February they embarked for home and arrived in Adelaide on 27 March.

In June, the 19th Brigade was deployed to defend Darwin and the 2/4th Battalion remained there for what became a boring and frustrating year. The brigade rejoined the rest of the 6th Division, training in North Queensland in June 1943. It would be another 18 months before it again saw action. On 2 November 1944 the 2/4th Battalion landed at Aitape in New Guinea to undertake its only campaign against the Japanese. Its most intense effort took place between April and July of that year. Following the Japanese surrender on 15 August, drafts of the 2/4th Battalion men began returning to Australia for discharge. The remainder of the battalion arrived home on 26 October and disbanded at Chermside in Queensland on 12 November 1949. My pop was discharged on 12 December 1945. He never mentioned anything about his war service.

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: They rarely do.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Indeed. Many servicemen were silent about what they saw and did. Sadly, it was because of the deprivation they experienced and the carnage that they witnessed, which I spoke about earlier. No good comes from humans hurting humans. It would be one's worst nightmare to be confronted with those firearms and bombs with little opportunity to fight back. It is little wonder, given their pain, that so many returned service men and women did not share their stories. I appreciate that the Hon. Ben Franklin has moved this motion. It is an important motion that should be moved annually. Lest we forget.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (10:53): I speak to the motion moved by the Hon. Ben Franklin. I note the importance of this motion for members in this place and thank the Hon. Ben Franklin for moving it.

Anzac Day is a solemn day of remembrance and our communities gather to commemorate this sacred day when the deeds and sacrifices of our young men showed the world that Australia was emerging as a nation. On this day we remember their sacrifice and mourn them with pride. We take strength from the knowledge that young Australians today and in the future will never forget the examples set by their forebears.

Anzac Day is commemorated across the nation by communities in country towns and cities. It was a great honour for me to represent Minister Stuart Ayres for Anzac Day services in Penrith while he had the honour of attending the commemorations in France. This year I represented Minister Ayres at Penrith, Emu Plains and Glenbrook. I recall being part of many Anzac Day services throughout my school years in Penrith. On Anzac Day I wondered what had become of the obelisk and memorial at the Castlereagh Public School, which was closed in the late 1970s or early 1980s. I remember that the students looked after the obelisk in the school playground. I attended a one-teacher school. In the classroom the infants faced one direction and the primary school students faced the other and the teacher ran from one end to the other to teach us. I have fond memories of that school.

More importantly, our classroom, which was about the same size as this Chamber, had memorial boards hanging on the walls. As we worked every day in the classroom, we would look at the boards that were filled with asterisks, which informed us which young men from the rural community of Castlereagh served in the Great War. That community does not exist anymore because the Penrith Lakes Scheme and urban development has swallowed it up. The school building is still there, but, sadly, there is no service at the obelisk. However, on Anzac Day I went there to pay my respect.

I take this opportunity to thank the people who organised the Anzac Day events that I attended this year. The City of Penrith RSL Sub-Branch is a mighty sub-branch in Sydney. President Mr Mick McConnell and vice-presidents Brian Cartwright and Peter Todd organised the dawn service on Anzac Day, which was followed by a well-attended service at Memory Park in Penrith a few days earlier. Approximately 500 representatives from the local schools attended as well as members of the local military establishments.

On Anzac Day I attended the service at the Blaxland-Glenbrook RSL Sub-Branch, which is on the right-hand side of the highway at Glenbrook. It was an impressive service, which was large and well organised. A military contingent from the Royal Australian Air Force base participated in the march. Approximately 1,000 people attended that service, including a lot of veterans. The service particularly focused on the 100-year anniversary of the Battle of Villers-Bretonneux. It was amazing to see the French, New Zealand and Australian flags flying from the masts at the RSL club. We sang each of the national anthems, which proved to be a moving ceremony. The Emu Guide Association held a different service at Dukes Oval, Emu Plains. In recent years their service has become popular. It was attended by approximately 500 to 600 students from the local schools. After the service at the Girl Guides Hall, we walked across the road to the obelisk in the oval. There was a big community crowd rather than military service men and women.

Each year that passes during the centenary of the First World War we acknowledge anniversary milestones from the Great War. I have mentioned in this place before that this solemn day allows me to reflect on my own family's service. My great-uncle Frank Farrar from Badgerys Creek—the only brother of my grandfather—enlisted in 1917 in Liverpool at the age of 21. On 5 September 1918, one year after enlisting, Frank was killed by shelling at Péronne in the big push in the Battle of Somme on the Western Front in France. Tragically, it was only six weeks before the armistice that he was lost. The great General Monash was the commander at the time.

Throughout the generations my family, like many families, lived with an ever-present sense of loss of great-uncle Frank; however, we were also proud of his service to the country. In recent years I discovered that the portrait of a World War I soldier in the living room of our home at Badgerys Creek was not a portrait of great-uncle Frank because we had no photographs of him; the picture was put there by the family many years ago to symbolise his presence. I found out about that only when the house was sold and its contents were dispersed. Military service in my family continued. My grandfather, Bruce Peterson, served in the militia in Kokoda, Papua New Guinea, where he was wounded. He was sent there to hold back the Japanese and his battalion did a noble job even though it was under-resourced, not well trained and not well led. The Australian Imperial Force was subsequently diverted to Papua New Guinea. My great-uncle returned from the war a tragically changed man. Even now it is difficult to talk about what that meant to my family and why for a long time Anzac Day was a sobering day for me.

My sister, Michelle Larson, joined the army and served for some years in a period of non-conflict. Her son, Michael Larson—my oldest nephew—served in the army as a chef at Holsworthy. I often wonder whether his sons will continue in military service. I pay tribute to my family and I acknowledge all the men and women who made the supreme sacrifice to serve our country. Only some of them returned. The Hon. Lynda Voltz referred earlier to all those who kept the home fires burning. I am proud of the society we represent today—a society borne from sacrifice and honour—a community that is both diverse and united. Last month the Minister for Veterans

Affairs David Elliott and I took soil samples from the Redfern War Memorial and the Anzac Obelisk in Moore Park. Earlier the Hon. Lynda Voltz referred to the relocation of that obelisk and to the services that are held there on Anzac Day. Paddington RSL embraced that relocation as it can now conduct services at the obelisk. In a sense the move regenerated an interest in the grounds where the men camped before they were dispatched to war. It has been relocated to a beautiful setting not far from the road.

Soldiers from across Sydney who answered the call to fight in the Great War will be honoured in a moving artwork at the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park. The samples of soil that have been collected will be placed in the Hall of Service at the refurbished Anzac Memorial in commemoration of all those who served. The Soil Collection Project is part of the New South Wales Government's upgrade of the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park during the Centenary of Anzac—an exciting and inspiring project. As a councillor in the City of Sydney we embarked on a project to complete the Anzac Memorial which was never finished due to a lack of funds. The project has now been completed and enhanced in commemoration of the Centenary of Armistice.

Soil samples from more than 1,600 sites across New South Wales where young soldiers were enlisted to fight are being collected as part of the Anzac Memorial Centenary Project. Those samples will be placed in the renovated Hall of Service and include the name of the town from which they were collected. It was a privilege to be involved in two important ceremonies to commemorate all those who served their country and who contributed to the Anzac legacy. Many Australian soldiers who enlisted to serve our country in World War I came from Sydney and the Government wants to ensure that all their names are included. Diggers from across the Sydney region made an enormous sacrifice in foreign conflicts and it is important to remember them all. The Anzac Memorial Centenary Project, which will include an enhancement of the Anzac Memorial, will realise the vision of its architect, Bruce Dellit. New spaces will be created where interpretive education classes can occur. Due to financial constraints in the 1930s work did not proceed on Bruce Dellit's plans for a water cascade on Liverpool Street.

As we commemorate the Centenary of Anzac, New South Wales has an opportunity to complete Dellit's vision. The Anzac Memorial Centenary Project will include a record of the involvement of soldiers from New South Wales in all wars and peacekeeping missions and honour all those who served. This project was made possible by a \$20.3 million contribution from the New South Wales Government and a \$19.6 million contribution from the Commonwealth Anzac Centenary Public Fund. The City of Sydney spent \$3.4 million upgrading the Pool of Reflection which has been completed and which looks amazing. An additional \$4.1 million has been spent on associated works in Hyde Park around the memorial precinct. As the Centenary of Anzac draws to a close, this project will be a respectful addition to the Anzac Memorial and introduce stunning new features that will enhance its reputation as a New South Wales landmark.

I will refer briefly to an important event that was held at the Anzac Memorial. On 2 May French President Emmanuel Macron visited the memorial and told a commemorative ceremony, "No distance is too far for those who carry deep in their hearts the painful, privileged memory of brotherhood in arms." Three Australians who fought in France were awarded the Légion d'Honneur. President Macron referred to Australia's contribution to the Allied cause in two world wars and said:

We will answer the call every time we need each other ...

Walking in their footsteps is about fighting terrorism side by side, as we are doing in the Levant, and together taking action against the financing of terror.

He was referring to its relevance today and continued:

It is about building, over the next 50 years, an outstanding strategic partnership that enables us to defend together our idea of law, freedom and sovereignty.

It is about refusing to stand by powerless when this untold sorrow is inflicted on men, women and children in Syria with chemical weapons that the international community believed it had banished for all time after the Great War.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull told the audience at the ceremony, "Two nations that have fought and bled and died together will stay together." Premier Gladys Berejiklian read the World War I poem *In Flanders Fields*. President Macron awarded the Légion d'Honneur—the highest military honour that France awards to those who are not French nationals—to three British servicemen who migrated to Australia after the war. He bestowed the honour on Louis Solomons who is 101 years old, Bill Mackay who is 93 years old and Norman Saunders who is 91 years old for their roles in the liberation of France, with all three involved in the D-Day landings of 1944 or their immediate follow-up. It was a great honour for them. President Macron told the three men, "Veterans, barely into adulthood, you were already heroes." In his address, President Macron said that pupils of Branly Lycee in Amiens, where he is from—a dozen of whom had been brought by the French Government to the ceremony in Hyde Park where they read out letters from World War I veterans—had "travelled back down the road taken by 313,000 Australian soldiers to the Western Front over 100 years ago." He continued:

60,000 never came back. More than 11,000 fell in France and lay in rest on our soil today. We will never forget them.

It was great that he attended the ceremony. The Anzac Memorial is a reminder of all those who fought for freedom and who made the supreme sacrifice. I wanted to attend that ceremony on 2 May but I was disappointed when I discovered that the park was closed. Police on horses prevented the public from going into the park to see the French President and the Australian Prime Minister observing our great partnership and commemorating all those who made the supreme sacrifice. I do not think that is why the memorial was built. Whilst I recognise that there were security issues—we always have to be vigilant and protect the liberties for which our soldiers fought—it was disappointing that members of the public were not able to observe that important ceremony. I commend the motion to the House and thank the Hon. Ben Franklin for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. Lest we forget.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (11:08): I thank the Hon. Ben Franklin for moving his motion to commemorate Anzac Day, which is held on 25 April each year. It is Australia's most important commemoration. I am not an ex-serviceman who went to any war, but I spent 22 years in the Army Reserve and I was a member of the 45th Battalion and then later the 4th Battalion and I marched in the Anzac Day parade with all the national servicemen. Usually there are about 500 of them and they form one of the biggest contingents in the Anzac Day march. I am pleased that the number of people attending the march and those participating in it is growing; there are crowds of people all along the route of the Anzac Day march. I congratulate the Government on facilitating that event and ensuring that the police maintain good order so everyone can either participate in it or watch it. The Centenary of Anzac marks 100 years since Australia's involvement in the First World War and 2018 marks 100 years since the end of the First World War.

My father came from England, so he was in the British Army in World War I and served in France in the Gloucestershire Regiment. It is an unusual regiment, one of the few that has a badge on the front and back of each hat. It did that because, for some reason, it was always surrounded by the enemy. The joke was that if the enemy came from behind it would see the badge and know that it was the Gloucestershire Regiment. Amazingly, during the Korean War the Gloucestershire Regiment was again surrounded by the Chinese army, yet it survived. The habit it had of placing a badge on the front and back of each hats was necessary on that occasion as well. My father migrated to Australia but he also took part in Anzac Day marches because a large contingent of former British servicemen who came to live in Australia used to take part in the march. The Australian and British armies have always worked closely together, as we work closely with the New Zealand army. I support this motion, which states:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) 25 April is Anzac Day—Australia's most important national day of commemoration;
 - (b) 2014-2018 is the Centenary of Anzac, marking 100 years since Australia's involvement in the First World War; and
 - (c) this year, 2018, marks 100 years since the end of the First World War.
- (2) That this House acknowledges and honours the:
 - (a) contribution, service, sacrifice and bravery of our original Anzacs at Gallipoli and during the First World War; and
 - (b) men and women who have defended our country in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations over the past century.
- (3) That this House recognises that communities across our country, both urban and regional, will come together to mark Anzac Day with dawn services, marches and other community events in memory of those who sacrificed their lives for our country.
- (4) That this House encourages future generations to continue these Anzac remembrance traditions in honour of those who have served our country, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice.

I am pleased that the war memorial in Hyde Park is being renovated and will be reopened later this year—I think on Armistice Day. I have been organising a Beersheba commemoration to be held at that time at the war memorial in Hyde Park. We held our first commemoration last year on the anniversary of the Battle of Beersheba, where Australians achieved a great success against the Turkish army. I felt that that battle should be commemorated, and so we started this tradition last year in 2017. In 2018 there will again be a Beersheba commemoration at the war memorial to acknowledge those who served and died for their nation in their desire to promote peace between the nations of the world. Sometimes it is necessary to defend these traditions which is why army units serve overseas, but only to achieve a peaceful outcome so that nations can live together in harmony. I am pleased to support this motion.

Mr SCOT MacDONALD (11:14): I support the motion moved by the Hon. Ben Franklin—a fine and important motion. This year, 2018, is the 100 year commemoration of the end of hostilities. I will refer today to

the country commemorations that I have attended. I have been to only one commemoration service in Martin Place; I prefer to attend country services. This year I attended three services on the morning of 25 April. I started at Kearsley, a small town next to Cessnock. In debate on a similar motion I said that the Kearsley Anzac commemoration is not run by an RSL but by a community committee and it is called the Kearsley Community Dawn Service. I acknowledge the chair Mr Jordan Fallon, secretary Mr Dale Goldie, treasurer Mrs Pam Snaddon and general members Mr Col Fraser, Mr Hudson Fallon, Mr Chris Fallon, and Mr Stephen Donn.

It was a great service despite the cold that morning in Kearsley. The community comes together at a memorial that has been built next to the community hall. That service is steadily growing. I want that to be the theme of my contribution. It is a moving service. As the dawn breaks, there is a short march back to the memorial from a few streets away, supported by various emergency services. The community falls in behind the march, behind the veterans and the serving officers and then the speeches are made. I was a guest and represented the Premier at the service and I really enjoyed it. There would not have been more than 200 or 250 people at that service but they fell in, listened to the speakers and observed the commemoration.

Kearsley is like many small country towns across New South Wales and Australia that do not have all the bells and whistles. One hundred years ago those communities sent off what I always think of as an inordinate number of their young generation. People who went to serve were often aged 17 or 18—below the age of enlistment. They served in disproportionate numbers to their community. Young countrymen enlisted in big numbers and served overseas. We know that 66,000 Australians were killed. When I travel to country towns like Guyra, where I live, Kearsley, Raymond Terrace—which I visited later that day—and Seaham, which has a knitting circle about which I will speak later, I am always struck by the names that are written on various plinths and memorials. Those names represent young men and women who were not just part of a crowd in a large city; they were known intimately by the community. They would have gone to school, worked in the fields, shops and banks, and worked in mines in the Hunter Valley. They were friends, nieces and nephews. They were not just a part of a large city where they may not have been noticed; they were a part of the fabric of their communities that noted and felt their loss..

I did a bit of research before I spoke at the Kearsley community dawn service and I gained the impression that these were men who worked down pit. They were all well known in their community and it was a big shock when telegrams started coming from places like Gallipoli, the Western Front and Fromelles. We have all seen fictional and non-fictional examples of people who are fearful of receiving such telegrams. Was it the family down the road? Was it someone else they might have known? Was it a member of their immediate family? These men were overseas in large numbers and the telegrams started to come. I have enormous respect for the sacrifice that was made by the men and women of regional and rural New South Wales. I repeat: That sacrifice was disproportionate. They were young and fit. They had skills in things such as tunnelling and engineering. Above all, they were proud to be a part of the Empire, as it was in those days. Some did it for the money, others did it for adventure. They did it for a range of reasons.

Each time I attend an Anzac Day commemoration at Kearsley, Raymond Terrace and Seaham I observe that it is mainly the younger people who are now ensuring that the sacrifices of the local service personnel are properly honoured. As I said earlier, Jordan Fallon is the chair of the Kearsley Community Dawn Service Inc. He also works in the office of member for Cessnock. I admire Jordan for showing leadership in his community. It is now 100 years since Australia's involvement in the First World War. The last survivor died about 10 years ago. My grandfather served in the First World War. He was wounded on the Western Front in August 1917; it almost cost him his life. I am proud to say that the responsibility for never forgetting those sacrifices appears to have been willingly adopted by the younger generation.

I will briefly mention the village of Seaham and the Seaham Knitting Circle Memorial, which was erected in remembrance of local boys who enlisted in the First World War. Seaham is rather unusual because there is no actual township. There are only a small number of houses, a school and a local store. The Seaham Knitting Circle comprised a group of ladies from the district who prepared comforts in the form of socks and beanies and sent them to serving soldiers. They also supported the families of soldiers who were serving overseas. Those ladies were very conscious of the sacrifice that their community was making in the lower Hunter area. Those soldiers were not strangers to these women—they were family, friends, people they had grown up with. These ladies were mothers who were either losing their sons or their sons were being injured. Many soldiers served for four to five years overseas. That is a long time for the community back home to be uncertain about the fate of their family and friends. At the end of the hostilities in 1918 a flag pole, with a plaque set in front of it, was erected on a road out of town. There are no houses near it. That memorial has become the focal point for the community to mark the sacrifice of the local boys from the lower Hunter region.

This year I attended the mid-morning Anzac Day commemoration service at Seaham. Unfortunately, we were washed out—in some respects that was good because a dry spell in the weather was broken—so we retreated

to the Seaham community hall, which shows how soft we are. That great ceremony was supported by the younger members of the community, including the scouts and emergency services personnel. The members of the Seaham community who do not want to forget will continue that work and maintain the memorial. I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Veterans Affairs, Mr David Elliott.

About four years ago the Government established the Community War Memorials Fund to help conserve, repair and protect war memorials across New South Wales. The funding is about \$5,000 or \$10,000 for each memorial. Many of these memorials are almost 100 years old so they are naturally fading—for example, the lettering is hard to read on the Lambton Park Memorial Gates. In fact, because of weathering the engraving is no longer visible. I have encouraged the Seaham Knitting Circle to apply for a grant via council. This was a small but important gesture on the part of this Government, and even though we are coming to the end of the four-year commemoration I am hopeful that the funding will continue.

At the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918 the Great War ended. However, history shows that the hostilities did not automatically finish at that time—there were further casualties. Sickness and illness from the Spanish Flu Pandemic followed and thousands more died, including soldiers who had survived the hostilities. At that time the population of Australia was about six million people. About 400,000 men served in the First World War, we lost 66,000 men and many others were wounded, including my grandfather. It was a terrible scar on our history. The sum of lives lost in all the wars after the First World War, including the Second World War, Malayan Emergency, Korean War, Vietnam War, have not added to that same toll yet Australia's population has increased manyfold. That gives some vision as to the scope of the willingness to sacrifice wave upon wave of men from Australia, New Zealand and all sides of the conflict, in horrendous circumstances.

The British lost a generation. The Germans also lost a generation and they basically descended into anarchy, which led in no small part to the next huge conflict where tens of millions of people died. We should not gloss over our history. This was a terrible sacrifice. I have read many books about it. The conditions those men worked under were astounding. Previous speakers have commented that such poor conditions, food, supplies, et cetera, would not be tolerated today. In fact, when they first started they did not even have functional uniforms. Generals congratulated themselves on all being quiet on the Western Front where only 100 died on any given day. We would not tolerate that, and nor should we tolerate it, in the future. I support this great motion moved by the Hon. Ben Franklin.

The Hon. LOU AMATO (11:28): I support the motion moved by the Hon. Ben Franklin. I also thank all members who made a valuable contribution to this important debate. Each year we make customary tributes to our brothers and sisters who fought for our freedom. Many gave their lives so we can stand free. We know them as the Anzacs. Their heroic deeds are not only legendary but they have also become part of the internal motivations of every good Australian. But sometimes I wonder, as I am sure many others do, whether we have forgotten the true purpose of their deeds. What really was the true purpose of their deeds, and do we as a nation live our lives in honour of that purpose? To me, the true purpose of the great deeds of the Anzacs was to protect freedom.

Thousands of lives were lost and bodies forever maimed in the cause of freedom. Mothers and fathers wept when they received the news of a lost child due to the oppressions of war. Parents' hearts ached, with tormented minds wondering if their beloved child died a swift death or laid upon the battlefield with a broken body, crying out in agony as their life slowly ebbed away and death finally took their pain. I remember speaking to surviving Anzacs when I was a young boy and they described to me being on the battlefield when a mate was mortally wounded. They told me how, as their mate lay upon the ground dying in agony, they would cry for their mothers or ask God to help them in those final moments. They were willing to die for a cause, and that cause was the freedoms that we all now enjoy.

If those brave souls died for our freedom, we must hold freedom as sacrosanct. We must honour their deaths by being stalwart champions for freedom. We as a people honouring the cause of freedom is far more appreciative than dawn services, marches and the laying of wreaths on Anzac Day. These activities are important and integral to our honouring of our beloved Anzacs, but they become reduced to rituals if we do not live our daily lives in reflection of the cause they died for. They died for our freedom. They died so we could enjoy a democratic Australia where freedom of speech is not an idea but a part of who we are. I wonder: Do we really live our lives mindful of the freedom fought in blood for each and every one of us?

As a member of this place, I feel many have forgotten the sacrifice paid in blood so that we can live free. Many Australians feel that our right to free speech is steadily being eroded. Political correctness and other anti-conservative values have been largely responsible for the decline in our right to freedom of speech. If the allies had lost in World War II, Europe would have been under Nazi control and the people of Europe would have had to live under the political correctness of Nazi fascism. Australia and the Pacific would have been under Japanese control. I need not here recount the atrocities committed by the Nazi and Japanese regimes during the

war, they are known to all. If those atrocities are any indication of what may have been, we can postulate that the freedom of speech we as a nation enjoy would be non-existent if our Anzacs were not willing to die to uphold freedom.

Do we here in this place, who are not presently faced with the horrors of war, uphold freedom? I sometimes wonder whether we have forgotten the true cause of the Anzacs and have replaced our obligations to uphold freedom with dawn services and wreath laying. No, we must do better than that. All of us here have witnessed an increasing socialist left ideology creeping into our midst that we all know has caused a gradual but slow erosion of our freedoms. Lest we forget. Or, should I say, let us remember whilst we are still free to do so?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (11:34): I speak on the importance of Anzac Day and of our service men and women who have sacrificed and are currently sacrificing their freedom so that we may enjoy our own in this beautiful country and the State that we call home. I thank the Hon. Ben Franklin for moving this motion and for bringing it forward to debate today. It is important for all our communities throughout New South Wales. I note in particular the comments of Mr Scot MacDonald about the sacrifice of regional communities and the significance of memorials in regional New South Wales, and about the work the Government is doing to remember that sacrifice and the importance of memorials in those communities.

This year 25 April meant a lot to all of us, particularly for me. For some people it was considered a holiday; for other people it was a chance to reflect; for me it was deeply personal. This year I had the great opportunity to represent the Premier and the New South Wales Government in Villers-Bretonneux and in Ypres, Belgium—at my own expense—during the dawn ceremony at the official ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of Australia's capture of Villers-Bretonneux and our wonderful campaign there. In attendance at the ceremony were His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales; the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP; the Prime Minister of France; the Hon. Tony Abbott, MP, the member for Warringah; and many other dignitaries. Most importantly, there was a crowd of more than 8,000 pilgrims to the Australian War Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux.

Like many of those 8,000 people at Villers-Bretonneux on a cold French morning, I came with a family connection. My great-uncle Lance Corporal William Arthur Miller's sacrifice is commemorated at the Villers-Bretonneux memorial. He enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force's 18th Infantry Battalion on 8 July 1915, from the little town of Grenfell in regional New South Wales. Referring to Mr Scot MacDonald's point earlier, Grenfell is a town that gave up so many of its sons for that battle. The memorial at Grenfell displays hundreds of names of people from that town and it makes one think of the significance of that loss to a small community like that 100 years ago.

Sadly, William Arthur Miller would not return from France. He died a little over a year after his deployment, on 4 August 1916, at the age of 24, likely in the area known as the "windmill site" at Pozières. He is commemorated with thousands of other Australians at Villers-Bretonneux. I grew up with a cigar box containing medals at the bottom of my grandpa's wardrobe—medals that I did not really know the story of but used to like to pull out and play with or look at when I was a child. Only in recent years did I come to know the stories of those medals when I found a little box next to them which had "Decd" on it—deceased—and was able to trace my great-uncle's story, thanks to the work of the National Archives in providing all servicemen's records from the Great War, which is of wonderful assistance to all families of those who served.

A significant memorial to the Australian service men and women has been built at Villers-Bretonneux, the Sir John Monash Centre. It is an interactive display that brings to life the sacrifice of our soldiers on the Western Front. I pay tribute to the Hon. Tony Abbott, the member for Warringah, who, in his time as Prime Minister, made the announcement of that memorial on Remembrance Day. A great centre has been built there to remember the Australian sacrifice on the Western Front. People can go there to remember the sacrifice of their family members, to see what they went through and to better understand the battles and, of course, Australia's great achievements.

While I was in Villers-Bretonneux on 25 April, it was amazing for me to think of Australia's despair with the deployment in Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 but to also think of Australia's triumph in Villers-Bretonneux and the great scope of Australia's service on the Western Front. The family of Sir John Monash was at the ceremony. I got to meet some of his family members. Sir John Monash was an amazing soldier and strategist. He was one of the greatest in the empire at the time. The sacrifice of our soldiers and the triumph of our soldiers is not forgotten.

I turn now to great-uncle William Arthur Miller. During the time of his enlistment William's family moved from Grenfell to Meredith Street, Homebush. It is an area I am more familiar with than Grenfell. They moved to Elstow, Meredith Street, Homebush, where records show that Oswald Cleveland Pain was born. Oswald Cleveland Pain died in the Great War on 19 July 1917. This story, like many others, shows the gravity of the loss that our fledgling nation endured in a war thousands of miles from our shores. From a population of fewer than

five million, 416,809 men enlisted, of which more than 60,000 were killed and 156,000 were wounded, gassed or taken prisoner.

The most moving Anzac service I have ever experienced was at Villers-Bretonneux, where it felt as if their spirits were with you. Some 8,000 Australians were present to remember that sacrifice. It was a moving experience on a cold and wet morning in Villers-Bretonneux. It was amazing to stand on the front and feel appreciation from the community for Australia's service to their town. The adage of "Never forget Australia" and Australian flags and kangaroos in shops throughout the Somme keeps alive the memory of service by Australia and other Commonwealth nations.

That was reflected upon by the French Prime Minister, Édouard Philippe, in the many stories he told. The Hon. Wes Fang will be pleased to hear that one of those stories spoke of a soldier from Wagga Wagga. His Royal Highness Prince Charles also remarked upon that soldier and his sacrifice. It was particularly moving to see the photos and images of those who had given their lives in service of our country shown on the memorial tower in Villers-Bretonneux. One of those individuals was the soldier from Wagga Wagga. When I had the opportunity to speak to Prince Charles he spoke of that soldier, as well as his love for Bundy rum and his memories of this Chamber when he visited in the 1970s. Following from Villers-Bretonneux I continued to Belgium to the town of Ieper, as it is known in Flemish.

The Hon. Rick Colless: Some say, "Wipers".

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I note the interjection of the Hon. Rick Colless and his pronunciation of Ypres as "Wipers". Before I visited Belgium it was mentioned that my great-uncle probably pronounced it "Wipers". Some 295,000 Australians served on the Western Front and 46,000 lost their lives across the trenches of Belgium and France. One of those soldiers was my great-uncle Victor William Clarke, who served in the 13th Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force, Western Front. He enlisted at Smithfield on 17 December 1915. One of the first towns he was posted to was Amiens in the Somme. It is a beautiful town. He sent my great-grandmother, his sister, a postcard from that town.

After my grandmother died a few months ago I discovered that postcard when I was going through her items. At first I thought it was from her brother, Victor William Reeves. It was discovered that it was Victor William Clarke and was addressed to her mother. That postcard reflected that all was good and he wanted to be remembered to his friends, who he had not heard from. He was deployed to the Western Front and wounded in action in France on 14 August 1916. He was shipped to Manchester to recuperate. On 9 January 1917 he was discharged from hospital and sent back to the front in March.

The Australian memorial reflects that it was seen as a great thing to be wounded and sent to the United Kingdom to recuperate. Sadly for Victor William Clarke, four months later—on 10 July 1917—he made the ultimate sacrifice in Belgium. He, along with thousands of other Australian, New Zealand, British, Indian, Canadian and other Commonwealth nation soldiers, are commemorated on the walls of remembrance of fallen soldiers at Menin Gate, Belgium. I was honoured to represent the Government at the last post ceremony that is held every single day by the Last Post Association.

I met with the buglers involved in that service who still commemorate the service and sacrifice on the Western Front of the thousands of soldiers from Commonwealth nations who paid the ultimate sacrifice. That service happens every single day and was only broken during World War II, when it again became a theatre of war. Presently, the Last Post Association is managed by Benoit and I met with him to talk about the reasons why the sacrifice of these soldiers is commemorated. The Belgium people are proud of their nation and of their distinction from other nations around them, whether France, Germany or the Netherlands. They are thankful for the service of the Australian soldiers who would not have known of Ieper but travelled thousands of miles to pay the ultimate sacrifice.

The last post on Anzac Day was a moving service jointly held between Australia and New Zealand service men and women. The New Zealand forces sang Maori songs and performed an intimidating haka while the Australian band sang *I still call Australia home*. It was incredibly moving as the bugles marked the last post service at Ieper. Over seven weeks in 1916 during the Battle of the Somme the Australian Imperial Force suffered 23,000 casualties, more than 6,700 men died in the countryside, including around the windmill at Pozières. My great-uncle William Arthur Miller was one of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. These are some of the stories that define our nation and define the people who have shaped the way we now live life.

There are 416,809 Australian stories from the Great War—stories now shared by millions of Australians, who are their descendants. We now look back at the damage caused by acts of violence and we reflect on what was lost. It is through reflection that we remember, and will never forget, the ultimate sacrifice that was given by so many. The contribution, service, and bravery of our Anzacs on the Western Front and during the First World

War is nearly incomprehensible today. It is, however, important to remember and commemorate so that younger generations will understand the immense privileges we enjoy are due to the sacrifice made by so many. Never was so much owed by so many to so few. During my visit to the Western Front it was clearly evident that the Franco-Australian relationship is strong, so strong that the people of Villers-Bretonneux, and indeed France, to this day decorate their towns and villages with Australian flags. The French have a saying, "N'oublions jamais l'Australie", which translates to, "Let us never forget Australia". Lest we forget.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (11:49): I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on this motion. I thank and congratulate the Hon. Ben Franklin on moving it. Anzac Day is, as other members have described, a fundamental part of the Australian spirit. When we recognise the sacrifice of the Anzacs and pay tribute to their continued legacy within our Defence Force and country, it is important to note how fundamental the Anzac spirit is in our Australian identity. On 25 April each year we officially recognise Anzac Day. The values behind that ceremony have become a fundamental component of our identity as Australians. We have heard from other members about their family experiences. Service touches every family in this country.

My grandfather William Leslie "Les" Ward was in the army in the Second World War. He volunteered in October 1939 and was sent to France as part of the British Army. While in France, he was attached to the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards. He his job was to drive the padre, who is a minister of all Christian religions. He drove the padre to all the frontline positions that the guards maintained and held services in the field. He was shot at a number of times but, thankfully, he was not wounded. Les was a survivor of Dunkirk and experienced one of the most iconic theatres of war in our country's history. As enemy forces closed in, the padre told Leslie to leave him and the guards and drive the car—an Austin 7—onto the beach, to immobilise it and get away if he could, and he did.

Once on the beach, the soldiers would have to run to the sand dunes under heavy machine gunfire and constant bombing. Les made many attempts to get away and, after some days, managed to board a navy ship called HMS *Gossamer* J63, a halcyon class minesweeper. At the evacuation from Dunkirk, *Gossamer* made six trips from those beaches to Britain and brought home 23,200 officers and men under incessant attacks. We have recently seen the feature film about that event, which brings that experience to life for this generation. My grandfather Les served the rest of the war in England working as a driver at MI5 in Bristol and apparently drove many famous people. His love of cars and motorbikes was ingrained in my father, David Ward, and brother, Tony Ward, but it also informs my deep respect and admiration for people such as Barry Heyder, those who quietly and caringly help others in service. In the latter years of the war, papa Les did the job he loved most: He became a dispatch rider on a Matchless 350 motorbike. He was released from the army in August 1945. Many families have many stories like my papa Les and I thank each one of them for their service.

Within my other family, the Liberal family, there is a permanent backdrop of service and sacrifice. Both sides of this House can agree that what binds us together is our gratitude and respect for those who have paid the ultimate price to protect the system that we uphold and participate in. Many heroes and service men and women contribute to the Liberal family that I am fortunate enough to be in, such as Sir John Leslie Carrick, AC, KCMG. As an iconic leader and hero, the late Sir John Carrick was also an Anzac. He was a prisoner of war for three years from 1942 when he was captured in World War II. There, he looked death in the eye and watched his beloved digger mates perish in unfathomable and truly inhumane conditions at the notorious Hellfire Pass along the Burma-Thai Railway. During the war, Sir John and his fellow prisoners made a pact that no-one would die alone, that someone would always be there for someone else at the very end holding their hand. It is said that he declined a State funeral because he wanted to honour his fellow prisoners who lost their lives during the war. He wanted to be equal to them—just John.

In our current day, I acknowledge the work of Colonel Dr Andrew Morrison, RFD, SC. A Queens Counsel and Acting District Court Judge. He is an infantry officer in the Army Reserve who rose to command the 2/17th Battalion of the Royal New South Wales Regiment. In recognising those who have served, it is important to note the selfless work of the community men and women who organise and participate in Anzac Day services, marches and other community events across our country every year. From the incredible work of nationwide organisations such as the Returned Services League of Australia, Soldier On and the Legacy Foundation to humble local annual gatherings, we owe a great deal to people who put in the time and care to ensure that Anzac Day is appropriately observed each year. I know the humbling experience I have felt at Anzac Day services is shared and observed on this day each year across Sydney and throughout New South Wales.

I give special mention in this forum to the effort that goes into conducting those services. Across my local area there is always a multitude of services, marches and events. I acknowledge every sub-branch across our State for the work they do on this day and especially recognise the Mosman RSL Sub-Branch and its president Victor Danko for the outstanding Georges Heights dawn service it conducted again this year. In concluding, I point

out the most inspiring and hopeful part of this motion, which I thank and honour the Hon. Ben Franklin for including:

- (4) That this House encourages future generations to continue these Anzac remembrance traditions in honour of those who have served our country, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice.

I am proud to stand in this Chamber and say I have faith in the next generation of young people who are inspired by the Anzac legacy and are impassioned enough to serve, whether it be through the Defence Force, the Reserves or by helping their communities in other ways. I have had family members before me, such as my grandfather, who have served. I have had contemporaries, colleagues and young friends, such as Lieutenant and Troop Leader Alasdair Cameron—hopefully soon to be Captain Cameron—and Lachlan Finch who are part of the next generation of fine young men and women who have enrolled in various ways. I know many young people who have started the process and are beginning their journey of service. Our Minister for Defence, the Hon. Marise Payne, is a woman leading our Defence Services. The Anzac legacy touches every life in this country and it is part of what makes Australia so special. I congratulate and thank the Hon. Ben Franklin for moving this motion and other members in this place who have contributed to the debate. I commend the motion to the House.

Debated adjourned.

LIVE ANIMAL EXPORT INDUSTRY

Debate resumed from 17 May 2018.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH (11:57): I speak to Private Members' Business item No. 2025 outside the Order of Precedence in the name of the Hon. Mark Pearson, which relates to the live animal export industry. It is fair to say that the community expects that our animals are treated humanely and ethically, whether they be animals for food production or companion animals, as we heard in debate earlier this week. Those community expectations and standards are ever increasing. It is important in motions such as this one that the House carefully reflects upon the wording of the motion. I understand the intent of the Hon. Mark Pearson in moving this motion, but first we must ensure that the elements of the motions we move are factual and correct. Secondly, we must acknowledge how the motions relate to our jurisdiction and what we can achieve from them. If we were to follow the notices of motions in Private Members' Business that are presented in this place, I suggest we would nearly have a Minister for Foreign Affairs. We must be careful about our jurisdictional responsibilities and what we can achieve.

It is important to note that New South Wales does not use our ports for exporting live animals. My understanding is—and if I am wrong Minister Blair will correct me—that approximately 1.5 per cent to 1.7 per cent of our animals used for food production go to the live export market in Australia. Quite a small portion of our animals are produced for consumption. However, that does not lessen our responsibilities to make sure that those animals are treated in a humane and ethical way and to meet the ever-increasing community expectations and standards. The *60 Minutes* exposé was troubling. I do not think anyone accepted those troubling moments and we have to ensure that they never happen again. The circumstances have been detailed quite clearly in the motion moved by the Hon. Mark Pearson. At the Federal level there has been activity in this public policy space since the *60 Minutes* exposé. In fact, since we debated this matter in this Chamber a couple of weeks ago there has been further public commentary and movement.

It is important that I put on the record that my Federal parliamentary colleagues have publicly stated their intention to phase out live sheep exports over a five-year period because the evidence before them shows that the current arrangements are not sustainable and cannot be done in a way that meets the community expectations on animal welfare I referred to earlier. I also note that this motion calls on the Minister for Primary Industries to meet his Federal colleague. I also note that the Minister addressed that matter in his contribution to this motion. It would be fair to say that on both sides of politics dialogue with Federal colleagues is ongoing. In a lot of ways we win some and we lose some. A lot of dynamics are involved in what happens in New South Wales as opposed to what happens at the Federal level. It is a very fluid environment because a lot of things happen at any time that shape our conversations with our Federal colleagues.

The Hon. Niall Blair: We are having dinner tonight.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: I note the interjection from the Minister. Hopefully he will be consuming New South Wales produce.

The Hon. Niall Blair: It is Canberra, and it is on water matters and we are having dinner.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: On water matters? Very topical. I note the Minister's response relating to that part of the motion. It is important to reflect upon the wording of motions before the Chamber and that is where the Opposition has a problem with this motion. We understand and appreciate the intent of the Hon. Mark Pearson with this motion. We support most of what is in the motion; however, the Opposition has a problem with

jurisdictional issues. The motion poses some difficulties for the New South Wales Opposition. We believe a number of steps should take place at a Federal level. The Hon. Mark Pearson can rest assured that I have provided his motion to my Federal colleague, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon, for his consideration and information, even though the motion does not call for me to do that. Whilst the Opposition supports some of the factual matters, the intent of this motion and the movements at a Federal level to try to increase the standards for the live export industry, it cannot support this motion as worded.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN (12:03): I speak on the live animal export industry. I note that it is the bread and butter of the Hon. Mark Pearson and he understands this industry—

The Hon. Mark Pearson: Not quite.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: In terms of your constituents.

The Hon. Mick Veitch: It is not quite fish, is it?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: It is not quite fish.

The Hon. Rick Colless: He doesn't eat butter either.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: He doesn't eat butter. There is almond butter. My boy is vegan and I am learning a lot about keeping meat out of everything. The motion states:

- (1) That this House condemns the live animal export industry which has a 40-year history of systemic animal cruelty causing suffering and death.
- (2) That this House notes that the recent *Animals Australia* expose of the extreme suffering of sheep confined on the *Awassi Express* by Emanuel Exports, highlights the ongoing national scandal of animal cruelty by the live export industry being:
 - (a) animals starving to death from inanition;
 - (b) animals dying from over-crowding, causing inability to access food and water;
 - (c) animals dying of heat stress from high temperatures due to climatic extremes;
 - (d) animals forced to stand in their own excrement for periods of up to a month, causing respiratory distress and blindness from ammonia fumes; and
 - (e) multiple and persistent breaches of Australian animal welfare laws.
- (3) That this House congratulates Faisal Ullah, the *Awassi Express* assistant navigator, for performing a brave and merciful act of public service by recording the scenes of misery and suffering of sheep aboard the ship.
- (4) That this House calls upon the Minister for Primary Industries, the Hon. Niall Blair, to meet with the Federal Minister for Agriculture to convey this House's deep disgust at the continued breaches of Australian animal cruelty laws and to advocate for a ban on live animal exports.
- (5) That this House call on the Government to prohibit the land transport of animals to New South Wales ports, or other States, for the purpose of boarding onto live export ships.

According to LiveCorp, in 2017 Australia exported a total of more than 2.8 million live cattle, beef and dairy, sheep and goats. The Australian Livestock Exporters' Council stated:

Australia's beef cattle exports are worth \$1.35 billion annually; dairy cattle exports are worth about \$170 million, sheep exports are worth \$250 million, and goats exports are valued at about \$10 million.

That totals just under \$1.8 billion per annum. Live animal exports are a growing concern within segments of the community, as acknowledged in this motion from my honourable colleague. Over the past few years a number of incidents have highlighted the poor treatment of livestock whilst travelling to foreign markets, as acknowledged once again in this motion. We need to do all we can to ensure that the travelling conditions for our sheep and cattle whilst on long voyages minimise harm, including distress or death, to these animals. We note sadly that the mortality acceptance rate is about 2 per cent of sheep and 1 per cent of cattle out of approximately 70,000 animals. That does not appear too bad but it equates to an acceptable death rate of 1,400 sheep on those exports.

I remember that at the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party dinner Vince Sorrenti, the great Italian, was taking the mickey out of The Greens who had commented on the acceptable levels of faeces, I think, at Bondi Beach. The Greens thought that the standards were being broken and were not at an acceptable level. He said, "Since when is faeces ever at an acceptable level?" I thought it was a cracker. Sadly, I think that applies here: Since when is there an acceptable level of deaths of these animals? There should not be an acceptable level. We understand that stock die, but the death of 1,400 sheep and 1 per cent of cattle is pretty appalling. I think we can do more. We can always work to improve the standards of care with these transport processes. On my understanding, the clientele purchase the stock and arrange for them to be transported on ships. It will not necessarily be arranged in Australia. I acknowledge the difficulty, at times, to impose the improvement of

standards on parties existing outside Australia. I greatly encourage them to choose to take a greater responsibility and care of livestock, particularly while in their care during transportation.

What can we do? I have always said that farmers and people of the land are our greatest asset and our greatest environmentalists. They understand the land more than anyone, because their lives depend on it. I note the comments of the Hon. Niall Blair, who comes from the land, in which he clearly acknowledged that we cannot wash our hands of this challenge. That is admirable and we need to work with that. In New South Wales, we should do whatever we can to improve conditions, including influencing the decisions of Federal Government where possible. I am aware that the Minister for Primary Industries has already met with a Federal representative on this matter. We can definitely seek to communicate our concerns to the Western Australian Government, which is the largest live animal exporter in our nation. As a State, New South Wales is responsible for less than 1 per cent of Australia's total live animal exports.

In our modern society, the need for food and food security has never been more important. We talk about being the food bowl of the world. By 2050, the amount of food needed will be 70 per cent more than we have now. That is quite a lot of food. It is quite a lot of meat, whether sheep, goat or maybe horses. I think Japan eats about 4.9 million horses a year—different nations like different meats. Maybe some of the Kosciuszko National Park brumbies can make their way over to Japan. There might be a business model in there for someone. I know what the Hon. Robert Brown said about that yesterday, but for export.

If Australia is going to be the food bowl, we have to get this right. We have to do everything we can to make sure that animals that are being exported do not suffer current death rates and harm in the process. I think we will see more improvement in these matters because the food industry is changing. There is a wonderful saying, "paddock to plate", and a lot of communities now take an interest in where a product started, how it was nurtured, how it was cured—whether that be livestock or vegies—and its journey before it is eaten. The "paddock to plate" concept will go a long way towards people not accepting animal cruelty or distressed animals dying on the way to the plate. In the future, people will be really interested in how their food got from where it was to their plate. That will put more pressure on markets to do more to ensure that the product has got there ethically.

The industry's ability to do this whilst considering the values of consumers is to be commended and relates directly to its local and overseas reputation. In Australia, farmers putting their stock on the boat should be held accountable. We should ask them if they know what happens to their livestock when it is on the ship. In some cases, it is lucky to get there alive. As I have often said in this House, in regional New South Wales it is better to keep a job rather than create a new one. The live export industry currently provides around 10,000 jobs across Australia. While New South Wales may not have a large slice of the pie, a job is still a job. We need to continue to raise awareness of this issue. From my experience in politics, I understand that we can continue the discussions on timely issues and seek to raise further awareness with such debates as today's.

Regarding actions taken to date, it is my understanding that the Minister has met with the Federal Government. I acknowledge the Federal Government's acceptance of the 23 recommendations following the report prepared by Dr Michael McCarthy looking into a review of the live animal export trade. We should continue to do all we can. If improvements cannot be made, then it is reasonable to look at what we can do to slaughter our own livestock here and then export it overseas.

Dr MEHREEN FARUQI (12:14): On behalf of The Greens, I express my strong support of the motion moved by the Hon. Mark Pearson. Animals are not mere cargo. They are alive, they can breathe and, most importantly, they can feel and suffer. And they do suffer—they suffer immensely because of the incredible and inherent cruelty of the live animal export trade. We all know and have always known that the lucrative live export industry has dark secrets to hide from the public, which is why cameras have never been allowed on board these ships of misery. But the animals' pain and suffering has been exposed repeatedly by brave activists who have risked everything, including their safety and in some cases their livelihoods, to capture on camera and reveal the heart-wrenching anguish of these animals.

Almost exactly two months ago, *60 Minutes* revealed that on one of these live sheep exports and just on one day alone, more than 800 animals died from heat stress. I ask members present in this Chamber to imagine the blast furnace-like heat conditions, where sheep are falling dead every two minutes at a rate of hundreds per day. The brave whistleblower in this case was a trainee navigation officer of the vessel, 25-year-old graduate of Pakistan Marine Academy Faisal Ullah. He described the conditions on board the vessel to be the same as "putting live animals into the oven". Mr Faisal Ullah said he felt a personal obligation to expose the cruelty because of the severity of suffering he witnessed, including lambs born on the ship being crushed to death and the crew slitting the throats of sheep to throw them overboard. I remind the House that currently the export of pregnant animals is prohibited by regulations but that is obviously not working at all.

On the three-week journey from Fremantle to the Middle East, the sheep—including pregnant animals—have standing room only. How is this allowed to go on? How can Labor members say they have problems with the wording of the motion? We have to look at the motion's sentiment, as well its wording. Anyone who has seen the images recorded by Mr Faisal Ullah can only agree that the dreadful practice of live export must be stopped.

We are shocked and saddened by these images, but we should also be enraged that this is happening under the watch of the Australian Government and under the control of Australian companies supposedly governed by regulations that the Government seems to deem enough. We should be ashamed and we should be furious. I absolutely agree with the words of this motion in front of us today, especially that the live export industry has a 40-year history of systemic animal cruelty causing suffering and death. There is no way around this cruelty. The brutality is inherent and it is deliberate. The exporters know the conditions into which they send these animals when they load them by the thousands onto the ships. It is clear that the only way to end this is to stop the entire live animal export trade for good.

I am proud to support this motion. The Greens have always been the party to strongly speak out against and call for an end to the live export trade. Senator Lee Rhiannon's tireless and passionate work on stopping live exports speaks for itself. Senator Rhiannon currently has two bills in the Federal Parliament on this issue: one to end live exports and another to create an independent office of animal welfare to oversee the live export trade until it has been phased out. Some members from other parties have come on board, but the Government has not. The Greens have a five-point plan to phase out live exports which is the only reasonable and practical way out of this mess. Not only will this plan help end the excruciatingly cruel trade of living and breathing animals, but it will also create jobs and livelihoods in Australia through expanding the local meat processing industry.

This Government claims to create and support local jobs, but it has not even bothered to pay lip service to the issue. The Liberal-Nationals Government did not have the guts to even temporarily suspend live exports, let alone take any meaningful action. Instead, the live export trade issue has been thrown into the review basket. That is complete nonsense. Nothing has been done even after inspectors in Western Australia raised serious alarm over another ship that still left Western Australia shores just days after the cruel conditions were exposed on television. As we debate this issue over and over again in Australia, thousands of animals are dying in terror, suffering in oven-like temperatures, frightened, and in constant pain. We know that the lies and cover-ups from the live export industry will continue but we can no longer—and the Government can no longer—continue to excuse the horrific brutality of what goes on in those ships.

One of my favourite quotes is attributed to Mahatma Gandhi: "The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated." There is a lot we have to do before we become great. Thousands of people from communities across Australia have rallied again and again for this change and many animal welfare organisations such as Animals Australia are working hard to end live exports. Australians do care about animals, whether it is greyhounds, koalas or sheep. We want them to be treated with kindness and compassion. I commend the courage of activists who have exposed the dreadful conditions on board the live export ships. I commend the motion to the House and implore my colleagues to support it.

Debate adjourned.

Committees

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

Establishment and Membership

The Hon. ERNEST WONG (12:21): I move:

- (1) That a select committee be established to inquire into and report on preventing and addressing homelessness in New South Wales, and in particular:
 - (a) the impact of the current housing market on homelessness and the forecasted level of homelessness over the next five years;
 - (b) the role of government and non-government agencies in preventing and addressing homelessness;
 - (c) the capacity and effectiveness of services provided by government and non-government agencies to support people at risk of, and experiencing, homelessness;
 - (d) the allocation of funding for support services to homeless people compared with funding to increase access to housing;
 - (e) the current and projected supply of social, public and affordable housing in New South Wales;
 - (f) specific initiatives and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness;

- (g) the impact of homelessness on specific cohorts including young people, families, older women and rough sleepers;
 - (h) international evidence in preventing and addressing homelessness, and
 - (i) any other related matter.
- (2) That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders, the committee consists of seven members comprising:
 - (a) two Government members;
 - (b) two Opposition members; and
 - (c) three crossbench members.
- (3) That members may be appointed to the committee as substitute members for any matter before the committee by providing notice in writing to the Committee Clerk, with nominations made as follows:
 - (a) nominations for substitute Government or Opposition members are to be made by the Leader of the Government, Leader of the Opposition, Government or Opposition Whip or Deputy Whip, as applicable; and
 - (b) nominations for substitute crossbench members are to be made by the substantive member or another crossbench member.
- (4) That a committee member who is unable to attend a deliberative meeting in person may participate by electronic communication and may move any motion and be counted for the purpose of any quorum or division, provided that:
 - (a) the Chair is present in the meeting room;
 - (b) all members are able to speak and hear each other at all times; and
 - (c) members may not participate by electronic communication in a meeting to consider a draft report.
- (5) That, unless the committee decides otherwise:
 - (a) submissions to inquiries are to be published, subject to the Committee Clerk checking for confidentiality and adverse mention and, where those issues arise, bringing them to the attention of the committee for consideration;
 - (b) the Chair's proposed witness list is to be circulated to provide members with an opportunity to amend the list, with the witness list agreed to by email, unless a member requests the Chair to convene a meeting to resolve any disagreement;
 - (c) the sequence of questions to be asked at hearings alternate between Opposition, crossbench and Government members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each;
 - (d) transcripts of evidence taken at public hearings are to be published;
 - (e) supplementary questions are to be lodged with the Committee Clerk within two days, excluding Saturday and Sunday, following the receipt of the hearing transcript, with witnesses requested to return answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions within 21 calendar days of the date on which questions are forwarded to the witness; and
 - (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, subject to the Committee Clerk checking for confidentiality and adverse mention and, where those issues arise, bringing them to the attention of the committee for consideration.

I have no doubt that members in this House have come across rough sleepers. They may have passed them while walking on the street or even on their way to work. They may indeed be some of their constituents or even their friends. If by some miracle they have not, it would not take much to imagine how abhorrent it must be for the countless people in New South Wales who have no protection from the bitter cold, wind and rain that we are currently experiencing to sleep on the streets or move around shelters, desperately seeking some reprieve from the elements. All the while, we are tucked away safely in our homes with heaters on, nice hot meals and warm cosy beds, complaining about how cold it is outside.

We have the capability, the means and the absolute duty of care to help our constituents by doing everything we possibly can to help them and keep them off the streets. The formation of this committee would be the first crucial step in that process. If we can help, then we must help. We are all aware that homelessness is a complex issue with no simple solution. Yet, we all agree that it is a crucial social issue, not only harming individuals and families, but also laying a great burden on the community and society at large.

Homelessness is one of the most definitive indicators of disadvantage in the community and one of the most important markers of social exclusion, as rightly stated by the Victorian Department of Human Services in 2002. At the outset, I emphasise to members that the inquiry I am proposing is to underpin the strategy and actions being considered by the Government. On 14 March Minister Sarah Mitchell, in answering a question from Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, outlined what has been, and will be, done by the Government. I acknowledge the intention of the Government to address the issue when funding was provided in 2017-18 budget, but I am

concerned that the Government measures are project-based rather than an overall strategy towards a determined, full-on effort to solve this longstanding social problem that New South Wales is facing.

There is no doubt the Government has a genuine intention to tackle the issue—as much as there is amongst all of us in this House and in New South Wales. Nevertheless, the strategy to be released by the Government may well fall short of what is needed; simply relying on the 2016 discussion paper data may not truly reflect the current situation, as pinpointed in the latest statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. There are additional aspects not covered by the discussion paper which this inquiry will set out to address, such as the impact of the current housing market on homelessness and the international evidence in preventing and addressing homelessness, amongst other considerations. A parliamentary inquiry is the perfect opportunity for all parties to look at the issue in a timely and considered manner.

It will give us the opportunity to explore in depth—and gain a deeper understanding of—this most serious issue, producing an update that can be provided to the Government to achieve the goal identified in the discussion paper, "Foundations for Change—Homelessness in NSW". That goal is to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of services across the homelessness spectrum, including prevention, early intervention and crisis response. There has not been a parliamentary inquiry into homelessness since the inquiry conducted by the Standing Committee on Social Issues in 2009 just under 10 years ago. Given the length of time since the last inquiry, and given the worsening plight of the homeless, it is more than relevant to look at the issue at this moment.

It is clear to any observer that New South Wales is in the midst of a growing homelessness crisis. Data released in December by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, after the response from the then Minister Pru Goward in July 2017, revealed that in 2016-17 homelessness services in New South Wales supported over 74,000 clients—an increase of 43 per cent in three years and 30 per cent more clients than the system is designed and funded to support. Every one of us has seen the alarming figures in the ABS Census data only a short time ago, which showed that between 2011 and 2016 New South Wales experienced an increase of 37 per cent in homelessness, the worst result in any State or Territory. Across Australia, the increase in homelessness was 14 per cent. In 2011 the number of people experiencing homelessness in New South Wales was 28,191. In 2016 that jumped to 37,715. Homelessness in Sydney, in particular, has been increasing faster than in any other capital city in Australia.

Services are turning away clients from crisis accommodation, with two in five clients not able to be placed in any short-term accommodation such as refuges, hotels, motels or caravan parks. When short-term homelessness support ended, two out of three clients who remained homeless had no long-term accommodation options available. Homelessness is a particular issue amongst older people. In 2015-16 the incidence of homelessness amongst older people in New South Wales was greater than it has ever been before. The number of people aged over 55 seeking help with homelessness has increased by 77 per cent in three years.

Social workers warn that Australia is facing a generational tsunami of older homeless people in coming years as casualisation of employment, high-priced housing and a lack of superannuation take their toll. Moreover, figures from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare show that 30 per cent of homeless clients are people escaping domestic and family violence. Between 2011-12 and 2015-16 in New South Wales there has been a 300 per cent increase in women couch surfing and sleeping in their cars. It is even more devastating to know that charities have reported increases of up to 44 per cent in the number of older women seeking homelessness services in the past five years.

Homelessness is an equally pressing issue for young people in New South Wales. Young people make up to 19 per cent of those experiencing homelessness. The rate of homelessness for people aged 19 to 24 has increased by 92 per cent in the past 10 years. Furthermore, this sector of the population is often hidden from view—as homelessness nearly always is. It is heartbreaking to read the most recently reported statistics, which show that on the last census night 10,813 university or TAFE students were homeless. Of those, 1,117 were living in facilities for the homeless and 1,073 were couch surfing. This particular group of individuals bring with them unique service challenges in that they are too old for child services but often not ready or eligible for adult services.

Let us proceed to the core of the causes and contributing factors of homelessness: poverty, unemployment, a critical shortage of affordable housing, family and relationship breakdowns, domestic and family violence, poor physical or mental health, physical and/or sexual assault, drug and alcohol addiction, financial difficulty, gambling and social isolation. Collectively or individually, all these factors not only contribute to a person becoming homeless but also can become a factor in their remaining homeless. Many homeless people start out in life with jobs and stable residences and some were once members of the army, navy or air force but social and economic factors intervene, causing a rapid downward spiral in their living conditions.

This is an ideal opportunity to dispel the misconceptions that exist in the community about homelessness and homeless people. No matter how many reports we have made and how many investigations we have gone

through, we will never be able to take the action needed without a commitment to explore and analyse the problem at its very core. More importantly, as legislators and policymakers we need to make a commitment to prepare accompanying legislation that would support a government plan and lay the groundwork for an integrated approach that encompasses collaboration between all tiers of government, government agencies and private organisations. We must commit to an effective and streamlined service which would both prevent homelessness and help people who have fallen into that state.

Homelessness is also a determining factor in the state of people's health; homeless people are at high risk for a broad range of acute and chronic illnesses. Homelessness thus has an interwoven relationship with the health issues of the nation. While some health problems precede and contribute to homelessness, others are consequences of homelessness, and homelessness complicates the treatment of many illnesses. Certain illnesses and health problems are in fact precursors of homelessness. The most common of these are the major mental illnesses, especially chronic schizophrenia. As the disabilities of mentally ill people worsen, their ability to cope with their surroundings becomes severely strained. In the absence of appropriate therapeutic interventions and supportive alternative housing arrangements, many wind up on the streets.

Homelessness exacerbates the risk of developing health problems such as diseases of the skin and respiratory illnesses. Moreover, homelessness increases the possibility of trauma, especially as a result of physical assault. For even the most routine medical treatment, the state of being homeless makes the provision of care extraordinarily difficult. Even the need for bed rest is complicated, if not impossible, when the patient does not have a bed or, as is the case in many shelters for the homeless, must leave the shelter in the early morning.

Homelessness services in New South Wales are stretched to the limit and they are unable to help some of the most vulnerable people in New South Wales. This is most visible through the hot spots that we see every day in the city at Martin Place, Central Station and Pitt St Mall, just to mention a few. There has been a 26 per cent increase in the number of people sleeping rough in the city of Sydney since 2011. As highlighted by the shadow Minister for Family and Community Services, Tania Mihailuk, in the other place, the recent release of the 2016 ABS census data confirms there was a significant increase in homelessness in Western Sydney from 2011 to 2016 of an average of 50 per cent. That is higher than for the rest of the State.

No-one should be risking their safety by sleeping on the street or living in a state of anxiety about whether they might have a roof over their head but that is what is happening in New South Wales. Moreover, we as legislators have a duty of care to people who are experiencing homelessness and we have the capacity to do more than just leave this to the Government. The 2018 Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot has identified that fewer than 1 per cent of private rentals are affordable for people on low incomes. Meanwhile, there are 60,000 people on the social housing waiting list. There is a blockage in the crisis accommodation system and there is simply no long-term affordable housing available.

I intend that this inquiry will learn not only from other Australian jurisdictions which have managed to reduce or end homelessness but also from jurisdictions overseas. The United Kingdom's Conservative Party Government only last year obtained passage of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, under which all people found to be homeless and in priority need will be provided with interim accommodation. Finland is on track to have effectively ended rough sleeping after implementing a 10-year cross-government, bipartisan-supported plan. Victoria recently announced a \$45 million rough sleeper strategy and is investing heavily in addressing domestic and family violence. Many of our academics have written extensively on this subject and have produced a wealth of insights. We as parliamentarians need to be aware of best practice nationally and internationally and how it can support any government in addressing this issue. The time has truly arrived for a parliamentary inquiry to explore the possibility of developing a legislative response to the circumstances of those who are in the worst of situations. As rightly stated by the Federation of Housing Association:

A safe home is a basic right that every child or person in Australia should have access to—no matter how much they earn. If we're going to make any dent in the housing issue we need all levels of government ... to work together with a genuine commitment to bipartisan support for sensible solutions that go beyond a four or three year election cycle.

This opinion is also shared by Katherine McKernan, Chief Executive Officer of Homelessness New South Wales, whom I have to thank for her assistance throughout the process of presenting this motion about the establishment of the inquiry. She said:

If we are to really address homelessness ... then we need an ongoing co-ordinated, well resourced plan that provides affordable housing with support and cross-agency leadership that focuses on preventing exits into homelessness from prisons, health services and housing. I take this opportunity to thank the St Vincent de Paul Society for giving a thorough overview when I visited its facility as part of my study of the services it provides by managing hostels and programs that engage the homeless community and integrate them back into society. The most important part of the whole plan is to integrate people back into society. I was fortunate enough to see this firsthand on a recent tour of St Vincent de Paul's Woolloomooloo services, as well as through a ride-around tour with Mission Australia, when I joined its Missionbeat mobile service. Missionbeat provides transport to homeless people in municipal areas. It would be remiss of me if I did not thank and commend all those organisations, whether they are religious groups

or private not-for-profit organisations, for the service and assistance they have provided all along to those in need. All of the services and challenges these organisations are facing will be reviewed as part of this inquiry. Let us work together to end homelessness in New South Wales. I commend the motion to the House. [*Business interrupted.*]

Visitors

VISITORS

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Shayne Mallard): I welcome to the public gallery a delegation from Guangdong Province, Maoming City, Dianbai District, led by Mr Huang Dongming, Deputy General Secretary of Maoming Dianbai District Committee. The delegation members are guests of the Hon. Ernest Wong. Welcome to the oldest Parliament in Australia.

Committees

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

Establishment and Membership

[*Business resumed.*]

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (12:39): The goal of the New South Wales Government is to ensure that by working with our non-government partners and across government we will create a system that is able to prevent and respond more effectively to homelessness. I thank in particular Minister Goward in the other place for her leadership in homelessness. She has been committed to bettering the lives of our most vulnerable in New South Wales and to championing social reform. The 2017-18 budget included \$1.1 billion to support people experiencing homelessness and to improve services for social housing tenants and help break disadvantage. The Government is investing record amounts of money into homelessness services and programs. In fact, our funding has increased by 43 per cent over four years. Under the stewardship of Minister Goward, the Government has been developing a homelessness strategy to aid efforts in tackling this heartbreaking problem in our community.

This is a challenging and complex area of social policy but I am confident that we are seeing results off the back of the work of Minister Goward. Extensive work has been done in this area. Later this month, the Government will release the NSW Homelessness Strategy. This process has been comprehensive and the consultation has been broad. That is why we on this side of the Chamber do not support this motion. The Government recognises that only by creating an effective system, which recognises the complex nature of homelessness and responds holistically, can we help break the cycle of disadvantage and support people to live happier, more secure lives. The NSW Homelessness Strategy will set the direction for the next five years. The focus will be on prevention responses that address the root causes of homelessness and early intervention responses that will reduce the longer term impact of homelessness.

Homelessness is not just a housing problem. Every person who experiences homelessness has a different story. Indeed, the causes of homelessness are complex and play out in different ways. For some people homelessness is an isolated event. Other people will cycle in and out of it, unable to find and sustain housing for more than a temporary period. The NSW Homelessness Strategy will deliver a framework for action that enables agencies and services to identify vulnerability early, help manage the risk factors that make a person vulnerable and reduce the complexity of the service system. The strategy will establish accountability across government so that all agencies, including Family and Community Services, Health, Education, and Justice, share the responsibility for preventing homelessness. There is no reason to support this motion.

In late 2016 we completed an intensive consultation process across New South Wales with hundreds of participants from a range of agencies and organisations, including people with lived experience of homelessness and people from groups at increased risk of homelessness. Those experiences, themes and messages have been developed into the NSW Homelessness Strategy. Our vision is that by working together we can build a mainstream service system that will be able to intervene early to prevent homelessness and break disadvantage; will increase access to supports, including housing, that prevent homelessness and re-entry into homelessness; and will create an integrated, person-centred service system. The strategy will recognise that homelessness is not just a housing problem.

A person's pathway into homelessness is driven by the intersection of structural drivers, risk factors, and protective factors. The structural drivers for homelessness include housing affordability, labour market forces, a reliance on income support and intergenerational poverty. Individual risk factors include unemployment, financial stress, family breakdown, domestic and family violence, trauma, mental health issues, drug or alcohol dependence and a history of contact with State institutions. Protective factors include employment, financial security, involvement in school or community, healthy family relationships and access to and integration of services. The Government is currently implementing a range of reforms to help address the structural drivers of homelessness such as Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW. This strategy will build on these reforms to

provide a new approach to identifying people at risk of homelessness and put effective supports in place to reduce that risk.

The Government is pursuing an ambitious reform agenda to deliver better services to protect vulnerable people and to improve social and economic outcomes for the people of New South Wales. By building on current reforms we can ensure homelessness is recognised in key policy areas across the New South Wales Government. We are determined to ensure that the most vulnerable in our society are able to find affordable and stable accommodation so that they can access the opportunities that housing provides. That is why we are working to increase the quality and quantity of social housing stock. Indeed, that is why we are proud to have the biggest social housing building program of any State or Territory across the country. We have a plan for social housing that will deliver more housing and a better experience for tenants and create more opportunities and incentives to build housing independence.

Under Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW, the Government is reforming social housing. The Future Directions strategy is delivering more social housing, more opportunities and more support for people living in social housing. The Communities Plus program is a key part of the Government's Future Directions strategy. This \$22 billion building program commits over 10 years to build up to 23,000 new and replacement social housing dwellings, 500 affordable housing dwellings and up to 40,000 private dwellings, which will contribute to the much-needed housing supply in New South Wales. Communities Plus will see the renewal of social housing estates across New South Wales, including the seven major projects now in the pipeline at Ivanhoe, Waterloo, Riverwood, Arncliffe, Telopea, Redfern and Villawood. In addition to the major renewal sites, small- to medium-scale packages known as "neighbourhood releases" will form part of the Communities Plus program.

Communities Plus is housing more people in need with better social housing—housing connected with more services and in integrated communities. Services are also being provided to assist tenants to overcome their barriers to employment, to get work ready and to get a job. The affordable housing provided through Communities Plus will provide an affordable pathway out of social housing for people who have improved their circumstances. In addition to Communities Plus, through the Social and Affordable Housing Fund [SAHF] the Government has committed to building up to 3,400 social and affordable homes across the State. Last year's announcement of the expansion of SAHF under phase two delivers on the Government's election commitment to increase housing supply and to create more sustainable social housing for New South Wales. The Government is undertaking significant reform, and a substantial amount of work has already been done. We have heard from communities across the State about what is needed to tackle this issue and we are committed to action. We do not need an inquiry. This Government will continue to ensure that we maximise our social housing assets so that more people in need are provided with a home as soon as possible.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (12:48): I make a contribution to debate in support of the motion of the Hon. Ernest Wong that a select committee be established to conduct an inquiry into and report on preventing and addressing homelessness in New South Wales. The Greens are long-term advocates of the right to housing. Indeed, my colleague in the other place Jenny Leong has been working tirelessly as the member for Newtown and The Greens spokesperson for housing to ensure that this Government regards housing as a human right, not just a privilege afforded to a few. The proposed terms of reference for the inquiry are broad but they go to the key issues faced by so many people across the breadth of our society—young and old alike; those who have come from employment and find themselves in situations of homeless insecurity and ultimately homelessness; and those who have struggled through intergenerational inequality to ever find housing stability and security.

As a society, we have a responsibility to ensure that everyone has a roof over their head. It is an important social good that ultimately delivers so much more than just a house and a home: it enables people to meaningfully engage in society. Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] data on homelessness released in March this year show that homelessness and other consequences from a lack of affordable housing and social housing are rising unacceptably in New South Wales. Between 2011 and 2016, there was a 37 per cent increase in homelessness in New South Wales—more than double the national increase—and a shocking 92 per cent increase in the rate of homelessness experienced by youth aged between 19 years and 24 years of age. To put that in perspective, according to the official ABS figures, about 10,000 more people have become homeless since the Liberal-Nationals Government came to power.

I listened to the facts put forward by the Hon. Ernest Wong and the response from the Government. On the basis of that response, there is no clearer evidence that this inquiry is required because there is an absolute disconnect between what is happening in the New South Wales community and the delivery of the Government's program, which is clearly failing. Over the life of this Government, homelessness has increased markedly in New South Wales. It may be the case that a large investment increase has been announced, but New South Wales has the largest population base and the largest homelessness problem. That investment is necessary but, clearly,

the increase is not sufficient and it is sensible that we inquire into why it is not being effective in reducing homelessness in our community.

An inquiry would get to the bottom of the issues. The increase in homelessness reflects a lack of public, social and affordable housing in this State and the Liberal-Nationals Government's apathy when it comes to taking meaningful action. Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory have seen significant reductions in homelessness, and that has happened at a time when New South Wales claims to be number one again in economic development. It has not been an economic benefit to the breadth of our community. Clearly, the economic benefit is not reaching everyone, as more people find themselves homeless and there is housing insecurity. Victoria and South Australia have seen only small increases in homelessness. We could learn from other States. An inquiry is a good way to look at the best examples around the country and even internationally so that we can as effectively as possible design social and affordable housing that ensures people have access to the housing they need.

In a similar pattern to the homelessness figures, there has been an astronomical rise of 74 per cent in the number of people living in severely overcrowded dwellings in New South Wales. This probably masks the extent of the homelessness and housing insecurity issue in New South Wales. It shows that housing and rental stress in this State is at breaking point. They are some of the issues that have been flagged for inquiry as put forward by the Hon. Ernest Wong in his motion. New South Wales is facing an unprecedented growth in inequality at a time when the Government is championing economic growth in the State. I spoke in this place last night about the way in which we measure our development and economic growth. What we measure is what matters.

It is clear that we are not measuring the impact of housing insecurity and homelessness on people because if we were, we would be taking a different approach to ensure that it was solved. The Greens are committed to a housing first approach, which has been shown to have immediate impacts where it has been implemented in other jurisdictions. We believe that housing is a human right, not a privilege. Market solutions should not be left to the market or to speculators. The Government has a responsibility to uphold the right for housing and an inquiry can assist in that regard. On behalf of The Greens, I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (12:54): I acknowledge all members who have spoken to this motion. The motion raises the concerns of not only the Hon. Ernest Wong but also the community, who are concerned about the significant number of homeless people around the State and the nation. I congratulate the Hon. Ernest Wong on bringing this motion before the House. The motion is not only important, it is wideranging and covers significant issues of concern. The motion calls for a select committee to be established to inquire into addressing homelessness throughout New South Wales, in particular: the impact of the current housing market on homelessness; the role of government and non-government agencies; the effectiveness of services provided by government and non-government agencies; the allocation of funding for support services; the current and projected supply of social, public and affordable housing; specific initiatives and outcomes for Indigenous people and migrants; and the impact of homelessness on specific cohorts, including young people, families and others. A significant number of migrants are homeless but it is not reflected in the figures because many migrants, out of shame and for other reasons, will not ask for housing.

I am pleased the Hon. Ernest Wong has included for inquiry those organisations that support the homeless, such as Red Cross, Salvation Army, Smith Family, Lighthouse Foundation, St Vincent de Paul and many others, particularly in migrant communities. As a former social worker, I know there are many who help the homeless. They give them support and try to lift them out of their predicaments. Certain criteria applies to what it means to be homeless and there are researchers who think outside the box. Mr Gerry Georgatos, who is a suicide prevention and poverty researcher, argues that there is an overwhelming intersection between poverty and suicide and between homelessness and suicide. He says there is an intersection between those aspects that lead not only to homelessness but potentially to suicide and a further deterioration of many of our citizens. Mr Georgatos has long argued that the extensiveness of poverty, relative and abject, and the extensiveness of homelessness are dramatically under-reported. He says that the majority of Australia's poor and homeless live and languish in New South Wales. Given that New South Wales is a large State, he identifies that a significant number of people will be on record. Mr Georgatos disputes that only 116,000 Australians are homeless and agrees with Homeless NSW that it is closer to 300,000 or higher.

Mr Georgatos states that 180,000 Australian families remain in the queue for public housing and New South Wales has the highest number of families waiting for public housing. He argues that 25 per cent of working-age Australians are unemployed as opposed to the official statistic of 5 per cent. I will allude to some of the articles he has written. Mr Georgatos is an interesting researcher who looks outside the box and tests official policy, practice and rhetoric. He challenges the narrative and questions the official policy position. His approach is well respected in Australia. He states that homelessness will continue to increase and become more visible.

Debate adjourned.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Shayne Mallard): I will now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: Order! According to sessional order, proceedings are now interrupted for questions.

Questions Without Notice

RIDGELANDS RESOURCES COMMUNITY FUND

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (14:30): My question without notice is directed to the Leader of the Government, the Minister for Resources, and Minister for Energy and Utilities. Given his previous answers on Ridgeland's licence requirements, which included setting up a \$5 million community fund, what is his response to emails from the resources and energy division of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment, dated 3 August 2017, which states, "We've inadvertently approved the variation of the community fund without knowledge of the special condition 58"? Given this inadvertent approval led to the community fund obligation being reduced to just \$500,000, why was his department not aware of the licence condition?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (14:31): What matters is that the money has been paid in full. In fact, the cheques are going out the door as we speak. I imagine the Mayor of Muswellbrook is very happy about that. When I said "the cheques are going out the door", of course I was speaking figuratively. The reality is that on 14 February the Hon. Penny Sharpe asked me a question about the department's actions, which I took on notice. Under condition 58 of its exploration licence, Ridgeland's was required to complete the exploration work program on 27 February 2018. On 27 March 2017, Ridgeland's wrote to the department to request—no, that is not what I want to go through. We are not having a good start this afternoon. It has been a long week.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I cannot hear the point of order of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition with so much chatter coming from members behind him. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is entitled to be heard in silence, particularly by his own colleagues.

The Hon. Walt Secord: I seek leave to allow the Leader of the Government to table his notes.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is no point of order. Has the Leader of the Government finished his answer?

The Hon. DON HARWIN: No. The \$5 million has been paid into the community fund and it is being disbursed. A number of people have applied for grants and are receiving them. This is not a government fund. It is a fund that Ridgeland's set up. The money is being disbursed. The council has a representative on it and the community is benefiting as a result.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (14:33): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate the part of his answer when he explained the inadvertent approval and why the department was unaware of the condition that was implemented?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (14:33): I refer the Hon. Adam Searle to my previous answer.

ENERGY MARKET REFORM

The Hon. LOU AMATO (14:34): My question is addressed to the Minister for Energy and Utilities. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is futureproofing the New South Wales electricity network?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (14:34): I thank the Hon. Lou Amato for his important question because futureproofing the electricity network is absolutely vital. The New South Wales Government is taking the lead in ensuring sufficient new affordable energy generation for households and communities in New South Wales into the future. Yesterday I had the opportunity to address the Energy Networks Australia 2018 conference to announce that the New South Wales Government will prepare a transmission infrastructure strategy. To attract investment in new energy generation and network infrastructure, we need a clear plan. This transmission strategy is about New South Wales—to use the words of the Premier—"owning the future".

We must do the work now to ensure that we are ready for the future. For too many years we have not been in the position that we need to be in. Industry and consumers have suffered from ad hoc announcements and policy on the run. We have a huge pipeline of potential investment in new generation projects worth \$18 billion. However, none of it matters if we cannot transmit power to where it needs to be. Currently the volume of proposed

new generation projects is 15 times higher than the remaining capacity of our transmission network. We have a huge pipeline of projects, but we do not have the transmission network to support it. Therefore, the goal of our strategy is straightforward to ensure that New South Wales can access the low-cost power generation that it needs. We have learned from jurisdictions such as Texas, which unlocked its renewable resources and cheaper power through competitive renewable energy zones.

A key part of delivering this vision is encouraging private sector investment in generation in New South Wales proposed energy zones. We have identified three potential priority energy zones in the New England, the Central West and the south-west of the State. Those energy zones will form the foundation of the transmission strategy. Those zones benefit from outstanding energy resources, reduced environmental and planning constraints, are close to existing network infrastructure and load centres, and align with the Government's regional growth priority. The result of unlocking this investment potential would be a more competitive wholesale market and a market delivering least cost energy to New South Wales consumers.

The transmission strategy will ensure that this State has enough energy supply in the future and that the costs to New South Wales energy consumers are limited. We are doing this as strong supporters of the national electricity market and the role of Australian Energy Market Operator in national energy planning. Our plan supports its work. This is about ensuring that any new transmission infrastructure delivers benefits for energy consumers and our regional communities. This strategy is vital because of the challenges of infrastructure lead times and the legacy that we have inherited. We are focused on doing what we can to plan for the future energy needs of communities across New South Wales. We are planning for the future. We are planning for the energy transition. It is all very well to have a focus on renewables, but if we do not have the transmission network to support it, then we are not going to be able to meet the full potential—*[Time expired.]*

RIDGELANDS RESOURCES COMMUNITY FUND

The Hon. WALT SECORD (14:38): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Leader of the Government. What investigations have taken place as a result of the Ridgeland issue being raised with the Minister on 14 February 2018? How is it possible that a government agency was able to reduce a community fund from \$5 million to \$500,000?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (14:41): The requirement for Ridgeland to establish a \$5 million community fund is enforceable under condition 58 of EL8064. I previously told the House, I am advised that Ridgeland Coal Resources has established a \$5 million community fund. I am further advised that Ridgeland received 18 applications under the first round of funding, nine of which were approved and paid for at a cost of \$548,565. A second round of applications were considered by the fund committee on 28 May, with more than 40 applications assessed, 27 of which were approved to the total value of \$4,452,628. This means that the entire \$5 million has been committed to the community projects as I informed the House earlier.

Notwithstanding that the community fund has finally been established, the Resources Regulator is continuing its investigation into Ridgeland. The simple fact is that when this Government grants a licence for exploration or extraction, it expects and will ensure that all conditions of that licence are met. In fact, it was this Government that established the Resources Regulator to ensure operators meet their licence conditions. Gone are the days of the Labor Government's approach to mining regulation. I am always surprised when the Labor Party has the audacity to come into this place and talk about the regulation of mining after its record in its time in office. We will not be judged by its degraded standards. Given that the Resource Regulator has yet to complete its investigation, it is inappropriate for me to make further comment.

The Hon. WALT SECORD (14:41): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer in regard to the Resources Regulator investigation? When will that investigation be completed? Will it be released publicly?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (14:41): If the Hon. Walt Secord had listened he would have heard that the Resources Regulator has yet to complete its investigation. I will not make any other comment until the investigation is finished.

ABOVE AND BEYOND FESTIVAL TICKET CONFISCATION

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (14:41): My question is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries, representing the Minister for Police. What powers is the NSW Police Force relying on to confiscate festival goers' tickets at the Above and Beyond Festival this weekend after they have conducted a search of them following a positive drug dog indication and found no drugs? Is it Government policy to punish the innocent?

The Hon. Don Harwin: Point of order: I believe questions that contain hypothetical material, or are about a future event that is hypothetical, are out of order.

Mr David Shoebridge: Point of order—

The PRESIDENT: I will look at the question while I listen to the point of order.

Mr David Shoebridge: Only two days ago the NSW Police Force issued a media release stating that it will apply that policy this weekend. It is not a hypothetical. It is unfortunately the official policy of the NSW Police Force to punish the innocent.

The PRESIDENT: The first part of the question is permitted. However, I will not allow the last part of the question, which states, "Is it Government policy to punish the innocent?"

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry) (14:43): I thank Mr David Shoebridge for his question. The question is obviously directed to the Minister for Police, who I represent in this Chamber. I have been advised, and I am aware, that police have issued warnings to festival goers ahead of the Above and Beyond festival, which I think Mr David Shoebridge said is scheduled to occur this weekend. Is it on Saturday or Sunday?

Mr David Shoebridge: I believe it is Sunday.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: It is on Sunday at the Sydney Showground. I have been advised that drug detection dogs will patrol the venue. The number one priority of the NSW Police Force is to ensure the safety of all music fans, event staff and performers attending the festival. The NSW Police Force will take all appropriate action within the law to ensure community safety. I also have been advised that on occasions when the NSW Police Force denies entry to the Above and Beyond festival based upon actual or suspected possession of drugs, they will be doing so with the support and agreement of Sydney Showground, the licensee and event promoters.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (14:45): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer and explain to the House how punishing festival goers, by removing their tickets, who have been searched by police and found to have no drugs assists in promoting community safety?

The Hon. Scott Farlow: Point of order: It is clearly a new question and does not relate to the Minister's answer and does not seek elucidation.

The PRESIDENT: I believe the supplementary question is in order. The Minister can answer the question, noting that he has already indicated that he represents a Minister in the other place.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry) (14:46): I refer Mr David Shoebridge to my previous answer. Given the event will take place this weekend, even if I were to take the question on notice I do not know that I would have an answer for him by then. I refer Mr David Shoebridge to the information that I have at hand. He may want to ask another question after the festival. If such events occur, I am sure he will.

GET HOOKED—IT'S FUN TO FISH PROGRAM

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES (14:46): I address my question to the Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry. Will the Minister update the House on what the Government is doing to encourage kids to take up fishing?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry) (14:46): I thank the honourable member for her question. As we have heard before, fishing is enjoyed by approximately one million people in New South Wales every year. Whether they are wetting a line at Wee Waa or Lismore, or casting out at Currarong or Kingscliff, everyone loves to fish. We want every child in New South Wales to have the opportunity to learn to fish. That is why the Department of Primary Industries has been encouraging children to fish through the popular Get Hooked—It's Fun to Fish program.

Get Hooked is a free New South Wales primary school program for all schools, with students getting the chance to participate in fishing workshops, where they can have a shot at landing the big one. The workshops involve lessons about rules and regulations, fish identification, catch and release techniques, practical skills on rods and reels, and tying knots and rigging. All students also take home a goody bag, which includes a tackle box, educational material, pencil case and an activity book.

Get Hooked provides students with the basic skills needed for recreational fishing. It also introduces students to the concept of sustaining quality aquatic habitats by practising safe and responsible fishing. This year, approximately 100 schools across New South Wales are involved, covering more than 3,500 students. Each year,

\$440,000 from the New South Wales Recreational Fishing Trust is allocated to provide this program. Get Hooked is a good example of fishing licence fees, which are collected within the trust, being poured back into initiatives to equip the next generation to fish.

The program is made up of six teaching modules, which form a junior fishing code and are derived from the national code principles. Teachers are provided with an activity kit with items to run games and exercises in class. The junior fishing code also meets syllabus outcomes across all key learning areas. The program is popular with kids who struggle at school as it provides a calm, fun and hands-on approach, allowing those students to build their confidence and express their abilities in a team environment.

The Get Hooked program works closely and in collaboration with teachers and other agencies, such as local councils, Roads and Maritime Services, Marine Parks and staff within the Department of Primary Industries. I make special mention of our fantastic Fishcare volunteers, who also assist with Get Hooked. They get involved with the activities and pass on their extensive knowledge and skills to the students, with more than 20 Fishcare volunteers assisting with school visits and workshops. We are thankful to our volunteers for all the hard work they put in. By adding fishing to the curriculum, children get the chance to learn the skills for recreational fishing that will form a lifelong hobby. Not only that, the children get to see what it looks like to take an active role in the management of waterways and fish stocks, as many recreational fishers do. This will ensure the State's fish resources are enjoyed now and into the future.

I encourage all schools across New South Wales to "get hooked". As I have said before and will say again: what we want for our kids is more time in the tackle box, less time on the Xbox. We want our kids out there, fishing. We want them getting out there, connecting with their local environments and learning about habitats. We want them out there, learning from our volunteers and looking at and participating in the wonderful activity of recreational fishing. That is what we are supporting through this fantastic program.

The Hon. Mick Veitch: Who wrote that line?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: That one is mine. They did not write that; that is why I am freewheeling. It is a great activity. [*Time expired.*]

The PRESIDENT: I indicate to all members that if a member wishes to seek the call, it would assist the Chair if they call out, "Mr President." A habit has started to form where members simply stand. When I have three or four members standing—notwithstanding that they know it is not their turn—it makes it difficult for me. I assume that Ms Dawn Walker is seeking the call.

BIOENERGY

Ms DAWN WALKER (14:51): My question is directed to the Minister for Resources, and Minister for Energy and Utilities. Is the Government aware of any proposals to use biomass from native forests in New South Wales, including harvest residues from forestry operations, for new bioenergy electricity generation facilities? If so, will the Minister provide details of these proposals, including their location, size, what stage they are at in the planning process and whether the Government supports such facilities being approved?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (14:52): I thank Ms Dawn Walker for her question. As a general statement, we support a private sector-led transition to a secure, affordable and modern energy system. That is the Government's policy, and it includes support for a sustainable bioenergy sector. Bioenergy is a renewable type of energy because its source—biomass—is a replenishable resource. It has the potential to increase security and diversity of energy supply, while creating jobs and income diversification in regional and rural New South Wales. Forest biomass is used extensively around the world for the generation of bioenergy and there is no reason why Australia should be any different. While burning biomass releases carbon emissions, it operates in a closed carbon cycle and therefore creates little or no net greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2014 the New South Wales Government removed an unnecessary barrier to renewable energy development by introducing a more flexible regulatory scheme that helps to strike the right balance between a sustainable timber industry and the environment. The regulatory scheme enables the use of invasive native species, the tree heads and offcuts of trees cut for sawlogs, and trees that might otherwise be made into pulp for paper production to be used for electricity generation. These materials would otherwise be under-utilised and would potentially contribute to increased fire risks. The supply of energy from this source has the potential to contribute to a diverse generation base and energy security. The regulations only allow biomaterials that have legal approvals to be used to generate electricity. They were specifically designed to ensure that there is no increase in the intensity of logging. This has reduced or removed any of the existing obligations of industry in the harvesting process in native forests.

The Environment Protection Authority carefully manages the regulatory scheme to avoid unintended consequences. This includes requiring all private electricity operators to keep a detailed record of the amount of biomass they receive and burn, and where this material comes from. Any proposals involving the use of waste to generate electricity would also need to comply with the NSW Environment Protection Authority's Energy from Waste Policy Statement. Any major electricity-generating proposals would be subject to the New South Wales planning process under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

I am advised that we are aware of one proposal, but no formal application has yet been lodged. That proposal is for a "biohub" project at Cobar by a company called Renewed Carbon. It includes converting forestry remains and cleared invasive native scrub into a range of products, including sawlogs and speciality timbers, and electricity generation for the local community. If the department— [*Time expired.*]

RIDGELANDS RESOURCES COMMUNITY FUND

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (14:56): My question is directed to the Minister for Resources and Minister for Energy and Utilities. Departmental officials said that the change to the Ridgeland Community Fund was "inadvertent". In an email dated 4 August 2017 from Ms Kylie Hargreaves, then Deputy Secretary to the Division of Resources and Geosciences, she states that she "totally disagrees" with this excuse from departmental officials. What really happened with this fund?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (14:56): I am advised that in August 2017 the Government became aware that Ridgeland had not established the \$5 million community fund. When the Government became aware of that, the matter was immediately referred to the Resources Regulator to determine whether there had been a breach of the licence conditions. Following that, Ridgeland deposited \$5 million into the community fund through three payments comprising \$500,000 on 1 October 2017, \$500,000 on 25 January 2018, and \$4 million on 9 February 2018. As I informed the House earlier, the Resources Regulator is continuing with its investigation into this matter. If noncompliance by Ridgeland is established, a range of penalties and prosecutorial options are available.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (14:57): I ask a supplementary question. My question related to how this mistake was made internally within the department. In his answer, will the Minister elucidate investigations within the department itself into how it allowed this licence condition to—

The PRESIDENT: The Minister will resume his seat. I would prefer that Ministers do not stand until the member asking the question has finished doing so. If the Minister wants to take a point of order, he can do so when the question is asked.

The Hon. Don Harwin: Point of order: The question is essentially the same as the question that was previously asked. There is nothing new in it and therefore it is not a supplementary question.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Penny Sharpe will wait until the Minister finishes speaking before standing. As I indicated yesterday, this continual jumping up and down when a member is speaking makes it incredibly difficult for me.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I believe that the supplementary question is in order and I am seeking an elucidation. The Minister spoke about investigations into this matter and I am seeking an elucidation about what is happening within his own department—not what has been referred to the regulator. That is a separate issue. He canvassed both of those matters within his answer, and I am seeking an elucidation on the actions that have been taken internally within his department.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Penny Sharpe has, in effect, simply repeated her question again as part of her request for elucidation. It is not an appropriate supplementary question and I will not allow it.

REGIONAL CONSERVATORIUMS GRANTS PROGRAM

The Hon. WES FANG (14:59): My question is addressed to the Assistant Minister for Education. Would the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government is supporting music education?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education) (14:59): I thank the Hon. Wes Fang for his question and his continued interest in how music education is being rolled out in regional New South Wales. Music education and involvement in the arts are important to students' success as individuals and as members of society. They emphasise not only creativity and innovation but also the values of broad cultural understanding and social harmony. That is why the New South Wales Government has introduced the Regional Conservatoriums Grants Program to support music education in this State. As Assistant Minister for Education, I am proud to play a role in this policy area.

The Regional Conservatorium Grants Program supports the provision of a wide range of music education, training, performance and engagement opportunities for schools, students, teachers and community members in regional, rural and remote areas by catering for learners, performers and audiences of all ages, interests and abilities. Programs offered include: instrumental and vocal tuition, musicianship and theory, tuition for people with special needs, performing ensembles, performances for the community, professional development for teachers and performers, schools programs, music technology, and early childhood music.

There are currently 18 conservatoriums funded by the New South Wales Government. Funding for this financial year for the Regional Conservatoriums Grants Program includes nearly \$7 million allocated to regional conservatoriums, an additional \$381,000 to support additional projects, and \$275,000 allocated to departmental operations including staffing costs. According to recent reporting by the conservatoriums, nearly 14,000 students from 259 public schools and 168 non-Government schools in regional New South Wales benefitted from the program over the past year. Of those students, 1,300 resided more than 100 kilometres away from their nearest regional conservatorium and more than 1,500 were Indigenous students. A total of 562 teachers have also been involved with programs associated with regional conservatoriums. Approximately 257 musical performances and concerts by students engaged in music education at regional conservatoriums have taken place in regional New South Wales in the past year.

As Minister, I have really enjoyed visiting regional conservatoriums and meeting many of the directors and board members from around New South Wales. I especially acknowledge Anita Bellman, president of the Association of NSW Regional Conservatoriums, who does a wonderful job. On a personal level, I have also experienced firsthand the great things that conservatoriums can bring to regional communities. For a long time, my daughter Annabelle has attended early childhood music classes at the Gunnedah Conservatorium. The classes have helped her both developmentally and socially. I make special mention of her fantastic teacher Julia Rennick, who all of the children in Gunnedah adore. She does a lot of work with early childhood services in the town. I know this is the case in many other regional communities and as Minister for Early Childhood Education, it is particularly pleasing to see when these experiences are offered to children in our many services across the State.

Conservatoriums also give the local community a chance to participate in the arts. We in the country love the arts. Regional people want to have a vibrant cultural community, and conservatoriums make that possible. Again, to use a local example, in Gunnedah they have recently finished a sellout run of the musical *Chicago* using all local talent. It was a fantastic production. I acknowledge the main cast: Tammy Clark, Alison Stewart, Ben Hennessey, Jamie Brown, Kate Pinn and others. I also acknowledge Director Larni Christie, Musical Director Emma Kersley, and Director of the Gunnedah Conservatorium Rebecca Ryan. It was a fantastic production. Productions like that are exactly why the Government's investment in regional conservatoriums is a sound investment in our regional communities and their future.

POWERHOUSE MUSEUM RELOCATION

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (15:04): My question without notice is directed to Minister for the Arts. Will the Minister guarantee that the business case documents for the relocation of the Powerhouse Museum that he will provide to the Parliament tomorrow will be complete documents—that is, not redacted, censored, or summarised?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (15:04): I gave an answer to that question yesterday: The material that will be provided will be consistent with its status and the conventions of the House.

NEWCASTLE CONTAINER TERMINAL

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (15:05): My question is directed to the Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts, and Leader of the Government. Given the proposal for the T4 coal export terminal at Newcastle has been scrapped, will the Government now lift the anti-competitive restrictions that were placed on the development of a container terminal at the port so that Newcastle and the Hunter Valley can diversify and strengthen its economic base?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (15:05): I am happy to take the question as Leader of the Government, but it clearly should be directed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. I will direct the question to her for a response.

MINING INDUSTRY COMPLIANCE

Mr SCOT MacDONALD (15:05): My question is addressed to the Minister for Resources. Will the Minister update the House on what the Government is doing to address compliance in the mining industry?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (15:06): I thank Mr Scot MacDonald for his question. Given his role as Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter, he would know that mining is a critical industry for the Hunter Valley. There is a clear need to focus on ensuring ongoing compliance in our mining industry. This is a matter that we take very seriously. Recent changes to our legislation and a realignment of the Resources Regulator's approach, as outlined in its incident prevention strategy, required a testing of some underpinning, risk-based assumptions. This also includes a focus on mine rehabilitation activities to ensure progressive rehabilitation is being carried out and compliance obligations are being met.

With recent data identifying potentially serious incidents, the regulator launched a high-visibility compliance operation throughout all mining, extractive and petroleum sectors in New South Wales. The week-long statewide compliance blitz ran from 28 May to 1 June and covered all mining and petroleum extraction regions. This was the largest operational deployment of personnel and resources ever conducted by the regulator and will serve as a model for future compliance campaigns. It also built on similar focused campaigns undertaken by the regulator in the Lightning Ridge opal mining fields.

The compliance operation was undertaken by multi-disciplined teams involving 80 inspectors and regulatory officers. As a result of the operation, 129 inspections were carried out across 109 mine and petroleum sites, including 41 coalmines, 28 metalliferous or extractive mines, 34 small mines, six petroleum sites and one other workplace. The regulator deployed inspectors and regulatory officers from its safety, environment and compliance units. These teams were led by technical experts and supported by other multidisciplinary personnel. Inspections and visits during the high-visibility operation focused on four key areas. These were determined to be areas of high potential for incidents in the industry, as confirmed by analysis of the incident data.

The key focus areas were: roads and vehicle-operating areas at large surface mines and underground metalliferous mines, ground and strata failure in all underground mines, safe operation of mobile plant at quarrying operations, and rehabilitation and dam monitoring. I am advised that some issues were identified at a small number of sites, particularly in relation to plant and equipment. These resulted in 28 prohibition notices being issued at 12 sites. Those mines were required to suspend part of their operations until they can satisfy the regulator that their sites are safe for workers to resume those activities. A further 35 improvement notices and 33 notices of concern were issued in relation to work health and safety requirements. There are also eight potential breaches identified under the Mining Act, which will be investigated for further enforcement action.

Overall, the operation generally found good compliance by mine operators with legislative obligations. Mine operators are to be commended on their strong commitment to the safety of their workforce. I congratulate them on that result. I am confident that the model of detection and enforcement—[*Time expired.*]

WILD DEER CONTROL PROGRAMS

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN (15:10): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries. Given the Government's very recent confirmation of its decision to not shoot brumbies from helicopters in Kosciuszko National Park due to potentially horrific animal welfare outcomes, will the Government now cancel the planned slaughter of wild deer by North West Local Land Services using a helicopter gunship at Willow Tree and in other areas of the State, including national parks? On what basis is this inhumane method justified, given that the Local Land Services regional pest management plans have not yet been finalised?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry) (15:11): I thank the honourable member for his question. The question refers to activities that the Local Land Services [LLS] has been undertaking for some time now in the northern part of this State. The activities planned for the control of deer in those areas have been made in conjunction with those landholders willing to participate in these activities. These aerial operations are being done with the permission of landholders. They are also consistent with previously conducted aerial operations.

These activities are being undertaken in response to the increasing number of wild deer and the suspension in June 2017 of hunting regulations in eight local government areas across New South Wales, including the Snowy Monaro, Bega Valley, Snowy Valleys, Wollongong, Liverpool Plains, Upper Hunter, Glen Innes Severn and Tenterfield councils. Hunting regulations in these areas are to be suspended for three years to allow licenced and insured hunters to help those private property owners being impacted by wild deer. This is one of the activities being carried out to try to control those numbers of wild deer but it is different to what the member has asked about in his question.

These activities are being carried on private land with the permission of the private landholders. The latest update I have been given is that very strict control measures are in place. There has also been a lot of consultation with the landholders and extensive planning has taken place for these aerial culls. I have also been

advised that some landholders have decided to opt-out of these control programs, having participated in them in the previous few months. That decision has been respected by Local Land Services. This matter is absolutely consistent with what Local Land Services has been doing. It is very different to the brumby issue that was debated in this House. Most importantly, these culls are being carried out on private property.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN (15:14): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer where he described this process as being controlled? Can the Minister inform members of what evidence he can bring to the House about those controls and if those control methods are within the standing operating procedures of the Local Land Services?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry) (15:14): I thank the honourable member for his supplementary question. I am more than happy to take that question on notice and get some for further information for him. As I said, I was recalling information from previous discussions I have had about this matter with LLS. Taking the question on notice will allow LLS to compile a detailed response about the types of management plans and the consultation that has taken place with these landholders.

The response will also include the controls that LLS has in place. As I said in my earlier answer, these activities are supported by some landholders and not by others. I am aware of cases where landholders who did not want this type of aerial cull to occur were able to opt-out, and that decision was respected. There needs to be a lot of engagement with landholders around the timing, the type of activities that will be occurring during the cull and the cleaning up and collection of carcasses. I am absolutely confident that the LLS will be able to supply this information and I will come back to the member with that information in due course.

FARM INNOVATION FUND

The Hon. MICK VEITCH (15:16): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry. Given that Mr Adam Marshall, the member for the Northern Tablelands, and the Minister's ministerial colleague, has supported my calls for a top-up of the Farm Innovation Fund, when will the Minister be announcing a top-up of that fund?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry) (15:17:0): I thank the honourable member for his question. It should come as no surprise that when one travels across the State and talks to different people from different communities—which I have been doing—they have differing views about what should be happening in this policy area. And many members of Parliament, at all levels of government, are more than happy to also express their views about this. When it comes to drought, in particular, people hold many differing views about what should be done. Part of the reason that people express those views is that the Government has been leading the conversation—for example, the Premier and the Deputy Premier have been visiting a number of farmers around the State. This week at the Federal level we have also seen the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Deputy Leader of The Nationals and the member for Parkes on farms in western New South Wales.

The issue of the Farm Innovation Fund has also been canvassed in this Chamber in response to previous questions by the member. I said in answer to a previous question that I congratulate not only the shadow Minister for Primary Industries but also the Labor Party for acknowledging that this funding has made a difference. This funding is being used to put infrastructure on farms to help farmers through drought—not only the current drought but also subsequent droughts—and for other things to help with farming operations. The member well knows that this funding has been heavily subscribed. Indeed, I have mentioned both in this House, and also in recent media, that we have seen an increase in the number of farmers accessing the Farm Innovation Fund. Further, since the \$20,000 Drought Transport Fund was announced, applications for funding of around \$700,000 have been received.

This shows that the settings that the Government has adjusted are hitting the mark. It not only confirms that the Farm Innovation Fund has been popular, but that the adjustment to the Drought Transport Fund is also hitting the mark. We came up with the fund and we know how popular it has been. We know how much is left in it and we control the destiny of that fund. We will ensure that the things that have been supporting our farmers will be front and centre as needed and when needed and we will continue to stand by the farmers of this State. It is a challenging time for our farmers. We know that the Farm Innovation Fund has been popular. We are listening to a range of views from across the State on what adjustments may need to be made to our drought policy. We will take all of those views into account when we come up with a final decision.

WESTERN SYDNEY AIRPORT

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (15:20): My question is addressed to the Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry. How is the New South Wales Government delivering on the promise of the Western Sydney Airport and aerotropolis?

The Hon. NIAL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry) (15:20): I thank the honourable member for his question. The Commonwealth, New South Wales and local governments have come together to deliver a world-class airport to support the expansion and prosperity of Western Sydney. Western Sydney is already the nation's third-largest region for economic contribution. This much-needed infrastructure project will take that to the next level. Once complete, the airport will support some 13,000 jobs directly and generate many more indirect jobs across Western Sydney and beyond.

This is not just a project for Western Sydney; the effects of this project extend far beyond the local region. It will provide 24-hour operations to support not only passenger flights but also the increasingly important freight operations that are delivering our agricultural products to regional markets throughout Asia. In addition, it is the intention of both the Commonwealth and State to encourage a range of targeted industries to establish operations around the airport. These industries include aerospace and defence, advanced manufacturing, freight and logistics, agribusiness, education and research, health and tourism. These industries will drive employment, innovation and expansion in Western Sydney.

In addition, the creation of a major international airport in Western Sydney will boost productivity in the area. The savings in travel time alone, multiplied by the many millions of passengers each year, will be vast. All these benefits will flow throughout Western Sydney, delivering a once-in-a-century boost to the region. Naturally, this will not happen overnight or without hard work to attract investment into the region. To this end, the Premier and the Prime Minister hosted a major Aerotropolis Investor Forum in Western Sydney on 28 May, where potential investors from across the globe were introduced to the full size and scope of the Western Sydney aerotropolis project. The forum highlighted the importance that all levels of government place on this game-changing infrastructure project. We cannot understate the potential this development offers to businesses looking to set up or expand, with a vast array of greenfield sites adjacent to the airport site available for local and international firms. The three levels of government are joining in a proactive manner to deliver an unprecedented \$20 billion of public funding into transport, health and education infrastructure around the aerotropolis.

Western Sydney is receiving infrastructure on a grand scale. To capitalise on that, the New South Wales Government is putting in place a range of measures to assist businesses to set up in Western Sydney, particularly near the Western Sydney airport site. This includes streamlined planning processes, fast-tracking infrastructure and working with telecommunications providers to enhance digital connectivity, including through the deployment of 5G technologies. In addition, the Commonwealth and State governments will set up the Western Sydney Development Authority. This new authority will work on the early delivery of utilities and other critical infrastructure, helping to speed up development and reducing costs to businesses. The New South Wales Government is backing Western Sydney. We are overseeing a once-in-a-generation boost to the region, delivering the infrastructure, the investment and the jobs that the region needs, and we will continue to deliver the prosperity that Western Sydney deserves.

I had the pleasure of also attending the aerotropolis event in Western Sydney. It was a great opportunity to not only meet with domestic businesses but also connect with some of those businesses that I met with on some of my overseas delegations as trade Minister to have a look at what sort of investment they can bring to this exciting infrastructure opportunity that will create jobs for many people within Western Sydney. It is an exciting project and we must ensure that we all get in and back it.

NATIONAL ENERGY GUARANTEE

Mr JEREMY BUCKINGHAM (15:24): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Resources, and Minister for Energy and Utilities. Are "behind the grid" electricity contracts and usage, such as the one announced between Hunter Energy and the IOT Group to mine bitcoin, regulated under the National Electricity Market and subject to policies such as the proposed National Energy Guarantee, which is targeted at energy retailers? If not, how will such usage be regulated in general and, in particular, how will "behind the grid" operations be assessed and regulated in terms of carbon emissions and climate and energy-related targets?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (15:27): That is a very good question indeed. The proposed National Energy Guarantee [NEG] design will create obligations for energy retailers and some large users to deliver reliable and lower emissions energy. The existing Redbank power station has a connection to the National Electricity Market. All of the State

energy Ministers, as well as the Federal energy Ministers and departmental representatives, are working with the Energy Security Board developing the detailed design of the NEG, including how behind-the-meter arrangements will affect obligations. We are closely monitoring that.

We expect to hear about the full detail of the proposal at a ministerial phone hook-up later in June; so there will be more information then. It is not possible to give a detailed answer to the honourable member at the moment because there is still work going on. Obviously there will be negotiations during July and August, but the intention is for the final design of the NEG to go to the Council of Australian Governments Energy Council on Friday 10 August in Sydney; so by then we will know. But between now and late June there is more work to be done and then we will be negotiating during July.

LAND CONTAMINATION

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (15:27): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry. In light of revelations that farmland around Stony Creek and Swamp Creek has been contaminated with per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances [PFAS], what is the Minister's response to community concern that primary producers have been told not to eat their own products but should continue to sell their cattle, and why did Local Land Services fail to provide producer-specific briefings to affected farmers?

The Hon. NIAL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry) (15:28): I thank the honourable member for his question. As we have said before, PFAS contamination and the way that it may affect food that goes into the supply chain is guided by our scientific experts in those matters. We know that in previous cases we have seen in the State, those responses have been guided by the Chief Scientist and Engineer and health experts, because when we are talking about PFAS and the broader food supply chain, we see a dilution of PFAS in produce that may go into the broader food supply chain rather than a concentration if someone was to continually consume the same food that is produced on the same property.

If I have not previously explained this issue correctly, I am happy to get further advice and come back to the House. We must be careful when it comes to issues of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances and contamination more broadly. We must clearly stick to the advice of the experts and not talk ourselves out of trade markets because of scaremongering or political gain. I am not accusing the member of that. This is an area where we must listen to the expert advice and stick to that advice. I am happy to take that on notice and come back to the member. We have seen PFAS contamination before. It is not isolated to this country. It has occurred around the world and it occurs in nature. There are levels and limits set by experts and we must adhere to them. As the Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Trade, I must be protective and ensure that we do not talk ourselves out of markets. It is something that the Government takes seriously.

In relation to that part of the question relating to Local Land Services [LLS] and its advice, I will take that on notice also and return with a detailed response. On 7 May 2018 the Australian Government's expert health panel released a report on potential health impacts associated with PFAS exposure. The panel's findings support the New South Wales Government's precautionary approach towards issues in other parts of the State. There is a lot of expert advice and opinion that goes into the settings of these areas. I thank the member for his question.

I will take the question on notice in relation to the LLS response and come back to him. When I can provide the expert advice to the member on how we handle the food supply chain and contamination, I will reiterate that advice to everyone in the House. The Government takes this matter seriously. I will provide the member with a response and I will remind the House the way in which the Government deals with this issue. The Government takes the issue of food safety and human health needs very seriously. [*Time expired.*]

The Hon. DON HARWIN: The time for questions has expired. If members have further questions I suggest they place them on notice.

Deferred Answers

HOMOPHOBIA

In reply to **Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE** (3 May 2018).

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts)—The Minister provided the following response:

I am advised:

Questions relating to a person's employment or sponsorship, on the basis of his or her public comments, are matters for the person's employer and sponsors, subject to requirement of law.

ANIMAL WELFARE

In reply to the **Hon. MARK PEARSON** (3 May 2018).

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry)—The Minister provided the following response:

I have been informed that the Department of Primary Industries Regional Director advised Local Land Services of the incident. The Local Land Services vet contacted Yass police and was advised that no request for assistance had been made. The vet received a call from police about 40 minutes later providing a situation report and stated that the poultry company staff were on site. There was no request for Local Land Services to attend and the Local Land Services vet advised she could be contacted if assistance was required. No further contact was received from the police.

Euthanasia was carried out by the poultry company staff. Local Land Services cannot comment on the method used.

SHOALHAVEN ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

In reply to the **Hon. PAUL GREEN** (3 May 2018).

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry)—The Minister provided the following response:

I am advised:

Detailed information about the planned new Princes Highway bridge over the Shoalhaven River at Nowra is available on the Roads and Maritime Services website. Information about funding will be available in the NSW Budget 2018-19.

*Committees***PROCEDURE COMMITTEE****Report: E-petitions**

The PRESIDENT: I table report No. 11 of the Procedure Committee entitled "E-petitions", dated June 2018, together with related papers.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS**Establishment and Membership**

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There are too many audible conversations in the Chamber. Members will remove themselves from the Chamber following question time quickly and quietly and hold any conversations outside the Chamber.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (15:34): I previously referred to a number of articles that are relevant to the issue of homelessness and poverty. In an article dated 19 December 2017 entitled "Feeling the pinch this Christmas? This might be why", Roqayah Chamseddine states:

A report commissioned by Salvation Army and published last week—

The Hon. Ernest Wong: Point of order: Members on the other side of the Chamber are talking so loudly I cannot hear the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane's contribution to the debate.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I uphold the point of order. Members moving to the President's Gallery and having a loud conversation are not abiding by my direction. The member has the call.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: The article states:

A report commissioned by Salvation Army and published this week spells out an overlooked and distressing materiality this holiday season: 10 million Australians find it increasingly difficult to afford Christmas, and this year some 1.6 million parents "will struggle to put presents under the tree for their children". This isn't just about Christmas and what can be considered frivolous holiday expenditures but the rising cost of living in Australia, the daunting ascension of poverty, and how this manifests in our communities.

This important citation goes to the heart of the issue. More than 10 million Australians are having difficulty buying gifts for their children at Christmas. The article goes on:

What's compounding the issue of a burgeoning cost of living? A stagnation in pay. In August, Anna Patty, workplace editor for Fairfax Media, explained that "most Australians have not had a pay rise in real terms in years in the face of an assault on wages which has policy makers, unions and business groups worried".

I spoke with Gerry Georgatos, a poverty and suicide prevention researcher who works first-hand with the homeless and impoverished. Georgatos says Australians are being sold a false narrative about poverty, homelessness and joblessness. He says that it is officially argued that 750,000 Australians are out of work but, in reality, Georgatos says, "it's around 2½ million Australians of working age who are unemployed, and possibly higher".

A committee inquiry could call on experts to provide information. I thank the Hon. Ernest Wong for moving this motion which calls for the establishment of a select committee to inquire into and report on preventing and addressing homelessness in New South Wales.

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (15:38): The Government opposes this motion for several reasons. In July last year under Minister Goward's stewardship the Government released a broad discussion paper, "Foundations for Change—Homelessness in NSW". Based on that paper, the Government, through the Department of Family and Community Services, sought feedback, ideas and contributions from across New South Wales to help inform the development of a new homelessness strategy for New South Wales. The results of this consultation and the discussion paper are available on the Department of Family and Community Services' website. Consulting with people who have experienced homelessness and the people who respond to it was an essential element in developing a comprehensive policy response to homelessness. The Minister for Social Housing stated that the results of the consultation were clear: homelessness is everyone's business. All areas of the Government and the community need to work together to identify and understand risks, and bring support to people early to break the cycle of vulnerability. The consultations received 120 written submissions from individuals, non-government organisations and other stakeholder groups. Consultations were undertaken with people across New South Wales and across a broad range of communities.

Three workshops were held with Aboriginal people, service providers and clients. The sessions were held in Lismore, Campbelltown and Dubbo, covering the metropolitan and regional experiences of this heavily over-represented group. Seventy-five people who are homeless or have had direct experience with homelessness were interviewed by StreetCare, an independent homeless consumer advisory committee. That included 26 people who had recently left prison, eight who had experienced domestic and family violence, and 19 rough sleepers. Young people were directly engaged through the Advocate for Children and Young People. Ten group consultations with participants aged 13 years to 24 years allowed young people to offer insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by the particularly vulnerable group.

A total of 430 participants were reached through 15 open consultations held in each Family and Community Services district across New South Wales. The sessions were required to gain insights into regional differences. External stakeholders such as non-government organisations, service providers, tenancy advocates, housing services, specialist homelessness services, local government, Commonwealth services and many others were also engaged. Other government agencies met directly with the Department of Family and Community Services to relay their feedback in relation to people at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. The Premier's Council on Homelessness also played a critical role. The council is a group of independent experts and key sector peaks who provide the New South Wales Government with advice on homelessness issues and innovative, evidence-based responses.

Key messages from the consultations were that a person-centred approach delivers the best outcomes. We know that clients' needs—not the process—are most important and that people need to be treated as people, not numbers. Homelessness is everyone's business. The system needs to be integrated to foster collaboration, and to not allow people to fall between the cracks. We need to intervene early to prevent homelessness and break the cycle. Finally, we need to do more of what we know works. The consultations to produce the homelessness strategy have been public, transparent and comprehensive. It has engaged the sector, the community and the clients of homelessness services in a positive approach to improving outcomes.

The role of the Parliament should not be to re-prosecute a successful public policy consultation process. The consultations have clearly informed a range of reforms to be presented as part of the homelessness strategy and will demonstrate that the Government will tackle homelessness on all fronts. Homelessness is a critical priority for the Government, featuring heavily in our State and Premier's priorities. It is time for bold and decisive action to prevent homelessness and to intervene early when it does occur to quickly and effectively support those in crisis back to independence. That is why we do not support this motion. We already have a way forward. We already have a strategy. We are already hard at work.

Labor Party members turn up here today wanting to set up a committee on homelessness. They think they have discovered America. We are already solving the issue and putting those things together. We have been out there while Labor has been asleep. They have been asleep for 20 years on the issue and have suddenly woken up—more or less. They are still shuffling towards the starting line. Labor has been the Rip Van Winkle of politics in the State for 20 years. Minister Goward and the Coalition have the issue in hand. We are way ahead of Labor—

not by an inch, a foot, yard or mile; but by a thousand light-years. We have the issue in hand. Labor should go back to sleep; the Coalition is already on the job.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON (15:44): The Animal Justice Party supports this motion to set up a select committee on homelessness. There has been consultation after consultation, reports after reports, and recommendations after recommendations. The measure of the efficacy of all this—of the proactive inclusion and work for homeless people—would be that homelessness has reduced, people are finding homes and are not on the streets, vulnerable to all sorts of assault and abuse. During the Government's so-called consultations, reports and investigations, that measure has not borne any fruit; the problem is worse. With Indigenous people, we had consultation after consultation, committees and reports, but it never led to any practical outcome.

Members should look across the road from Parliament House. We are facing an extraordinary amount of noise pollution and dust pollution from a development proposal that the Government approved. The monster of a building being built across the road will not have one room for homeless people. It will stand where homeless people made the Premier quite uncomfortable by being in Martin Place. But one thing is for sure: All those homeless people are the most uncomfortable in our community. They are sleeping in tents and on concrete in the middle of winter. In almost every corner in the city, you will find one person or two huddled up in the corner of a building entrance, trying to keep warm. It is a blight on our society that the number of these people continues to grow while we are having reports and consultation, and reports and consultation.

The same thing happened with the committee and inquiry into mental health. People with mental health issues never received assertive and comprehensive mental health intervention until an inquiry instigated action on the ground to assess mentally ill people when they arrived at psychiatric hospitals, to look at the best way to treat and support them via agencies and case management, and to look after them when they were suffering from a mental health problem and coping with the pressures that it brought in their personal life and the community.

The measure of whether all that work and consultation has had an effect would have been a major decrease in the number of homeless people in our community. This is far from the truth. It brings about an urgent call for a committee that will look at the practical application of helping those people on the ground to be able to tie their boots and stand up, and find a home, shelter and warmth with the support of agencies. I overwhelmingly support the establishment of the committee.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (15:48): I speak on the motion moved by the Hon. Ernest Wong calling for the creation of a select committee on homelessness. I oppose the motion. The basis of my opposition is that the Government is getting on with action and is not having more inquiries. Aside from a political manoeuvre just before an election period, the call for an inquiry is also a diversion of resources. It is a key diversion of resources from stakeholders and government departments. Those resources would be diverted away from the action that the Government is taking, as has been outlined by other members. The call to establish an inquiry into homelessness is irresponsible and politically motivated and diverts resources away from the stakeholders—the people who are involved in providing services to the homeless community.

The Hon. Ernest Wong: Have you talked to them? They are happy to do it. I spoke to all of them.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I listened to your speech in silence. We have had two inquiries but other mechanisms are available to test the performance of the Government and the strategies that have been outlined. One of them is budget estimates. I invite the Hon. Ernest Wong to take the opportunity in budget estimates to ask the Minister those questions or to put questions on notice. If homelessness issues concern him that much, he can ask constructive questions on notice. The Berejiklian Government is championing social policy and putting Labor's record in office to shame. I remind members that this is the first government in New South Wales in the past 20 years that has created an increase in social housing. Labor sold social housing and did not replace it. I will come to that in more detail later. This Government is investing record amounts of money in homelessness services and programs as a result of increasing the budget for those services by more than 43 per cent over four years.

The Hon. Ernest Wong: How many? Tell me.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I am going to tell you. Just listen. We are supporting more people than ever before. New South Wales has the biggest social housing building program of any State or Territory in the country and it is probably the biggest in this State's history for the past 20 years. New South Wales is doing more for those experiencing homelessness in this State, more for the families that are living in social housing, and more for the families tragically experiencing domestic violence. I am proud that the 2017-18 budget included \$1.1 billion not only to support people experiencing homelessness but also for improved services for social housing tenants to help break disadvantage. It can never be enough, but \$1.1 billion is a huge investment in dealing with this perennial problem that occurs everywhere, not only in the Western world. We must be ever vigilant and

keep working on it. Members on this side of the House recognise that homelessness is a complex problem and there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

We have a range of options in New South Wales to support people at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness. We have Rentstart Bond Loans that provide a loan of up to 100 per cent of a rental bond to help people establish a tenancy in the private market; Rent Choice, which provides private rental assistance and subsidies, including targeted programs for women leaving domestic violence and young people to help them establish themselves in the private rental market; specialised mental health services; and Family and Community Services [FACS] outreach teams that have permanently housed more than 200 people sleeping rough in the inner city in the past 12 months. I know how difficult that is, having been a councillor on the City of Sydney and working with FACS to find accommodation for rough sleepers.

This Government is contributing funding to more women's refuges, contrary to what is being said. I am pleased to see that recent data shows a 19 per cent increase in the number of people who are accessing supported accommodation. We have developed a system that puts clients at the centre, coordinates services across government and focuses on prevention. We will continue to focus on the services that make a difference on the ground. We will continue to work to ensure the people at risk of experiencing homelessness in New South Wales receive the help they need to escape crisis and lead positive, healthy and secure and fulfilling lives.

Domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness. For many victims of domestic violence the threat of homelessness is what drives them back to the perpetrator and the reoffending. For this reason, the Government has invested more than \$350 million over four years to support domestic violence survivors so they can rebuild their lives and hold the perpetrators to account. That is in addition to the hundreds of millions of dollars that the Government spends each year to combat domestic violence and family violence through mainstream services such as Justice, Police, Health, child protection, social housing and Homelessness NSW.

The Government is committed to delivering better services for people in New South Wales through maintenance pop-ups, new supply and our social and affordable housing reforms. The Government is transforming social housing to improve services and to transform the lives of tenants. An essential component of that is working with and engaging the non-governmental sector to deliver better outcomes for social housing tenants. At an average of more than 850 a year, Labor sold off more than 1,700 social housing properties between 2008 and 2010, and they were not replaced. This Government is the first government in 20 years that has increased the amount of social housing available in the community. It has taken this Government to come up with a real plan for social housing and homelessness and it is doing so by championing integrated social policy reform, which puts history and the legacy of those opposite to shame.

I say this as someone who as a baby left Nepean Hospital and went straight into social housing, which I mentioned in my inaugural speech. My family was in social housing for a few years and we saw it as a hand up, not a hand out. It was not only a way out of dependency but also a way into the private market and eventually home ownership. I greatly respect social housing. It is an opportunity to help people. It is important to note that for the 16 years that the Labor Government was in office it had no significant plan for social housing and there was no focus on social outcomes. This Government has launched Link2home, which is a specialised 24/7 phone line to direct people to its services. This Government launched the pop-up housing offices to take services direct to people sleeping rough. The Berejiklian Government will continue to deliver for the most vulnerable people in New South Wales. This Government is committed to integrated social and affordable housing, ensuring that the most vulnerable in our community have a safe and affordable place to live.

The New South Wales Government launched the Social and Affordable Housing Fund [SAHF] in 2016, which is identified in the budget. The second phase of the fund was launched last year. In September the Government committed to investing in an additional 1,200 homes, following the 2,200 homes that were announced in March 2017, bringing the total figure of new social and affordable houses to 3,400. The SAHF provides access to accommodation, asset and tenancy management and tailored support accommodation coordination services for each tenant and household member. The fund encourages people to live independently and, where possible, beyond the needs of social housing, as my family did. This will ensure that more people will live in homes that are connected to transport, jobs, education, tailored support services and away from isolation, which is one of the Government's strategies. Surely that is a fundamental part to helping people out of homelessness.

The SAHF model is intended to break the intergenerational disadvantage by providing services to those who need it most. In those locations, the partners to this fund are building and procuring high-quality homes close to trains, bus stops, shops, schools and services so that people can be involved in their communities, not isolated from them. When I worked in Liverpool I saw what isolation does to the people who lived in the old social housing model. People had no access to buses or trains and were basically dumped into suburbs that were built in the 1960s and 1970s. The council and others were trying to resolve a large number of issues. The NSW Council of Social Service Chief Executive Officer Tracy Howe said that the fund:

... provides assurances that the Government has a long-term commitment to social and affordable housing.

The SAHF is one part of this Government's strategy to grow social and affordable housing. As a member of this Government, I am proud to say that New South Wales now has the biggest social housing building and replacement program of any State in the country. The Berejiklian Government's \$22 billion Communities Plus program will create 23,000 new dwellings in social housing, 500 affordable housing dwellings and 40,000 private housing dwellings. The flagship of the Communities Plus program is the renewal of large housing estates. This includes sites in Telopea, Waterloo, Ivanhoe, Riverwood and Arncliffe. Those ageing estates will be transformed into mixed communities where social housing blends in with private and affordable housing and they will have better access to transport, employment, improved community facilities and open spaces. This will revolutionise the nature of social housing and the lives of those who live in social housing estates.

A number of neighbourhood projects are being run in metropolitan Sydney and regional areas of New South Wales such as Liverpool, Seven Hills, Glendale and Tweed. There is no doubt that New South Wales is leading the way on new and innovative ways of providing social and affordable housing. We have a strong and comprehensive reform program, which is a far cry from the record of those opposite. The New South Wales Government will keep delivering to the most vulnerable people in New South Wales—something that in our view was not done by Labor. It has taken a Coalition Government to devise a real plan for social housing—an enabling plan for social housing that includes a building program that is the envy of this country. I am proud that this Government is helping to transform the lives of some of the most vulnerable in our community. I now turn to the motion moved by the Hon. Ernest Wong. I reiterate that today we do not need another inquiry to run across the good work being done by this Government. The runs are on the board; the Government is delivering.

The Hon. Ernest Wong: An additional 10,000 homeless people.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Mechanisms are available for the Hon. Ernest Wong to ask questions and I invite him to use them. This is a political manoeuvre on the eve of an election. This inquiry would take away government resources that are being used to help the homeless. More importantly, it will take away resources from people providing the services so that they can attend the inquiry. The Hon. Ernest Wong will take away resources from frontline services. I commend the work of the Government in this area. I am proud to be part of a government that is working in this area. I strongly oppose the motion moved by the Hon. Ernest Wong.

Debate adjourned.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Taylor Martin): According to sessional orders, proceedings are interrupted to permit the Minister to move the adjournment motion if desired.

Adjournment Debate

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. DON HARWIN: I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

MARIAN STREET THEATRE

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (16:01): Tonight I speak about a community treasure in the northern suburbs of Sydney—the Marian Street Theatre. The 280 seat theatre located in Killara is a local icon that has served as a cultural asset for years in the north. Since its construction in 1906, the Marian Street Theatre has had a long history as a community cultural hub and is an irreplaceable part of the region's wider theatre and arts scene. Following its development as a theatre in 1965, the Marian Street Theatre played a significant role in the area's cultural life and is widely remembered by former patrons and theatre lovers across metropolitan Sydney.

Since the turn of the century the venue has been named the Marian Street Theatre for Young People. The real potential and value of this historic theatre was realised as a hub for training young people in theatre and providing family entertainment, especially in the holiday season. From running productions and giving students and young people their face of theatrical performance, to drama training and mentorship, the Marian Street Theatre for Young People showcased what could be achieved with the venue in Killara, and it demonstrated its value when open to the community.

Regretfully, the Marian Street Theatre was closed in December 2013. Local cultural enrichment is an important part of any strong community and it is a shame that the Marian Street Theatre had to close, but the passion behind its purpose and potential is not lost. I applaud the work of local champions who are strong advocates for the Marian Street Theatre and who are tirelessly working to see it reopened for their community. In particular, I recognise James Scott-Mitchell and thank him for his unwavering support for the reopening of the

theatre. I thank the entire Save Marian Street Theatre Committee for standing up for what they believe is an essential local asset.

I am proud to say that the New South Wales Government believes in the arts, believes in cultural enrichment and believes in strong communities. It recognises that the arts, screen and cultural sectors play a crucial role in creating thriving, dynamic and successful communities which make a significant contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of this State. The Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Don Harwin, MLC, advised that the Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office has been established to look at and consider proposals for cultural infrastructure projects such as this. The office was established in the Department of Planning and Environment to provide a centralised, strategic approach to cultural infrastructure planning and delivery, and the Marian Street Theatre certainly has a place in its considerations.

Excitingly, the Marian Street Theatre was also put on Ku-ring-Gai council's long-term financial plan after a special motion moved by councillors last month. They are exploring the steps needed to sustainably and responsibly reopen this community treasure. Make no mistake: Progress such as this only comes from the hard work of passionate people—people such as James Scott-Mitchell and the entire membership of the Save Marian Street Theatre Committee. Healthy, measured and driven advocacy for local issues is what makes our State so vibrant, and this Government is honoured to have the opportunity to work with people and groups such as these to find the best ways to enrich communities with the infrastructure they deserve.

ACTIVE BREED HEALTH PROGRAM

The Hon. WALT SECORD (16:04): During my decade as an adviser to Premier Bob Carr, I attended hundreds of multicultural, political and arts events and, of course, many sporting functions. There is an oft-used joke that Bob Carr took a book to the Sydney Olympics opening ceremony, which is untrue. As incredible as it seems, Bob Carr knows more about Australian sport than I do—which brings me to today's remarks. I will speak about my third sport-related official public function as a member of Parliament. My first function was in June 2016 and it was a dream come true. I had lunch with the great Canadian ice hockey player, Wayne Gretzky, in Sydney. However, I inadvertently insulted him when I told him that over breakfast with my partner I bragged I was going to meet the world's greatest hockey player later that day. As she was Moscow-born and educated but migrated to Australia in 1991 as an adult, she innocently asked me whether I was going to meet famous Soviet goaltender Vladislav Tretiak.

My second function was in late October 2017. I was honoured to drop the ceremonial first puck at the opening season game of the Sydney Sirens versus the Adelaide Rush in the Australian Women's Ice Hockey League. In Canada it is a great honour to drop the puck and it is reserved for a Premier or a Prime Minister. One of this Parliament's hardworking special constables Ron Walker has a 16-year-old daughter on the team, Chloe Walker. He is rightly proud of her as she has already represented Australia in international hockey. That Sydney Sirens game also coincided with the appearance of former Sutherland shire resident Nathan Walker as the first Australian to play in the professional North American ice hockey league, the NHL. He debuted with the Washington Capitals and scored a goal against the Montreal Canadiens in his first game.

When I became a member of Parliament in 2011, I vowed that I would never participate in a sporting event that I did not know, play or understand, so attending ice hockey is permissible. However, on 30 May I broke my rules and became the politician that I swore I would never become—a politician involved in sport. I attended a National Rugby League event but I did so for a worthwhile project—improve men's health in an innovative approach to get older men active and engaged in physical fitness. Upon reflection, I am in that demographic. At that event I told the assembled crowd that I felt I had been "set up" by my staffer, Luke Maxfield, and the member for Lakemba, Jihad Dib, both of whom repeatedly insisted that I attend the event as I fit neatly into the category.

I made my way to the Belmore sportsground to find the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs practising in the background. I did not know a soul there but even I could recognise the famous jerseys. It was the official launch of the Active Breed program—an exciting collaboration between the Bulldogs, Western Sydney University, the South Western Sydney Primary Health Network and Blooms the Chemist. It was also attended by Josh Jackson, Bulldogs captain and Active Breed ambassador; Bulldogs Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Hill; Bulldogs club ambassador Terry Lamb; Bulldogs general manager marketing and community, Fayssal Sari; Western Sydney University physical education lecturer, Dr Emma George; and Western Sydney University's Translational Health Research Institute Chief Operating Officer, James Kemp. I send a shout-out to Bulldogs Community Manager, Saree Boutros, who helped bring it together on that day.

Even though I was on unfamiliar sporting turf I knew immediately that this was a worthwhile cause that deserved support. The Active Breed program is the Bulldogs flagship health and wellness program in 2018. It is the first of its kind to be implemented in the National Rugby League and in the south-western Sydney region. It will be a pioneering initiative geared towards tackling a wide variety of men's health issues. It will address mental

health, physical activity, obesity, and diabetes and health literacy in men in Sydney's south-west. These are all important steps to tackling the chronic disease and mental health issues that have such a negative impact on our communities and indeed the entire State.

Through the program, participants will engage in 90-minute education and exercise sessions, delivered once a week over a 12-week period. These sessions will be run by health experts, with support from Bulldogs club legends. The organisers will collect data on a range of outcomes at baseline; at the end of intervention which is week 12 and then follow-up on week 24. The results will then be evaluated and outcomes will be assessed. The beauty of programs such as Active Breed is that they not only improve the lives of its participants but also reduce hospital admissions and help participants to avoid chronic diseases—and they reduce the cost of those diseases on the health and hospital system which is under enormous pressure. It is not just about living longer; it is about living each year better. On a final note, I enjoyed an interesting and informative talk about the challenges of the salary cap. But that is a story for another occasion. I thank the House for its consideration.

INSECT SENTIENCE

The Hon. MARK PEARSON (16:09): Insects and sentience—yes, he is getting crazier! We share the planet with more than 1.5 million species of insect, with new species discovered every day. They are the most common animal on the planet and yet our curiosity about them has been shaped by what they can do for us, rather than how they experience the world. We know that insects are essential for food production; they are the pollinators that ensure the fertility of our grains, nuts, fruits and vegetables. As we have done with the cow and the sheep, we farm insects to produce things we find useful: honey, silk, dyes and varnishes.

Of all the animals, only humans can compete with insects when it comes to colonising every corner of the Earth. There are Arctic bumblebees and butterflies, and the Simpson Desert provides a home to native moths and lacewings. Through adaptation and evolution, insects vary far more in physiology and biology than any other animal. The variations are stunning: from the giant 15-centimetre Lord Howe Island stick insect and the flower mantis, whose body mimics the shape and colour of its orchid host, to the Australian jewel beetle, so eye-catching that it was once widely used for brooches. We have taken insects for granted; only now are scientists asking whether we share more with insects than just a place within the animal kingdom.

Historically we have been unwilling to look outside the genus *Homo sapiens* to acknowledge that we are not the only species capable of intelligence and sentience. It is now undisputed that many animals are capable of sophisticated behaviours, including sensory discrimination, learning, decision-making, planning and highly adaptive social behaviours. Insect brains are tiny, with fewer than a million neurons in comparison to the human average of 86 billion. Yet bees can recognise each other and communicate via a waggle dance—such as has been demonstrated in this Chamber by the Hon. Niall Blair—transmitting the availability and location of food sources. Bees utilise complex cues enabling them to return to food sites, indicating a type of associative memory.

The common view is that insects are merely an assemblage of reflexes with no consciousness: The fly moves to evade the swatter and the cockroach scuttles away from the light. But is this merely an unthinking, unfeeling response to external stimuli? Insects react very differently from humans in response to physical harm. Observation shows that they can mate and feed even after sustaining severe abdominal injuries. Human consciousness is derived from our neocortex; however, our much more primitive midbrain synthesises sensory data to allow us to navigate our world. Insects have similar midbrain-like structures, including a "central complex" that allows insects to similarly move through their world. While the human midbrain and the insect brain may be evolutionarily related, an insect's inner life is more basic than our own. Scientists are now considering whether insects feel something like hunger and pain or emotional responses such as anxiety and anger.

While the jury may be out on insect sentience, we know that they are critically important to the health of the environment. Where would we be without the mighty labours of the dung beetle, or the wasps and ladybirds that ensure aphids and locusts do not consume all the plant life? In return, we harm insects in many ways: live bait and feed, research and teaching, the production of goods such as silk and shellac, and the killing of insects to protect crops. This destruction may lead to our own annihilation, with evidence that insect numbers are plummeting around the world due to overuse of pesticides and loss of habitat. Even though the jury might be out regarding the sentience of insects, the jury is not in. Therefore, we should offer them at least the benefit of the doubt.

FULL-FACE COVERINGS PROHIBITION

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (16:14): My adjournment speech is an update on the burqa issue. As members know, on 15 March this year I introduced the Summary Offences Amendment (Full-face Coverings Prohibition) Bill 2017, after the issue was raised in the Federal Parliament by Nationals member George Christensen. As well, recently a number of laws or updates have been passed in various countries, which I will

outline. The issue of the public wearing the face covering, or burqa, has not gone away and has been debated in many countries. I have often made the point that we should try to learn from the successes and failures of other countries. I have also said that we should draw on solutions—

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order: This matter is the subject of a bill before the House.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): I note the member's point of order. I know Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile will restrict his comments so that matters before the House are not being discussed.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: I will be going on to examples in other countries, not here.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): I apologise. The bill is outside the order of precedence so there is no point of order.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: You may need to add another minute to my time.

The Hon. Walt Secord: You're not the Chair, Fred.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: And take it off your time. In that spirit, I update the House on developments in this area of law reform. On 1 June 2018, a report in the *Independent* noted that Denmark is the most recent country to effectively ban the burqa. The Danish ban, which passed by parliamentary vote, prohibits the wearing of garments that cover the face. It does not use the word "burqa"; it is just face coverings. Obviously, this includes the Islamic face covering, which is not promoted or upheld in the *Koran*, the Islamic religious book. Under the new Danish law, face coverings can be worn if there is a "recognisable purpose", such as wearing a motorcycle helmet when required by law. However, outside the exceptions, the law establishes a fine of 1,000 kroner for first-time offences, which is the equivalent of \$207 today. The law also establishes a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment for anyone who forces a person to wear the burqa.

Denmark, like many other Nordic countries, has a serious problem with a rapidly growing Islamic population—one that, by many accounts, is becoming politically active in that country. While the Danish law was passed with an overwhelming majority of 75 to 30, apparently about 74 members abstained from the vote altogether. Why? Was there a climate of fear? That is a question. Austria, France and Belgium also have laws that address this issue. Another recent move to ban the burqa or face covering has been taken by Norway, which passed laws last Tuesday that prohibits wearing it in schools. Norway's online news the *Local* reported yesterday that the law applies to students and teachers, day care staff and others working in educational institutions. The law was passed by a majority after two rounds of voting and over three days of deliberations. The leader of the Progress Party, which strongly supported the reform, stated:

The ban is a clear signal that in Norway we expect to see each other's faces. We will continue to work towards a total ban, and believe several parties will be ready for that in a few years' time.

In this country, we too expect to be able to see each other. Not only is the burqa confronting, a strong argument can be made that this practice has no place in our Australian culture. Moreover, it divides society by literally separating people from each other physically, and by creating an atmosphere of discomfort and alienation between citizens. It also makes a mockery of attempts at street security, with CCTV cameras and so on. The garment has been restricted in our nearest neighbour, Indonesia. The Islamic University of Indonesia has banned students from wearing the burqa during graduation ceremonies. It has been reported that the university "cited fears over the spread of radical ideology on its campus for the decision". If that is the rationale stated by an authority in an Islamic country, we would be foolish not to take notice. [*Time expired.*]

ANTI-CHINESE RACISM

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (16:19): Today our Australian-Chinese community lives in fear. The persistent attacks on this community are generating a deep sense of apprehension of impending harm, which has left many in the community suffering from related psychosocial effects. This is devastating for many. Racism creates stress that impacts significantly on the everyday lives of hardworking Chinese Australians who just want to be able to live out their daily lives in peace. It has a profound impact also on their physical, psychological and social wellbeing. This has a ripple effect; it is traumatising for the entire community. The racism directed at the Australian-Chinese community must stop, and it must stop now. To end it we must start from the top, because it is the leaders of this country that set the tone of our national discourse on race and all those things that relate to it.

The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones: Point of order: All members have a right to make their adjournment speeches and also to be heard. It is hard to listen to the member's contribution to this debate while there is so much noise in the Chamber.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): I note the point of order. I note that the noise is coming from Government members.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Sinophobia has quite clearly reared its ugly head again.

The Hon. Catherine Cusack: Point of order: The Deputy President has not yet made a ruling on the point of order taken by the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, yet the member plunged straight into making a very rushed speech. I ask the Deputy President to consider the point made by my colleague and to make a ruling.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): I noted the point of order and I asked the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane to resume his contribution.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: The anti-Chinese and the anti-China sentiment driving Sinophobia must immediately be quashed before it brings further pain and suffering to the 1.2 million Chinese Australians and the many hundreds of thousands of Australians of Asian descent. Shame on the Turnbull Government for allowing this to fester and shame on Malcolm Turnbull for playing the anti-China and, subsequently, the anti-Chinese race card. I say again: Shame on them! I call on the Turnbull Government to cease and desist with this Sinophobia, and for all decent Federal parliamentarians to step up and say no to racism.

I have a great sense of affiliation with all our multicultural communities, specifically the Australian-Chinese community. My relationship with that community stretches back to my high school and university years. I appreciate this relationship so much so that I have studied both Chinese history and Chinese politics, and I have visited China 15 times since my first trip in 1997. China's economic rise and political place in the world these days does not surprise me. The Chinese people are a hardworking, peaceful, respectful people who are wholly committed to their society, to their community and to their family and future.

On a daily basis, wherever I go and whenever I interact with our friends in the Chinese community, the subject of racism and the role played by the Federal Government in explicitly and implicitly allowing these attacks on the Chinese community to go unchecked is always first on the agenda. The frequency with which this issue is raised speaks of the stress and psychological injury suffered by Chinese Australians. The cumulative load has become unbearable. It is destructive to our multicultural society and certainly ruinous of our international image as a harmonious, multicultural, multiracial, multi-faith society. We cannot allow the right-wing media or politicians with fascist tendencies to smear and incite hatred against Chinese Australians—

The Hon. Catherine Cusack: Point of order: The member is reflecting adversely on the Leader of the Opposition in the other place.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): Order! There is no point of order. The Hon. Catherine Cusack will resume her seat.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: We cannot allow the right-wing media or politicians with fascist tendencies to smear and incite hatred against Chinese-Australians by alleging that one, two or three individuals in the Chinese community are somehow agents for the Chinese Communist Party. Making allegations is one thing, but these allegations have now turned into persistent smears against all Chinese Australians. These are peace-loving citizens of our country, which the Coalition now accuses not only of being disloyal but also of spying for the Chinese Communist Party. [*Time expired.*]

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (16:25): In 2011 the Coalition came to government with one objective: to make New South Wales number one again. By any measure, the Government has met that objective. There are record numbers of police on the beat. We are redeveloping hospitals at Gosford and Wyong and building a new one in Maitland. Record numbers of nurses are employed in New South Wales in our new and redeveloped hospitals.

The Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane: Point of order: The member is misleading the House on the record number of hospitals.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): Order! There is no point of order. That is a debating point.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: We are building NorthConnex and upgrading the M1 at Beresfield, Somersby and Kariong. The Newcastle Light Rail is under construction and the Newcastle interchange has been opened. Next year we will begin rolling out more than 500 new intercity rail carriages on the Newcastle and Central Coast line. We have cut stamp duty for first home buyers. New South Wales is number one in retail spending; spending is 17.7 per cent above decade average levels. We are number one in equipment investment. Unemployment is at 4.9 per cent, which is below the decade average. Construction work is at record highs.

We remain in the top spot for dwelling starts, with commencements at 47 per cent—above the decade average. We also have an \$80 billion infrastructure pipeline. The Government has done all this while maintaining budget surpluses over the forward estimates. We said we would make New South Wales number one again and we did, but now is not the time for complacency. Now we must aim higher and reach further. Earlier today I tabled the report of the Standing Committee on State Development into regional development and a global Sydney. During the inquiry the committee heard from a number of organisations.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order: The Hon. Taylor Martin knows that the time to make contributions about committee reports is during debate on committee reports.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): I ask the member to limit his contribution to what is required under the standing orders.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: I am talking about the insidiousness of payroll tax. The burden of payroll tax in New South Wales is higher than in other States. In New South Wales the rate is 5.45 per cent. This is higher than Victoria, which has a rate of 3.65 per cent for regional employers and 4.85 per cent in metro areas.

The Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane: Point of order: The persistent interjections by Government members are making it difficult to hear the Hon. Taylor Martin.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): Order! I uphold the point of order. I ask that members allow the Hon. Taylor Martin to continue to make his adjournment speech. I will call members to order if they continue to interject.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: In Queensland the rate is 4.75 per cent. Even South Australia has a lower rate than New South Wales; it has a tiered rate of between 2.5 per cent and 4.95 per cent. The committee also heard how the tax-free threshold for payroll tax impacts on regional businesses. In New South Wales the threshold is \$750,000 in wages paid per annum. Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia all have lower tax-free thresholds. The benefits for reducing payroll tax are clear. In February and March 2017 the NSW Business Chamber conducted a survey of its members.

The survey found that the typical payroll tax respondent incurred \$10,700 in administrative and compliance costs over and above his or her payroll tax liability. What sticks out is that even for businesses that were just over the payroll tax threshold, compliance costs alone were at least \$10,200. The business chamber estimates that increasing the threshold to \$1 million would unburden New South Wales businesses by up to \$40 million per year in red tape. Unsurprisingly, the survey also found that payroll tax has an impact on staffing decisions for 85 per cent of businesses. This means that businesses are less likely to hire additional staff, offer extra hours to existing staff, or even offer pay rises to their staff.

The Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane: Point of order: Government members are chatting away and I cannot hear the Hon. Taylor Martin.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): Order! I uphold the point of order.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: For businesses operating just below the tax-free threshold, 80 per cent of respondents reported that they would be either more likely to hire additional staff or would do so immediately if the payroll tax-free threshold were increased. The survey also found that if the threshold were increased to \$1 million, 44 per cent of all businesses would be likely to increase their staffing levels and 85 per cent of businesses with a payroll higher than \$1 million would use savings to expand business operations and increase staffing levels. If we look closely at the payroll tax liability for businesses that are close to the payroll tax-free threshold, we understand— *[Time expired.]*

TRIBUTE TO MAVIS SMITH

The Hon. WES FANG (16:30): I pay tribute to my grandmother, Mavis Smith, born Mavis Lena McFadzean in Griffith on 18 March 1930. She passed away earlier today. She was an amazing lady who contributed much to her community, particularly in West Wyalong, as a member of the Country Women's Association and the hospital auxiliary. She was a wife to Bill; a mother to Zanette, Peter, Gail and Gordon; a grandmother and great-grandmother to many; and she was loved by all. She will be greatly missed.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The time for debate has expired. The question is that this House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 16:31 until Tuesday 19 June 2018 at 14:30.