

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 10 November 1999

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald)** took the chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

A petition signed by 2 947 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the government to reverse its decision to charge metropolitan rates for compulsory third party insurance for residents of Aldinga and Aldinga Beach was presented by Mr Hill.

Petition received.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Industry and Trade (Hon. I.F. Evans)—

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs—Report, 1998-99
Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal—Report, 1998-99
Legal Practitioners Guarantee Fund—Report, 1998-99.

PARTNERSHIPS 21

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Yesterday the opposition embarked on a malicious, insidious and deliberately misleading attack on the right of every child to have a quality education regardless of where they live. These claims are not only wrong; they are entirely disreputable. Those who pretend to support public education and claim that funding is being ripped out of Labor seats and redirected into Liberal seats put themselves before our young people. The new Partnerships 21 funding model is far too important for that. There is no place for such baseless and scurrilous innuendo. Today I intend to set that right.

Yesterday, the opposition alleged that the Government would deliberately deny children in our schools funding because they happened to go to a school situated in a Labor electorate and not in a Liberal one. This is dishonest in the extreme. Clearly members opposite do not understand why schools are wanting to move to local management. School communities have clearly said that they want local management, and we are helping them achieve this through Partnerships 21. What is eminently clear is the lack of Labor understanding of the needs of school communities, and I ask: where are their policies? They also showed yesterday that they do not understand what a global budget is. To have the best education in Australia, governments need to respond dynamically to changing needs. The global budget is one of these tools. Rather than providing many buckets of money, the global budget simplifies the funding process.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: What we will have is a system whereby schools are now able to decide locally on their budget priorities and have a guaranteed budget for three

years. The teachers union and other key stakeholders were part of constructing this funding model, and that consultation continues so that the final model more accurately reflects current policies and priorities. It is unfortunate that both the union and the opposition have deliberately and blatantly misrepresented the information contained in the working papers. These papers do not reflect political or electoral fraud, as alleged yesterday. They reflect the recognition that rural communities require targeted support structures. Rural schools have not always enjoyed the same access as metropolitan schools. The government will not allow this to continue. If the Labor Party and the teachers union do not want country children and students to have the same opportunities—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: —as their city cousins, then let them say so now. No allocation has been made on electoral or political grounds. We are allocating funds where they belong, and we are getting on with the job of educating our young people—be they in the country or the city. The government's position is one of providing a fair go. We will not sit by and let country students be disadvantaged waiting for you lot to catch up.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I bring up the 107th report of the committee, on the Barcoo Outlet, and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the report be published.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier meet today as a matter of urgency with members of the Economic and Finance Committee following evidence by the Auditor-General about 'a conspiracy of silence' and his concerns about probity in the privatisation of ETSA, and will the Premier read as a matter of urgency the Auditor-General's evidence given to the Economic and Finance Committee in camera this morning?

In public evidence, the Auditor-General today told the Economic and Finance Committee that he had serious concerns about probity in the ETSA privatisation. He said that these lapses exposed South Australia to actions in the courts from unsuccessful bidders. He told the committee that he would not be part of a conspiracy of silence on the issue. Members of the Economic and Finance Committee unanimously resolved to send to the Premier the in camera evidence provided by the Auditor-General to the committee and to seek a meeting with the Premier to discuss that evidence today.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): Of course I will meet with any committees of the parliament that want to put a point of view to me. I just draw to the attention of the House that the Leader of the Opposition has referred to in camera

discussions by the Auditor-General today. I know full well that this opposition—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I rise on a point of order. I am happy to read the question today which talked about the—

The SPEAKER: Order—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The leader will resume his seat—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: He will resume his seat or he will be named.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I caution all members, including the Leader of the Opposition, against continuing to interject when the chair is on his feet. If it happens in the future, they will be named on the spot.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Elder.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: In the interests of taxpayers, occasionally it is appropriate for political parties to have—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Elder for the second time.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Occasionally it is appropriate in the interests of taxpayers of South Australia to—

Mr Foley: Be careful.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I do not need the member for Hart to interject 'Be careful'. I start again. The Auditor-General has in camera given information to the Economic and Finance Committee. The question was would I meet. Of course I will meet—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the leader.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The leader has asked the question. If he wants an answer, I ask him and his front bench to at least give me the courtesy of answering it. Let me start again. The leader asked whether I will read information presented to the Economic and Finance Committee in camera and, yes, of course I will. Does the Economic and Finance Committee wish to meet with me? Of course I will. I go on to say that there are occasions when, in the interests of the taxpayers, it is appropriate for confidential commercial discussions to take place between respective parties in the parliament.

I cite an incident in the State Bank circumstances related to indemnity. Approached by the government of the day, the then Leader of the Opposition, a Liberal, held discussions with the government, discussions that had significant consequences. No media were informed of those discussions but it was the responsible thing to do in the interests of taxpayers. I mention that to the Leader of the Opposition for him to draw on that example of the past. This parliament has passed legislation for the sale-lease of our assets. It is in the interests of taxpayers that that process ensure maximum return of taxpayers' dollars. It would be very easy for a little bit of political one-upmanship to put—

The Hon. M.D. Rann: Ignore the Auditor-General at your peril.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It would be quite easy for some political one-upmanship by the opposition to cost taxpayers significant funds at the end of the day. I simply say that we have acted upon advice from the Auditor-General expedi-

tiously. The Treasurer has on each occasion and we will continue to do so. As has been evidenced by the Auditor-General previously in Economic and Finance Committee deliberations and as he has told the committee, he has not had to coerce the government, and I think that is almost a quote of the Auditor-General before the Economic and Finance Committee. That is an endorsement from the Auditor-General in terms of the approach, the accountability and the integrity with which we want to pursue this proposal in the interests of all South Australians. I do not intend to join the political one-upmanship game, but I will ensure that this process at the end of the day returns maximum benefit for every taxpayer in South Australia.

WINE INDUSTRY

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Can the Premier outline to the House the State Government's vision for the future of the South Australian wine industry?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I thank the member for Schubert for his question, coming as he does from a wine district. Indeed, the electorate of Schubert was named after no less than Max Schubert, the maker of that great drop, Penfold's Grange Hermitage. However, given its outstanding success, most of us in South Australia cannot afford to drink it any more. I had the opportunity to open the wine industry Outlook Conference at which more than 300 industry representatives met today. It was appropriate that South Australia host this year's conference, as we produce the vast majority—in fact, some 70 per cent—of Australia's wine exports. I am confident that South Australia can build on that success.

The theme, The Challenges of Change, says it all. The wine industry is to be congratulated for continuing to show a progressive and self-determined approach to issues which confront it. We have all been basking in the glory of Australia's wine industry reaching \$1 billion worth of exports of which \$700 million comes from South Australia, but the true challenge is just beginning. The industry accepts that, as Australia produces much increased volumes, we will be competing against even larger volumes of wine from the enormous plantings recently undertaken in France.

The Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation predicts a surplus of upwards of 80 million litres of wine within three years. My own electorate, for example, which takes in much of the Adelaide Hills region, has a number of boutique wineries producing premium, cool climate wines. Those wineries have sprung up and are continuing to grow and expand. Our own competitive additional supply overseas can be viewed as much an opportunity as a threat. The way in which the wine industry has tackled threats in the past and turned them into opportunities is a credit to the industry itself. It was not so long ago that people laughed when they said their target was a \$1 billion worth of exports by the year 2000. They attained that target a year ahead of schedule.

Of course, the industry is important to us. We see about \$1.5 billion worth of wine produced per annum, and some \$600 million to \$700 million of that is exported. An area of 43 000 hectares is under grape production in South Australia. There are some 6 000 permanent jobs in the industry, and many more casual jobs are centred in regional South Australia. There is also the added turnover of at least \$60 million annually in the state's tourism industry, generated by the attraction of our reputation in fine wines. Much of the resurgence and rebuilding we see in townships in our country

and regional areas is directly related to the growth and expansion of the wine industry in South Australia. In Clare the economic development board has indicated that it will need about 600 additional employees to service the viticulture industry in the Clare Valley and region within the next three years.

The Riverland has experienced about a 20 per cent compounding economic growth over the past three years. That clearly indicates that the resurgence of our country towns and regional communities has been, in the main, directly related to the viticulture industry, its plantings, processing and new investment. Only two weeks ago, I think it was, cabinet signed off on planning requirements for a major investment by Mildara Blass, involving about \$100 million, in the electorate of Schubert. We have to take on the new world competitors of South Africa, California and Chile. The conference today looks at opportunities by which that can be achieved.

I have confidence that the industry is prepared to confront those opportunities, those challenges and the threats that are there and turn them into outcomes to the betterment of the industry in South Australia. At present, we are capturing only 3 per cent of the international wine market. There is further opportunity and scope for the industry, and the industry can be assured that the government of South Australia will continue to support, facilitate and assist the industry, with further investment in jobs, in growth and overseas markets. It involves not only those country and regional towns: the port of Adelaide has experienced an increase, year on year, of about 11 per cent.

In addition, there has been a substantial increase in container traffic at the wharf. We have seen this in the trucking industry, in the establishment of store warehousing and all associated industries. In the month of June, as I think I have reported, Southcorp exported 2.1 million cases, or 25 million bottles, of wine. That is a lot of work for the ACI glass factory down here which produces the wine bottles, a lot of work for Collotype Labels Pty Ltd and others producing the labels for the bottles, the boxes, the transport and the jobs that are associated with it. So, it is an important industry that we will continue—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Gomersal Road—who could forget that? We are putting that in place in the Barossa Valley. This is all infrastructure going in to underpin the further growth of the wine industry and regional South Australia.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Given his answer to my previous question, will the Premier guarantee to the parliament that he will comply completely with the unanimous request of the Economic and Finance Committee that he respond in full within seven days to the serious concerns about probity in ETSA privatisation expressed by the Auditor-General, and fix those problems as a matter of urgency?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): The first question is: will I meet the committee? The answer is 'Yes.' When the committee meets with me and puts a proposal to me, I will give it consideration and reply.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

EXPORTS

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): Will the Minister for Industry and Trade update the House on the growth of South Australia's export market?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Industry and Trade): Members would be well aware that recently the survey undertaken by Morgan & Banks Ltd (which is Australia's largest recruitment firm, of course) has revealed that exports are now setting South Australia apart from other areas within Australia. For instance, the 1998-99 financial year records show that a 6.5 per cent increase in the South Australian exports compared to something like a 2 per cent downturn nationally indicates that South Australia is outperforming other states.

The Premier has made some very positive comments regarding the wine industry. If we look at other industries—for instance, the automotive industry—we will find that exports in automotive products increased by something like 35.9 per cent last year, outperforming the wine industry in growth, with its exports at 22.9 per cent.

Yesterday, most members would have seen an *Advertiser* report on Holden's scoring a major export victory in the Middle East which could earn that company in excess of \$1 billion by the year 2003. Originally, General Motors-Holden's put its export target for the Middle East with total sales of about 10 000 Commodores and 10 000 Caprices within two years of the start up of the project. Given the success of the cars in the export market to the Middle East, it has now revised upwards those figures to something like 20 000 Caprices and 15 000 Commodores. That is really a tribute not only to Holden's but, of course, to the Holden work force and its suppliers, with the quality of the product that it is delivering on time to an export market, and it really is a credit to Holden's and its work force that it has been able to do that.

It is really of no surprise to me, as the minister, that it is obtaining these export orders. When I was in Detroit recently I met with General Motors, and its chief economist mentioned to me that, as far as General Motors is concerned, the South Australian plant is really a centre of excellence in the field of manufacturing rear wheel vehicles. Therefore, it is no surprise that the exports to the Middle East and other areas have certainly been very successful for Holden's and, indeed, other companies.

GM in Detroit also raised the issue about market access to some of the South-East Asian countries. Yesterday, I was involved in a teleconference with the federal minister, Mark Vaile, in preparation for the World Trade Organisation meeting in Seattle later this month. We raised with him the subject of market access for the automotive industry from Australia, in particular South Australia, into the South-East Asian region because we all know that, while Australia has gone about addressing some of its tariff issues, certainly some countries in that area have not reciprocated with the same enthusiasm about reducing their trade or tariff barriers, and we have asked Mark Vaile to take that up at the World Trade Organisation meeting in Seattle.

Exports generally are performing quite well at the moment. South Australian exports for August 1999 are valued at something like \$533 million. Indeed, it was 21 per cent more than in July and 16.5 per cent more than in August last year. Figures for South Australia are approximately 16 per cent up for the same time last year. That is good news, of course, and rides on the back of the Premier's recent

announcement about the Adelaide to Darwin railway line. I believe it underscores the importance of that railway line to the South Australian markets because it will provide another competitive way for our exporters to get products to the Asian market. That line will knock off days in terms of delivery of goods and therefore costs in relation to export markets.

That will obviously help all South Australian businesses and we look forward to that project progressing at a rate of knots. If one looks at the surveys, whether it be the Westpac, Econtech or the Morgan and Banks surveys, they all point to the fact that the South Australian economy and exports are performing at record levels.

HINDMARSH STADIUM

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that the South Australian Soccer Federation has defaulted on loan repayments for the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, has it breached terms of the funding deed with the government and is the government now examining taking over the management of the stadium from the South Australian Soccer Federation? The opposition has been advised that, following problems associated with the \$30 million stadium, including grave concerns expressed by the chair of the Public Works Committee, the demise of the Adelaide Rams and the Sharks, threats by Adelaide Force to go to Norwood Oval and the problems with loan repayments by the South Australian Soccer Federation, the government is now examining taking over the management of the stadium.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): The minister, as I understand it, is having ongoing discussions.

WOOMERA WEST

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): My question is directed—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: It was a pretty good answer; you don't like it, obviously.

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

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Will the Deputy Premier outline regional development benefits to the Woomera community following yesterday's announcement that a new immigration reception and processing centre will be established at Woomera West in an area of Woomera that has not been used for many years?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): I thank the honourable member for his question and his ongoing interest in issues related to northern South Australia. As all members would be aware, there has been quite an increase in the number of illegal immigrants entering Australia over recent times. To date, these people have been housed either at the Port Headland Detention Centre, which is in Western Australia, or at Curtin. Once these people have been properly assessed and their situations processed, decisions will then be made about their relocation overseas.

The existing detention facilities are nearing their limit and this situation has created an opportunity for the utilisation of facilities at Woomera. As the honourable member said, the West Woomera site is approximately five kilometres from the main township and comprises 21 brick accommodation blocks and, if required, could initially accommodate up to 400 people. More than \$1 million of construction work will be required to bring the housing up to standard and, during the construction phase, that will inject some much needed

funding into the local economy. Of course, in addition is an ongoing employment opportunity: there will be requirements in areas such as security, catering, administration and health.

The centre will clearly provide an economic boost for the Woomera township and the surrounding region. In total, over 60 jobs are expected to be created in terms of staff for the centre and, obviously, in a town like Woomera that will provide flow-ons to businesses within the local community. The withdrawal of the joint military facility at Woomera has resulted in an unfortunate loss of people from the town. That has impacted on the people's confidence and morale. It is certainly very encouraging for the community to have this opportunity come along so soon. This will give an important boost to Woomera and, hopefully, will be the forerunner of other developments for the town.

HINDMARSH STADIUM

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): My question is to the Minister for Recreation and Sport. Does the South Australian Soccer Federation hold a lease over all of the land associated with the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium and, if not, will the minister advise the House of the situation and whether access to parts of the stadium could be denied by the Charles Sturt Council or any other body? The Public Works Committee interim report into stage 2 of the \$30 million Hindmarsh stadium development says that the stadium has been leased to the South Australian Soccer Federation for 21 years with a right of renewal for another 21 years. However, the opposition has been advised that there is no lease covering parts of the site involving the new southern grandstand which overhangs a closed road and new access gates and turnstiles in Manton Street on the eastern side of the stadium, giving the potential for the owners of the land, the Charles Sturt council, to withhold access to parts of the stadium. The Public Works Committee recommended that all titles involving the stadium be consolidated onto one new title to stop any unforeseen rating increases, peripheral sell-offs, swapping deals with sponsors and any other meddling with title and ownership.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Industry and Trade): It is quite surprising: I met with the City of Charles Sturt only last night on this very issue, and we get a question on it today.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: It is interesting. As I have already advised the member, if you look at *Hansard* and see what was said during consideration of the Auditor-General's Report, we said that we are having negotiations with the City of Charles Sturt and indeed the soccer federation about the ownership of the land. It is true to say—and it is no secret; everyone knows—that currently some of the land is owned by the City of Charles Sturt and leased to the soccer federation, and some of the land as we speak today is owned by the City of Charles Sturt and not leased to the soccer federation. I am sure that the City of Charles Sturt has no intention of causing difficulties for the soccer federation and indeed the government. In fact, we talked last night about the Olympic tournament and the fact that they have granted—I think from memory the words they used were 'under licence'—permission to use a section of the stadium. I do not think it is an issue: I think it is a beat-up ready for the honourable member's motion tomorrow. The fact is that we are negotiating—

Mr Wright interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The member raises the issue. They criticise us one minute for not—

Mr Wright interjecting:

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

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: He rattles on like a bay tram, Mr Speaker. The honourable member criticises us for not taking action in relation to trying to retain ownership—

Mr Wright interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Lee.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: We are negotiating to try to obtain ownership. We met with the City of Charles Sturt last night to try to progress the matter at a quicker rate, and we hope to resolve the ownership issue as quickly as possible.

PARTNERSHIPS 21

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): My question is directed to the Minister for Education. What will be the impact of Partnerships 21 on funding for our schools?

Mr Clarke interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): Yesterday, the Labor Party set out to wilfully mislead South Australian people over Partnerships 21. The leader had it wrong, and he knows it; those who advise the leader had it wrong, and they know it; they all have a track record of getting it wrong, and they know that, too. For the leader's and the shadow spokesperson's benefit I will say it slowly, simply and just once more: no school will suffer any cuts as a result of Partnerships 21—not one cent and not one dollar. If the opposition—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Peake.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: If members of the opposition had bothered to do their sums properly they would have found that many schools will be substantially better off under Partnerships 21. Let us give a couple of examples. The member for Giles is sitting very quietly over there—

The Hon. J.W. Olsen interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: —because a high school in her electorate will receive an additional \$460 000. A primary school in Parafield Gardens gets more than an extra \$110 000. Funny about the fact that they are both in Labor electorates, is it not? I could go on, because there are numerous examples of where schools in Labor electorates are getting more—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Exactly. I do not care how you do the sums: there are no cuts to schools. No school will be worse off. I have one message for parents, teachers and students in South Australia, that is, that it is a good thing that members opposite are not running education along with their union mates, because they cannot add up. The comprehension levels of members opposite are not too flash, either, and we will not be fooled by their political antics at all. It is time that they worked out a policy. There is one thing we know about members opposite: there are no policies. There is simply a vacuum. We on this side are getting on—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Ross Smith.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Thank you, sir. We are getting on with educating the young people of this state. We are ensuring that we recognise the needs of those young people in education, and I make no apology whatsoever for ensuring that there is a better, more equitable deal going to country schools in South Australia.

HINDMARSH STADIUM

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): My question is directed to the Minister for Tourism in her capacity as minister concerned with the Olympics. Will the minister release all documentation from SOCOG which indicates that the \$18.5 million stage 2 of the Hindmarsh stadium redevelopment entirely funded by taxpayers was required by SOCOG if Adelaide was to host some Olympic soccer matches next year and, if not, why not? In 1996 the Public Works Committee was told by government officials that the completion of the \$9.26 million stage 1 of the Hindmarsh stadium redevelopment would ensure that Adelaide would have the necessary facilities to host a round of soccer matches for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and approved the redevelopment on that basis. In 1997 the committee—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WRIGHT: In 1997, the committee, after being told that the 18—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right will come to order.

Mr WRIGHT: In 1997, the committee, after being told that the \$18.5 million stage 2 was now required for Adelaide to get Olympic soccer, requested all documentation exchanged between the South Australian Government and SOCOG which led to the development of the proposal for stage 2. The documentation has never been supplied.

The SPEAKER: Order! In calling the Minister for Tourism, I remind her that she need only reply to those sections of the question that apply to her responsibilities in her portfolio.

The Hon. J. HALL (Minister for Tourism): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I must say that I think the destructive campaign against this government by the political opponents sitting opposite, against the game of soccer and against the Olympic tournament, is absolutely appalling. There has been great success in the original sale of the tickets for the tournament, and I think that the campaign that has been conducted by members opposite is nothing short of disgraceful. Mr Speaker, you know the chaos they would be causing if we had not won an Olympic tournament, and I think it is about time they backed in behind the support of the Olympic tournament at Hindmarsh next year.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The chair has given fair rein this afternoon and if members continue to interject I will take some action.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY WEEK

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Can the Minister for Government Enterprises advise what the government hopes to achieve through the Workplace Health and Safety Week initiative?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I thank the member for Colton for his

question about an important issue, namely, that of workplace health and safety. The importance of this issue can be highlighted by what are, frankly, appalling and startling—and a number of other adjectives such as that—figures nationally which show that more people die on the path to success than on the road to work. The figures are as follows—and I reiterate that they are staggering and appalling: 2 900 deaths from work-related incidents or illness each year compared with 2 367 suicides and 2 029 road deaths. It is a major difficulty and a major dilemma and an extraordinarily important issue for Australia nationally and for us in South Australia.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Ross Smith for the very last time.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Thank you, Sir. By ensuring that we have more competitive, safer and more productive work places, obviously that will be to everyone's advantage, not only economically but also to the workers who are in those safer industries. WorkCover Corporation is active in implementing a number of strategies to help reduce workplace accidents and this week, as the member for Colton identified, is Workplace Health and Safety Week which is a very important and pleasingly successful public awareness initiative coordinated by the WorkCover Corporation. This year's theme—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The member for Hart appears to pick me up on the word 'pleasingly': yes, it is pleasing because it is being successful.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I'm sorry; I believe I said, 'Pleasingly it is being successful.' That is what I meant to say. At the end of the day, the theme for this year is called 'The Path to Success', and it highlights the great importance of health and safety to all South Australians in the workplace.

As I said before, pleasingly, the benefits of this public awareness week are now showing because the number of hits on the WorkCover Corporation's web site has almost doubled compared with the average number of hits. That means that more people are accessing appropriate information which will provide them with the opportunity to institute safer workplaces. Clearly, a number of businesses are taking advantage of the excellent resources that are available on the web site, and I am informed that there have been more than 2 000 downloads already of the new occupational health and safety regulations.

Improved workplace safety does rely on employers and employees working cooperatively, and key events this week to help encourage that are a number of workshops, about 80, which are being held around the state to provide very practical information on a range of topics including violence in the workplace, risk assessment, hazard management, designing for safety and so on. Those 80 workplace forums, I hope, will be well attended, and they will have a very strong focus on small business. They are to be focused, among other things, in the rural areas of the South-East, the Mid North, the Far North, Eyre Peninsula and the Riverland.

The week will undoubtedly finish on a high note because WorkCover Corporation will have a night to celebrate the presentation of its very prestigious safety awards. These awards recognise and celebrate companies that have demonstrated excellence and innovation in workplace occupational health and safety and those companies that have shown a major commitment to improved occupational health and

safety in their workplace. Having been lucky enough to present the awards in the past two years, I believe it is a source of enormous pride to the companies that have received these awards against very stiff competition from other people in their particular business sectors.

All the people who received the awards acknowledge the value to the company and to the workers of the employer and the employee working together cooperatively so that the company can win these awards. It is not at all surprising to see people who might be regarded as hard-nosed business men and women around Adelaide with tears in their eyes as they accept these awards, because they know that the award has been gained only with the cooperation of everyone in their workplace.

I thank the member for Colton for allowing me to highlight to the House a very important public awareness initiative and I urge every member to visit the WorkCover Corporation's web site to find out about workplace safety. I extend an invitation to all the businesses, employers and employees in their electorates to enter that web site and get its very relevant information to ensure that we have safer workplaces.

OLYMPIC SOCCER TOURNAMENT

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): My question is directed to the Minister for Tourism in her capacity as minister concerned with the Olympics. How many tickets to Olympic soccer at Hindmarsh stadium have been sold so far and how many are yet to be sold for each of our seven Olympic soccer matches? The South Australian government is spending over \$35 million to ensure that Adelaide hosts some Olympic soccer matches. SOCOG has been overwhelmed by the number of applications for Olympic tickets at Sydney venues and great concern has been raised by those who have missed out on their preferred events. We are yet to hear of any complaints about people missing out on tickets to Olympic soccer at Hindmarsh. In her previous answer, the minister said how well the tickets were selling. Will the Minister give us some details?

The Hon. J. HALL (Minister for Tourism): I would be absolutely delighted to give the House some of the details about the ticket sales because the results are fairly impressive. In fact, percentage wise the South Australian results are better than for all the other states, which I know will come as a great disappointment to members sitting opposite. I advise those members opposite who are not being destructive (there are probably a couple over there) that, as the tournament starts on 13 September and continues through to 23 September next year, knowing that we have seven games including one quarter final, 25 per cent of the total number of tickets has been sold without anyone knowing which teams will be playing. For the opening ceremony and the first game, which will be held on Wednesday 13 September, nearly 50 per cent of the stadium is already sold out.

I am sure that members opposite who have been so destructive might also be interested to know that there is huge interest in the soccer tournament here from Western Australia and there is considerable interest from the Northern Territory because some people are concerned about not being able to get tickets in Sydney. It might be of interest to the House for me to run through the pricing of the tickets.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Peake for the last time.

The Hon. J. HALL: I thought it would be worth while going through the prices for people who are interested in going to the soccer and I urge them to get their tickets early when the next batch is released by the extraordinary Olympics minister in New South Wales. As we well know, there is some confusion over tickets out of Sydney. It is interesting to know that, for the first game, which is on Wednesday 13 September, including a main gala ceremony, there are two prices for tickets, one being \$65 and the other \$50. On the remaining days, tickets are available for \$45 and \$30. For the quarter final, which is being held on 23 September, the tickets are \$65 and \$50 a seat. There is a great buy for those who want to go to all seven matches, and that is \$320 or \$225. The destruction, innuendo and political muckraking tactics of members opposite have not worked, because the demand for the tickets will be overwhelming.

In Adelaide, we will get to see nine of the 16 teams that will be playing here, and we have as good a chance of getting one of the top three teams playing in Adelaide when the teams are announced, and we are very enthusiastic about being able to see nine of the 16 teams here. It is important that, once the Olympics start, as we well know, 200 nations, involving more than 10 000 athletes, will be competing. It is pretty exciting for us as a state to have here an Olympic tournament which we know will be well patronised because of the overwhelming demand with which we are already coping and the inquiries that are coming from right across the country.

The teams that will be playing here will not be known until May or June. This has also enabled us to focus on the tourism activities in South Australia as we go into the lead-up to the Olympics. The South Australian community will be supportive of the activities to be held down at Hindmarsh in the lead-up to the Olympic tournament, and it is about time that members opposite stopped trying to be so destructive in their attempt to try to undo the great tournament that this state will host in just under 12 months from now.

CONSERVATION

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Environment and Heritage advise the House how the Government is working with private organisations to encourage conservation throughout the state?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Environment and Heritage): I thank the honourable member for his question and recognise his support and interest.

Members interjecting:

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

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I do not care. The member for Lee will remain silent.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I also recognise and acknowledge the honourable member's continued interest in all matters relating to the environment and, in particular, to conservation. Conservation will be successful only if all South Australians embrace it in principle. The government can encourage and put into place incentive structures but, ultimately, it will be the work of thousands of individuals that will make the difference to our environment.

One of the most significant tributes that can be paid to conservation workers and their projects is the Banksia award provided through the Banksia Environmental Foundation. The foundation was established some 11 years ago by a

diverse group of 44 people to support and recognise those in the community who make a positive contribution to addressing environmental improvement. The foundation runs an annual awards program that recognises achievement in a variety of different areas. It works in partnership with industry and with government around the country to raise awareness of practices associated with caring for the environment.

It is my pleasure to be able to announce to the House today that nominations for the 2000 Banksia awards are now open, and the theme for this year's awards is Tomorrow Today, reflecting the fact that decisions we make today will certainly have an impact far into the future. I was very pleased to be able to attend the 1999 Banksia environmental awards in Melbourne in May this year, and to be able to present the national flora and fauna conservation award.

At this point, I would like to take the opportunity to commend the efforts of Ian Henschke, from ABC television's *Landline*, for taking out the communication award. Ian has been able to utilise the forum to promote the work of groups and individuals who have taken up the challenge of working towards sustainable development in rural areas. By promoting such environmental achievements—

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the cameramen about filming people who are on their feet and speaking.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: —Ian has gone a very long way towards raising awareness in the farming communities of opportunities for far better production practices.

The South Australian Glossy Black Cockatoo Recovery Program, which is keenly supported by this government, was also a finalist in last year's awards. The program is a partnership between the Kangaroo Island land-holders, community volunteers, the Parndana Area School, Greening Australia, the Glossy Black Cockatoo Rescue Fund, the National Parks Foundation, Gerard Industries, Friends of Deep Creek Conservation Park, Landcare Kangaroo Island and, indeed, Environment Australia. This is an excellent example of a truly community based rescue mission for endangered species. From the program's inception (around about 1996 to 1998), the population of glossy black cockatoos on Kangaroo Island grew from some 188 to a current total of approximately 256. More than 125 volunteers have been involved with this project through population surveys, nest box maintenance, predator control, monitoring nest hollows and the installation of some 85 artificial nest boxes. It certainly was a very worthy finalist in the 1999 Banksia Awards, and it continues to provide support for the fledgling Kangaroo Island cockatoo population.

It would be tremendous to see many more South Australian finalists involved in the 2000 awards. Certainly, many exciting projects are taking place around this State. I encourage all interested community members and members of this House to nominate those individuals and those groups, or their projects, that they believe will represent good environmental practice in the state and that are worthy of national recognition.

PARTNERSHIPS 21

Ms WHITE (Taylor): My question is directed to the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training. Given the minister's explanation on radio this morning that the reason for Partnerships 21 funding schedules identifying schools by electorates was that it was standard practice to advise members of parliament of school funding programs

(and the minister used the example on radio of the back to school grants), will the minister now provide all members of this House with details of funding under Partnerships 21 for all schools in their electorate and, if not, why not?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): It is correct that, previously, with respect to back to school grants, basic skills test grants and those sorts of things, I and other ministers (the Hon. Rob Lucas before me) wrote to all members advising them of the schools in their electorate and the amount of money that they had received for those grants.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Yes, I agree; that is exactly right—for which they are eternally grateful. That is a practice that has been undertaken by this government. As I was not in the House and was not a member before, I am not sure whether that task was undertaken by the Labor government previously.

An honourable member: No, it was not.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: It wasn't? We know that it did not spend anything on maintenance in schools. It is the whole reason why we are having to spend so much money on catch up on maintenance at the moment. Basically, nothing was spent on maintenance in our schools in the 1980s and early 1990s—not to mention capital works. So, that has been a practice of this government, and it is one about which I am happy to provide information to members. As I described on the radio station this morning, it was not a political process of Labor-Liberal with respect to this funding for schools with Partnerships 21: it was a normal process that we carry out to allow members of parliament to see what grants are made to their schools.

I will take a little of the House's time on this matter, because I believe it is important to know exactly where all this is coming from. In October 1998, members would recall that the government offered teachers in this state a 13 per cent wage increase over three years. On the day of that press release the media people present could not quite believe the amount of money we were prepared to hand across. They were all hoping that their employers might do something similar for them. Of course, the teachers' union decided not to accept that package and, as a result, we are now in the arbitration commission sorting out that package. I think that anyone in the community would have been happy with a 13 per cent wage increase, but not so the union.

As I move around schools—and last week I visited nine or 10 schools—and talk to teachers I have become aware that they are not very happy that that 13 per cent has not been accepted because, had it been accepted, come Christmas teachers in our state would be \$1 500 better off, which would pay for quite a few Christmas dinners and quite a few Christmas presents. Let us go one step further, because this is all about a wage deal and Partnerships 21.

Janet Giles, President of the Australian Education Union, was involved with the Cox committee and Partnerships 21. She was a signature to the final report, yet she raised no issues with the Partnerships 21 document in terms of equity, the issues it covered and the deals available to schools. Not once did she raise such an issue yet, lo and behold, because we do not have a wage issue sorted out suddenly everything is wrong with Partnerships 21. How interesting it is that these hypocrites come out now and hold our children to ransom over their lack of acceptance of a very fair wage deal. The people of South Australia should know what the union is doing.

Let us look back at the actual election of the latest union president. I cannot quote exactly but South Australia has approximately 21 000 teachers. I stand corrected on that figure but guess how many voted in the election?

The Hon. M.K. Brindal: How many?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Just over 5 000. That is less than 25 per cent of the total teacher numbers in South Australia, which says—

Ms WHITE: This is all very interesting, Mr Speaker, but my question related to whether the minister would provide to members Partnerships 21 funding details for electorates.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The honourable member cannot put words into the minister's mouth. Has the Minister completed his reply?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: No, I have not, Mr Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right will come to order.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: It is a pity—

Mr Venning interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Schubert.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:—that the incoming president of the teachers' union is not present in the gallery today as he was yesterday. He fed misinformation again yesterday about Partnerships 21. In answer to the honourable member's question, I can provide her with a breakdown of the additional funding that will go to city Labor seats. I think that the House might be interested to know exactly the amount of funding. I can inform the House—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order. The member for Mitchell.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order on my right!

Mr HANNA: I presume that information could be submitted in a table as a statistical document.

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

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Here you are, sir, the member asking me to outline what funding is going into the seats and the member for Mitchell does not want to hear it! Amazing stuff! Let me just tell you, sir—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Am I not supposed to have the answer?

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Oh, sorry. An additional \$4.36 million will go into schools in city Labor seats. That averages out at some \$221 000 per seat. Let us look at the city Liberal seats. There are 13 city Liberal seats that come under that area: \$963 000 will go to those, and that averages out at \$74 000 each electorate. How about that: \$74 000 versus \$221 000, and we are supposed to be putting the extra money into Liberal seats! How do you like that?

Let us look at the country seats. I have no shame in saying that I decided, following country consultation and consultation with members from the country as well as with parents and school councillors from the country who highlighted that there were inequities within the system and that more money needed to go into country schools, to agree with that.

I will now look at the Independent country seats. We have three country Independents in this place. An additional \$3.3 million will go into the two Independent country seats and the one National Party seat.

Let us look also at the country Labor seat, the seat of Giles. There are 29 schools in the seat of Giles that will

receive an additional \$1.52 million. How about that? I wonder how the union representatives in those schools will say to their communities, 'Don't accept Partnerships 21.' Ask them how they will explain to their communities why they should not accept extra teachers or extra facilities in their schools.

It is very interesting for me now to refer to a telephone conversation between the union representative of Port Lincoln High School and their local superintendent which was relayed to me. The union representative said, 'I want to know whether this is the number of dollars that will be set aside for special education.' The district superintendent said, 'Yes, that is correct.' In relation to two other areas the district superintendent replied, 'Yes, that is correct.' After each time he was asked a question, the voice on the other end of the phone said, 'Oh.'

At the end, the union representative asked, 'Does that mean that an additional \$250 000 will go into Port Lincoln High School?', to which our district superintendent said, 'Yes, that is correct.' There was a bit of silence on the other end of the telephone, and the district superintendent, in the conversation that was relayed to me, said, 'I suppose that gives you a little bit of a difficult decision, because do you say to your community that you will not accept the equivalent of an additional three teachers in your schools, because that is what this means, or do you say that you are not coming into Partnerships 21, and how do you justify that in terms of the benefits educationally to your children?'

Partnerships 21 is an excellent package. It was not criticised by the union leadership at the time that it was devised. This is all about a wage issue and the union holding to ransom our children in this state for more educational resources. I repeat again: no school which joins Partnerships 21 will be disadvantaged or receive less funding than they currently get.

STATE RECORDS

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I table a statement made by my colleague the Minister for Administrative Services in another place concerning regulations under the State Records Act.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will just come back to some sense of business.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): I bring up the sixth report of the committee and move:

That the report be received and read.

Motion carried.

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): I bring up the seventh report of the committee and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

The SPEAKER: The question before the chair is that the House note grievances.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): After the minister's statement today and his response to questions yesterday, I want to tell the House clearly what exactly this Liberal Government has done in terms of redistributing funding towards schools in Liberal electorates, away from schools in Labor electorates. The minister has picked up a few statistics but he is not telling the whole story, so I intend to do that with some examples here this afternoon. First, the minister says there have been all these global budgets because there have had to be amendments and there have been minor errors. He cannot explain away a downgrading of the state's global budgets by \$20 million.

The SPEAKER: Order! Could the member for Peake and the deputy leader please be seated?

Ms WHITE: Labor holds 21 out of 47 state electorates, fewer than half the seats, yet more than two-thirds of that global budget cut has come from Labor electorates—shame indeed. The story is more than that. The government then just says it will top up the funding. That top-up funding is not guaranteed, nor are the global budgets guaranteed in the sense that the minister said in this place on 20 October and before that that, if the numbers of students decrease, so will those global budgets. So they are not absolutely guaranteed. He has said they will be subject to budgetary considerations when that initial agreement is finished.

On top of that downgrading of the global budgets by \$20 million, there has been a shift, a taking away from some of the schools that in the previous rounds did better in their global budget than it was costing to run the school. Following the Victorian election, the Government has taken some of that profit from schools in Labor electorates and shifted it to schools in Liberal electorates. For example, in my own electorate, the Direk Primary School had its global budget in this last round downgraded by \$163 000. In the second round, it was to have a profit of \$32 000. With the new budget, it will require a top-up of over \$110 000 just to keep parity with current costs. Also in my own electorate, Settlers Farm junior and primary schools have had their combined global budgets downgraded by \$230 000, and rather than having profits of over \$46 000 will need a top-up of \$111 000 just to keep parity. I could go on with many schools in Labor electorates.

For example, Gepps Cross Girls High School has had its global budget downgraded by \$442 000. It was to have a profit of \$82 000 before the Victorian election, but now it will require top-up funding of \$206 000, which is not guaranteed past the three years if it goes into Partnerships 21, just to keep parity with the situation now. The LeFevre High School has received a \$226 000 downgrade to its global budget. It went from having a profit of \$67 000 to having to have a top-up of \$102 000 in this latest round. The Largs Bay Primary School received a \$104 000 downgrade in the latest global budget, and will now require a \$54 000 top up, whereas in the previous round it was to have a profit of \$29 000.

The Flaxmill junior and primary schools were downgraded by \$161 000, and they will need top-ups of something approaching \$70 000 just to keep parity with what they are currently getting. Craigmore South Primary School received a \$131 000 downgrade to its global budget in this last round. Instead of a \$50 000 profit in the previous round, it will need top-up funding of \$37 000.

Time expired.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Today I wish to highlight another success story coming out of my electorate, this time in relation to the mining of harlequin stone from a mine just

north of Wallaroo. The harlequin stone is actually a granite that is infused with feldspar which makes it a particularly attractive stone for all types of monumental work, building cladding, and floor and wall tiles. It is being mined by a company called Adelford. Recently the Managing Director of Adelford, Mr Rick Hill, went to the World Stone Fair held in Verona, Italy, together with three other South Australian companies. As a result of attending that world fair, he has had a flood of inquiries as to how overseas countries can get hold of this harlequin stone. It is a real boost for the Yorke Peninsula area. In fact, currently Mr Hill is seeking to provide at least a container load to countries such as Lebanon, the USA and to Italy itself.

It is rather ironic, because we have always thought that Italy would provide most of the marble or granite stone for monumental work. Well, South Australia is coming to the fore with this particular stone which has a beautiful colouration. I guess I could best describe it as having a green colouration to some extent, and some of it is more of a reddish-pink colour, depending on the area from which it is mined. These trial shipments will be going overseas shortly and it will mean almost certainly a significant enterprise for South Australia. The actual mine just north of Wallaroo has been in operation for a little over a year, and some of the material already has been sent interstate. In fact, apparently some of it is going to Queensland, where it is being used as pavers in shopping malls. Also, some of it is being used for paving in or around the Sydney Olympic Games site.

It is wonderful to see this particular discovery going from strength to strength. Apparently, it is estimated that there is more than one million cubic metres of this harlequin stone, so that should be enough to keep the operation going for the next 100 years or so. Of course, it depends on how big the mine gets. Currently, the mine is employing four persons, but that number may well increase depending on overseas sales.

It is interesting to note how the stone is mined. It is mined in blocks of about 40 to 45 tonnes and then split into approximately 10 to 17 tonne blocks. To start the mining operation a series of vertical holes is drilled in the stone in a straight line parallel with the quarry face. The holes are approximately 15 centimetres apart and four metres deep. A substance called expandite, which slowly expands up to 10 000 times its own volume, is poured into every third or fourth hole. The information I have just given was cited in the local Yorke Peninsula *Country Times* recently. In fact, the article in the *Country Times* continues:

As the expandite expands over a period of two days to a week, the large block breaks away from the quarry face. This is then drilled and every third or fourth hole filled with expandite to split the stone into 10 to 17 tonne blocks a shipment.

It is a new business for South Australia. It is certainly a new business for Yorke Peninsula. It is great that Mr Hill was able to go to Verona to the World Stone Fair, and I know he is very thankful to primary industries for the assistance it gave. I believe that the minister himself managed to call into the Verona Stone Fair and for that we say, 'Thank you.'

Time expired.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): Last week I received through the post a booklet which I found quite informative. It detailed those food items which contain genetically altered foods. It is an issue about which I have spoken in the House previously. This booklet was also accompanied by a national petition calling upon federal and state members of parliament

to place a five year freeze on 'the release into the environment of genetically engineered organism crops, microbes or animals for research or commercial purposes, imports of genetically engineered food, GEOs and patents'.

As the gate appears to be open—and I guess you could say that the horse has already bolted on these issues—I could not help but feel that the petition was a little too late. However, the petition clearly signals the level of community concern and anxiety concerning the indecent haste with which genetically altered foods have found their way onto supermarket shelves, and certainly without adequate long-term testing and proven scientific analysis being undertaken as to the effects on micro organisms, plant life, animals and, indeed, human beings.

Many constituents in Torrens are already incensed by inadequate labelling of genetically altered food. In fact, one constituent has written to all food retailers outlining the current legislative requirements to label genetically altered products. One constituent (and constituents are the consumers of these products) has signalled an intention to undertake legal action if their legal rights are not upheld. I find that rather extraordinary, but this person is obviously driven by concerns about this matter. When I spoke about it in the House on 29 July this year, I called for regulations to make it mandatory for all genetically altered foods to be clearly labelled in order to give the consumer the right to make a choice, and for more adequate controls and scrutiny on the biotechnological industry.

Although I would disagree with the labelling of Greenpeace in this debate as extremist—and I found that somewhat offensive, I have to say—I was pleased to see that the member for Fisher made a positive contribution in recognising the need to improve community education concerning genetically altered food and the biotechnological industry in South Australia generally. I also agree with the need to develop regulations and codes of practice to ensure that scientific, ethical and legal standards are maintained with regard to genetic engineering. The Prime Minister is already on record as questioning the economic validity of direct labelling of all genetically altered foods for consumers. In his contribution on 21 October, the member for Fisher said:

I believe that the Prime Minister will eventually realise that labelling is a requirement

He is quite right. However, it is not a requirement that is a statutory requirement under the Trade Practices Act. The Trade Practices Act of 1974, section 52, titled 'Misleading and deceptive conduct', provides:

(1) A corporation shall not, in trade or commerce, engage in conduct that is misleading or deceptive or is likely to mislead or deceive.

Section 53 contains the following wording:

... falsely represent that goods are of a particular standard, quality, value, grade, composition, style or model or have had a particular history or particular previous use.

Under these circumstances, as it is shopkeepers and chain store owners who could bear the brunt of any legal action, the position of the Prime Minister is possibly putting retailers at risk of court action by consumers. It is clear that goods have to be sold as per description and per sample. If a commodity is not correctly labelled as per description it would appear to be in breach of the legislation and, therefore, unlawful. As I have said, I have been contacted by many angry and concerned constituents, who want to know the contents of the products they are buying, and they have a right to do so.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): On the last occasion on which I had the good fortune to be able to participate in a grievance debate, I explained to the House the substance of a paper which I delivered to the post graduate institute in Chungchongnam-do for the training of public servants. Chungchongnam-do is a part of Korea, and 'nam-do' means 'southern province', if you like, so it is the southern province of Chungchong.

I got to the point of ensuring that everyone understood, as we all need to understand, that a public service has to be independent of the political arm of government and be seen to be independent. I go on and explain that the system of government we invoke must be capable of functioning in perpetuity within the framework of stated objectives regardless of which appropriately and adequately qualified person with appropriate levels of experience fills each position. The organisational structure which is set up must be capable of continuing to function effectively regardless of whether or not any individual leaves that organisation from that specific position or role within it, and regardless of whether or not they shift to another position or role within it.

The organisational structure of government then, the one of which I am speaking, includes specific groups of task performers, not necessarily in order of importance or in order of the numbers. They are the law makers (the legislators such as ourselves), the law enforcers and regulators, the service providers, the judges and the auditors; that is, those who check that what has been set down as the task has in fact been performed and completed when it is said to have been completed, and who also check that it has been completed within the allocated cost provided for the purpose of doing it.

Let me now address that specific arm of government which is set up as the public service. Before any public service position is created, it must be established in law through a system which must, as a matter of due process, identify and state the task or tasks to be undertaken within the organisational structure and which also then defines each role in a separate job specification within a framework. This framework must include the work to be done, the hours to be worked per week, say, and for what specific reward or salary, and which other position holder will manage and supervise that work.

The positions thus created can then be publicly advertised, calling applications from those believing themselves to be appropriately qualified. If this is not done in this way, the faith and trust which the individual citizens of that society can have in the need for the job in the first place and in the objectivity and the fairness of the system by which the appointments are made to such jobs will be compromised; that is, there will be some citizens whose confidence, faith and trust in the fairness of administrative decision making by that Public Service will be lost in some measure, and this will result in dissent, however slight and muted or substantial and raucous. The credibility of the government of that society will be corroded to some degree.

In summary of the foregoing concepts, positions or jobs in the Public Service should only be created by due process in law to fulfil the needs which have been determined by lawfully established policy which has been designed to procure the desired, predetermined, documented outcomes being sought in the interests of that society. Then and only then can such positions in the Public Service be filled on the basis of the merit of the successful applicant's credentials.

From the foregoing, it follows that all citizens are entitled to have a transparent view of what is happening in the process by which government of their society is being provided by those entrusted with the various functions to deliver it, that is, so that they can see who is doing what and by what authority. Moreover, there needs to be a separation of roles between the law making part of government, the Public Service part of government and the other agencies of government, and that is called the separation of powers.

If too much power is held by any one individual to determine the policy and then appoint the people who implement the policy and then judge whether such policy has been implemented within the framework of the objectives which the policy sets out to address, then undue coercion resulting in fear begins to destroy the confidence that the job doers have that the work they are doing is acceptable to the person who has appointed and directed them to do it. Moreover, the job that is done is not necessarily the job that the individual tax-paying citizen was seeking to have done.

Mr HILL (Kaurna): Today I presented a petition containing 2 974 signatures which were collected in less than a month in the Aldinga-Port Willunga area by citizens aggrieved by the Olsen Liberal government's treatment of those living in these towns on the very edge of the metropolitan area. The petition states:

We are totally opposed to the government's decision to extend the metropolitan boundary to include all of postcode area 5173 for the purpose of motor vehicle CTP insurance. This will mean extra costs for many low-income residents who already struggle without adequate city services such as public transport, sewerage, telephone calls, policing etc., and who pay a country cost of living.

The petition goes on to say:

Your petitioners... demand that the Olsen government overturn its decision to charge metropolitan rates for CTP insurance for residents of postcode area 5173 south of Quinliven Road. Further, we call on the government to classify all of postcode 5173 as country.

I congratulate all those involved in the collection of signatures, in particular Mrs Joan Hughes, the secretary of the Aldinga Bay Residents Association. Collecting almost 3 000 signatures, which must be almost every resident in the district, in less than a month is a mighty effort.

This is the second time that this petition has been presented to the House. I presented a similar petition in the middle of 1998, when car registration rates were put up for the first time. At that time, I wrote to the Premier about the matter and I said in part in my letter to him:

As a result of your government's decision to include these residents [that is, those south of Quinliven Road] in the metropolitan area for motor registration, car owners will now be forced to pay a minimum of \$52 extra a year for their compulsory third party insurance. This high-handed decision made for administrative ease—

I was told by an officer that it was easier to program a computer to include a whole postcode area rather than just part of it—

means that life will be made that much harder for my constituents who already face many disadvantages... Premier, on behalf of my constituents I request that you immediately review the decision and restore this minimal benefit.

That letter was dated 1 July 1998. Needless to say, I have never received a reply from the Premier. So much for John Olsen's claim that he is listening to the people, particularly those in regional and rural areas. However, I did receive letters from the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport justifying the decisions but not offering a review.

My next act was to try to develop a full understanding of the government's treatment of people living on the edge of the city. Therefore, in the last session of parliament I placed on the *Notice Paper* for each minister these questions:

For each department, agency and instrumentality in the minister's portfolio—is there a boundary for administrative service delivery or other purposes separating the metropolitan area from country areas and, if so, where is that boundary, how and when was the boundary established, and is there a difference between the services provided and charges raised for citizens living on different sides of the boundary and, if so, what are the details?

I agree that these are difficult questions, but not one minister has responded. I have been unable to find one scrap of information about government policy regarding the boundary between country and city. This refusal to answer my questions put on behalf of my constituents shows the utter contempt that the Olsen government has for non-metropolitan citizens.

On 3 November, I again wrote to the Premier seeking answers to these questions. I finished my letter to the Premier with this plea:

Mr Olsen, please listen to the concerns of my constituents who live in this area and develop a consistent set of policies for residents living on the fringe of Adelaide.

I have raised these matters in this House on many occasions over the past two years, and I make no apology for doing that. I will keep raising these issues until they are properly addressed. People living on the fringe of the city do have real concerns. In her letter to Mr Greg Coombs, the Managing Director of the SA Centre for Economic Studies, Mrs Hughes expressed those concerns in a most eloquent manner, and she lists some of the reasons why postcode area 5173 should be considered as rural. She says, for example, that residents rely entirely on their own private transport, and she lists a number of reasons: infrequency and inadequacy of public transport; prospective employers will not employ people without private transport; the need to attend hospitals, visit people in hospital and make medical appointments; the need to do shopping; Australia Post will not guarantee same day delivery; they are serviced entirely by the CFS; most of the roads have country speed limits and the majority of accidents are caused by metropolitan drivers; the same boundary should exist for all services; they have to pay STD rates for phone calls to the city; their newspapers are state, not city, based; they have country school buses; must pay rural fees for delivery of goods; must pay country transport rates to Noarlunga, and so on.

Time expired.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Allegations have been made that imply improper conduct by myself and my husband. I am very proud of the fact that my husband Geoff and I are involved in two businesses that have the potential to provide between them about 95 new direct jobs and numerous indirect jobs in my electorate of Flinders. The fact that I have an interest in these enterprises is listed for all to see in my Register of Members' Interests. Geoff is the accountant for both businesses and would be derelict in his duty to the shareholders if he did not encourage applications for grant funding in what are both emerging industries. I have no input into the day-to-day running of either of these businesses.

Geoff and I share 3.1 per cent of the shares in Eyre Enterprises through our superannuation fund. Eyre Enterprises is a small company that is manufacturing solar-powered water distillation units in my home town of Lock on central

Eyre Peninsula. It is anticipated that the work will eventually provide about 20 direct jobs, many in that small community, and a larger number of indirect jobs.

These units are mounted on the roofs of homes to provide pure water for drinking. We share 3 per cent of shares in Southern Australian Seafoods (SAS) through our family trust. It is projected that 75 jobs will be created in the Port Lincoln and Elliston areas over a period of 10 years, as well as a large number of flow-on jobs across the state.

The federal Rail Reform Fund grants are subject to people being employed and, if 26 people are not employed by SAS by the due date, a pro rata proportion of the funding will have to be refunded. Seven people are being employed at present. Both the companies mentioned were listed on my Register of Members' Interests immediately after the incorporation of the companies. Because I am aware of the vulnerability of members who have business interests, I made the Chairman of the Rail Reform Funding Committee aware of my interest in Southern Australian Seafoods as soon as I was aware that it was making the application. In the case of Eyre Enterprises, I was unaware that an application was being made.

Geoff and I are shareholders in about 20 companies and it is not surprising that I would not be aware of a grant application from a company in which I have a very small shareholding—and that indirectly through our super fund. I might add that I understand that, although the funding has been approved, it has not yet been received by either company pending the signing of legal agreements.

I am very proud of the fact that Geoff and I, over our 31 years of marriage, with a lot of hard work and study, have become successful self-made business people. I am particularly proud that some of our money goes in to start up businesses within my electorate. It would be good if more people risked some of their own money to start up businesses in their own regions. It has been suggested that people coming into Parliament be required to put all money into blind trust. Beside being impractical, this would mean that the majority of these funds would go interstate and overseas, and possibly into companies investing in products such as tobacco and wood chips from rain forests. Instead, these funds, in a small way, will help to create possibly 95 jobs in a regional area where they are badly needed. They are invested in the green industries of solar powered distillation and abalone aquaculture, which I believe are industries of the future that the Democrats particularly should be supporting. I wish to assure the House that there has been no conflict of interest with respect to this matter, and clearly there has been full and proper disclosure of my interests. As member for Flinders, I will continue to encourage companies to invest in my electorate and generate much needed employment growth.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: BOTANIC WINE AND ROSE DEVELOPMENT

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

That the 106th report of the committee on the botanic, wine and rose redevelopment—stage 2—status report be noted.

In March 1999, the Public Works Committee presented details of stage 2 of the botanic wine and rose development which involved the construction of the National Wine Centre at the corner of Botanic and Hackney Roads at an estimated

capital cost of \$20 million. This status report on that development is the 106th report of the committee. In the report, which we tabled and debated in March, the committee recommended to the appropriate minister that no structural change of a substantial nature to existing buildings, or development or alienation of any area of land of the City of Adelaide originally surveyed and designated as parkland by Colonel William Light, be undertaken without the approval of an absolute majority of all members of each House of parliament and the Corporation of the City of Adelaide in their sessions, separately assembled.

At the time of writing the report, the minister responsible has not responded to these recommendations pursuant to section 19(2) of the Parliamentary Committees Act. Given the urgent need to allay the fears of members of the general public about what is happening to our parklands and to protect them from further development that would be otherwise undertaken without the consent of those three organs of government, the committee attached a draft bill to this report to amend the City of Adelaide Act in accordance with that recommendation. The purpose of our so doing is to address that problem. We do it only after having waited not the four months since March for a response, as is provided for under section 19(2) of the Parliamentary Committees Act, but March to April is one month; May is two months; June is three months; July is four months; and here we are now, not just in the fifth month or the sixth month of October, but already into November, which is seven months. Ninety days over the limit is more than any creditor would be willing to tolerate, and 90 days over the limit is more than this parliament ought to have to tolerate.

So, by virtue of the fact that it is clearly an oversight on the part of the minister whom I believe to be the Premier—certainly, it was the department of the Premier that came forward to the Public Works Committee as the proponent of the proposal—the committee itself, without further ado, has relieved the Premier of the necessity to address the matter by doing so itself. By presenting this status report and the attached draft bill, it enables the parliament, for once and all time, to say whether it believes the disquiet which is abroad in the public arena at present needs to be addressed. Indeed, it addresses it in the way in which most people have suggested it ought to be addressed, that is, that all land within that area that is encircled by other city council areas on various sides of the capital city ought to be subject to these controls.

So, the committee has defined the land for the purposes of this amendment to the existing act as being that land which is inside the front fences, if you like, of the freehold or government leasehold land on the perimeter of Park Terrace—or whatever the street is called in various places around the perimeter of Adelaide—to be parkland. That includes the footpath from those front fences, across the kerb and across the roadway, and across the kerb and the footpath and into the area that many of us tend to see as the open space parkland. We have done that for a very good reason—because we have become aware of proposals, albeit in draft form, in the Department of Transport, to consider the option of building clover leaf or diamond interchanges at the major arterial roads that radiate from the city with the ring route around the city in such a way as would use up the vacant space in the parklands rather than acquire where necessary land on the other side of the intersection or, even for that matter, to complement land which might be acquired in the adjoining city councils on the other side of the intersection. We want to ensure that such development of the transport

facilities around the city is seen as appropriate in the opinion of not just the city council and executive government but also the people of South Australia as a way of using that space.

Because the people of South Australia all have a vested interest and some standing in their capital city, the city council of Adelaide is not the only body and does not represent the only people who have an interest in how the capital city develops, what it looks like, how it feels. It is there for all South Australians, and that is why we need to include the parliament. The parliament represents all the people of South Australia, and it does that in two ways. In the House of Assembly there are 47 single members collectively covering the entire state, where each of us in this place represents those electorates on the basis that we have won a majority of the votes in a preferentially distributed system. In the other House, all the members represent all the state, and their electors' preferences for the whole of the state on one single list are distributed according to law, thus providing a composition which enables significant minorities to find representation in that chamber.

So, there is another way of ensuring that the interests of all South Australians are taken into account, and the city council itself, of course, looks after those people within its precincts who are likely to be affected and who will pay some of the rates, and so on, which will meet the cost of such developments. These developments are not just roadways or buildings but other things that will alienate the land from public access to a specific purpose. We think that, by putting the proposition in such simple terms, it ensures that adequate opportunity is there not only for representatives of each of the different groups but also for public awareness to be properly generated about the proposal.

You would know, Mr Deputy Speaker, that the time taken to make the decision to alienate the original six acres for the Adelaide Oval (the only so-called oval in the southern hemisphere back at the turn of the century) was six years. Several attempts were made to obtain adequate approval from the parliament and the Adelaide City Council, and a great deal of controversy raged until, in 1906 (I think it was), the matter was finally settled. At the very same time as that controversy was raging, the decision was being taken by government to alienate the land, very controversially, to establish the tram barns at Hackney on what was parkland. It was promised at the time by the government of the day that, once that land was no longer needed for trams (and they all laughed under their breath), it would be returned to parklands. This very proposal abrogates that. Yet it was not put to the committee, in the evidence from representatives of the proposing agency when they came before us, that such a promise had been made to the people some 93 or 94 years ago—1904, I think it was. Maybe those people in the agency who proposed the swap of land from what was the alienated land that went to the Botanic Garden with the land of the tram barn did not even know that fact themselves but our inquiries discovered that.

More particularly, those people from various organisations who sought to give us evidence and who have very strong feelings (as I know you have, sir, and as have I and other members of this House) about parklands, and how important it is for us to keep our Adelaide parklands, all said that this should not be happening; that there ought to be alternative considerations. However, members of the committee (me included) had earlier voted, as part of this chamber, on a bill that became an act of parliament to establish the National Wine Centre in that locality. Therefore, to avoid any further

embarrassment at any time in the future to the city and the state, the committee said, 'Let us put it beyond doubt.'

We thought at length, separately from one another, and came back to the committee meeting with the unanimous conclusion that the only way to restore the public trust and faith that government and parliament had previously enjoyed about the management of parkland (until very recent time) was to have an act that required the approval of both Houses and the city council before anything could be done. We looked closely at the amount of money, or any other criteria, that ought to be taken as the cut-off point below which it ought not to bother the legislation and came to the conclusion that a substantial toilet block to meet the needs of people congregating for informal recreational activity in any part of the parkland would not cost more than \$100 000 in this day and age; that, accordingly, anything less than \$100 000 indexed from this day forward, so that we would never have to revisit the quantum, could be undertaken using existing planning law and the processes in place for the city council itself to take such a decision; and that that was an appropriate way in which to view a cut-off point below which it is unnecessarily trivial to worry us. Accordingly, it is to be found in the draft legislation attached to our status report.

The only other matter that I need to explain about our concern is that we think that no developers would propose a development unless they were very certain that it had wide public support in the future and that, accordingly, the matter would come to the parliament and probably pass on the voices, without any fuss. In that way, the respect which people can have in us as members of parliament and in the processes which government and council must follow in anything they do in the parklands in future will properly restore that important part of the trust we have when we accept the delegated authority of those people who elect us.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): It is with pleasure that I rise to support the member for Hammond in his remarks about the Public Works Committee's status report on the botanic wine and rose development. The botanic wine and rose development merely gave us the opportunity to really think through a number of issues about the use of Adelaide's glorious parklands and to look at the threats to them—past, present and future. In moving to develop a process for public involvement in what happens on the parklands and for a say of their representatives, the committee was not particularly castigating any one body about the use of the parklands. Certainly, at this turn of the millennium it does give us time to reflect on what has happened in the period that these lands have been entrusted to us—and I think I would focus on the turn of the century rather than the turn of the millennium and look at what has happened to our parklands over the last hundred years.

I think we have been very fortunate that those to whose purposes the parklands have been alienated have treated them with such respect. In general, they have erected buildings that were appropriate to their purpose and compatible with the environment. However, there have been notable exceptions, and some recent trends have given greater cause for alarm.

One of the past notable exceptions is the Schulz tower on Kintore Avenue. For many years I would catch the train into the city and I would look up and see that hideous building and wonder what on earth it was and how it got there and I heard rumours that the Adelaide City Council had no knowledge of the fact that it was there. I do not know the historical circumstances of the case, but certainly I now know that

under current legislation it was, in fact, very possible that the Adelaide City Council had no information about the construction of the Schulz tower, which can only be described—generously—as inappropriate in its location. What I now find about the legislation controlling the parklands, as we think of them in their larger sense, is that those to whom the lands have been alienated generally have control over what happens. In some instances they must pay rent to the Adelaide City Council, which is put in the very strange position of having to negotiate a lease over premises that it may not have wanted built.

One example that does indicate particular cause for concern is that relating to the John Lloyd Leisure Centre on Memorial Drive. The Public Works Committee became aware of this development and, as we considered that it was being constructed on crown land, thought that even though the moneys for it were private it should be considered by the committee.

We were told that this was not the case as the land had been appropriated and, in consultation with the Adelaide City Council and in evidence given by the Lord Mayor and the Chief Executive to the committee, we learnt that the council was also very disturbed about the construction of this building. The council could offer comment about whether or not the purpose and design of the building was appropriate but it had no right of veto. The council was very concerned about many aspects of that building but was nevertheless forced to negotiate a lease with the new operators of the building rather than with the Memorial Drive Tennis Club into whose care this land had been entrusted.

The fact that many of us may believe that the Memorial Drive Tennis Club members, who were not elected by us and who are not accountable to us, made an inappropriate decision is something about which we can do absolutely nothing. We should not be putting members of the various clubs, for instance, who have care of the parklands in a position where they can be criticised widely for making a decision that does not reflect the needs of the community while it may very well suit the purposes for which they were elected.

Members of various organisations, sporting clubs, etc., come together for a specific purpose and elect a management committee. That management committee has the responsibility to do its best endeavours in the interests of the members: it does not have a responsibility in relation to the parklands or to the community of South Australia. If it was in the best interests of the members of the Memorial Drive Tennis Club to construct a huge edifice, which is not necessarily related to tennis, the management committee is obliged to go ahead and do it. The fact that it may be totally contrary to the interests of those who prize the parklands has nothing to do with it: they have no responsibility to us. If our proposal is adopted, there will be a wide opportunity for people in the community, both directly and indirectly through representation by their local members, to have a say on what should happen on parklands.

It involves not just the quantity of land that is devoted to parklands: it is about the nature of developments that occur on the land designated by Colonel Light, very wisely, as parklands. Often very grandiose claims are made in this place about the importance of various developments, but I do not think many people here or in the community would say that Adelaide's parklands are other than vitally important. They are important to our identity as a city and to who we are, and they are also important for our economic benefit. It is a

unique attraction and it must not be sold away by our being able to engage in a national bidding competition for a particular organisation, function or development by saying, 'We can offer parklands; can anyone else beat that?'

Well, they cannot, but neither should we be engaging on those terms. If that is what it takes to get development we are really selling ourselves short. We can do much better than that. By introducing the report and the appended bill today we hope that the community will take the opportunity to consider the proposed bill in terms of the wisdom of taking action of this sort and protecting the parklands through this type of mechanism. Indeed, we welcome suggestions on the appropriateness of the mechanisms suggested. We particularly welcome comments from those important organisations in our city that have responsibility for the care of various parts of our parklands.

We all think that the Adelaide City Council has control of the parklands, but we forget about the botanic gardens, the zoo, various clubs that have responsibility for small portions of it, the museum, Government House, the universities and the hospital. We do not intend to provide a barrier to places such as the hospital and the university being able to construct buildings that are required for their purposes. I think there will be very few occasions on which anyone will object to anything that those very important institutions are proposing, so long as it is not a Schulz tower. If they continue to deliver more Brookman buildings, for instance, we would be very happy to see them. This bill does give the community an opportunity to prevent another Schulz tower and to put in place mechanisms to protect our parklands, in the wider sense, for the next century.

Time expired.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I will be brief, as the two previous speakers have very clearly outlined this proposal. As the Presiding Member said in his contribution, the committee made certain recommendations in its report to this parliament. In those recommendations we asked the minister to act in a certain way and, as the Presiding Member outlined, nothing has been done in over seven months. The committee is very concerned about this issue, which is about the preservation of Adelaide's parklands. It is also about certainty for the future that these parklands will remain as a very outstanding feature of the city of Adelaide and that the temptations to encroach upon them for various types of development are avoided by ensuring that there is the widest possible examination of proposals.

That is all I want to say. I ask and recommend that all members of this House carefully read the report and the bill. The minister has indicated that he would prefer that this debate be deferred and that we wait for him to introduce his own piece of legislation. We have already waited seven months, and that has precipitated this action by the committee. We say that the Adelaide parklands are too important and too critical to this city and to this state for us to wait any longer while other sorts of developments are proposed and proceeded with.

Motion carried.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: RAIL LINKS

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Venning:

That the 35th report of the committee on rail links with the eastern states be noted.

(Continued from 27 October. Page 281.)

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): This is a very important subject, as the Presiding Member of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee pointed out at the time that he moved that we note the report. The Presiding Member regaled us with tales of trams, bluebirds of happiness and so on—along with the subject matter of the report. At the outset I perhaps ought to address those matters that I recognise I had something to say about by way of interjection, which was out of order, at the time the member for Schubert made his remarks in proposing that we note the report. Where trams are concerned there are people, of course, who get a shot of nostalgic irritation, or whatever else it is that we all suffer from from time to time, and who feel compelled to say a few things or shed a few tears one way or the other about the subject.

In this case, the member for Schubert was telling us that trams had a future. Well, they may, but they do not have a future in a city such as Adelaide for the foreseeable future—and that is the rest of my life, because I cannot see beyond that; no reasonable human being would expect me to. Trams were not an appropriate form of transport for this city. It is not as big as Melbourne and, what is more, the space available in which to accommodate them in the streets is not adequate. They cause immense traffic congestion and they have to go where the rails are 'installed' (I do not know whether it is appropriate to say 'laid': that is what chooks do with eggs). So, they are inflexible, whereas buses are very flexible.

Buses can be taken off a trunk route at any point where a spur needs to be established to provide greater convenience to the travelling public and from that service, provide far greater convenience at much less cost than is possible using tramways. We do not have the density of population, either, which tram services tend to require to become viable. Those people who mistakenly think that trams are free of pollution (after all, there are no exhaust fumes!) are very much mistaken, because the exhaust fumes are all belched to the atmosphere wherever the fossil fuels are being burned to generate the electricity. I have yet to see a solar tram, and I doubt that I ever will. It is not possible for such motors to be constructed to generate the torque needed from the power available from solar panels on the roofs of trams to haul them along. So, we have to put up with the fact that the exhaust fumes are still adding to greenhouse gases, even though they may not be coming from that particular vehicle: they are incrementally being generated back at the power station that provides the electricity for the tram.

Trams would clutter the intersection of North Terrace and King William Street. Indeed, they would clutter the entire length of King William Street from Victoria Square to North Terrace and would not contribute anything to the improvement in efficiency of the movement of passengers. They cost more per metre to get into place than dedicated busways. The sooner we rip out the tram line between Adelaide and Glenelg and replace it with an O-Bahn style dedicated busway, the more efficient will be the movement of people, the less expense there will be to the public purse and the fewer buses we will need on other arterial roads, which can then be left to cars with a far greater measure of flexibility of the form that I have suggested. I will leave that matter to rest and let

the romantics try to get it working. I hesitate to say 'get it up', because that is a bad thing; it is not permissible or decent.

Let me talk about trains. First, it disappoints me that the committee did not examine what had been done to the poor landowners and farmers along the Taillem Bend to Pinnaroo railway line when standardisation of that line was undertaken, because the committee examined connections to the eastern states. That is a railway line which does connect from Taillem Bend through Pinnaroo to the eastern states and even to Portland through Bendigo and Melbourne; it is a complete track.

Those farmers who own the land adjacent to that railway line had forebears who gave the land to establish the railway line and who now, through the mischief of what has been done by this government, must pay an annual licence and a maintenance fee to maintain the crossings that they have and need to get from their farms to the roadway; or, where the railway line does not follow the roadway between Jabuk and Lameroo, they have to pay this same fee to get from side to side of their farm across the ruddy railway line. I think that is wicked; it is not just unjust and inequitable. To now force them to pay over \$1 000 for every crossing is wrong.

The government did not have the right in law to offer that when it privatised the services provided along that line. I mention the disdain with which the Public Works Committee was treated by the minister and/or the agencies involved in seeking to discover why that work was undertaken on Crown land without our looking at it. They just said, 'Get lost,' and they ignored our correspondence; we have not heard from them.

Secondly, I commend the government, the Premier, members of the Labor Party, the Democrats, the member for Chaffey and other Independents who have given continuing support for the construction of a rail link between Adelaide and Darwin through Alice Springs. In fact, you could say that it is going to be from Tasmania since rapid sea freight across Bass Strait into Melbourne will enable containers to be loaded in Tasmania, taken to Melbourne and delivered to Darwin in much less than three days and landed in Japan in under a week. The people in Victoria who wish to get rapid access to our east Asian markets ought to be strongly supporting this initiative and not trying to find means of undermining it.

Indeed, the one thing that I hope we do quickly now, is enable those trains to be double decked in the containers on the flat tops to avoid the expensive greenhouse gas generating and inefficient haul of those trains over the Mount Lofty Ranges on the existing line from Murray Bridge to Adelaide. We ought to bypass that ancient piece of track, because its radii are too short and the camber on the curves is inappropriate for rapid travel—

The Hon. M.D. Rann: Where's this?

Mr LEWIS: Between Murray Bridge and Adelaide. The rail line is ancient. It was surveyed for much shorter trains and much lower powered locomotives than we have these days. Therefore, the speed on the line is much slower than it ought to be and needs to be for efficiency. I acknowledge that it is causing a nuisance to residents who now live near the line in greater numbers. Sir, as you would know, on some days inversion layers trap that noise to the extent that it bounces off the inversion layer less than 50 metres above the valleys and in the morning comes back down into the still air, causing disturbance to people's lifestyles and living comfort.

The sooner we build the bypass from Murray Bridge, along the Murray Plains through the Kapunda gap to

reconnect at Balaklava, the better off we will all be, because the faster will be the transit of freight from Melbourne through South Australia, Alice Springs to Darwin and off to our markets, and the more efficient it will be and the greater amount of business we can do in Port Adelaide.

Time expired.

Motion carried.

Mr MEIER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IMPLEMENTATION) BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the Bill with the amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

- No. 1. Page 1, line 16 (clause 2)—Leave out 'This Act' and insert: Subject to subsection (2), this Act
- No. 2. Page 1 (clause 2)—After line 16 insert the following:
(2) Section 12(5) will come into operation on assent.
- No. 3. Page 5 (clause 5)—After line 26 insert the following:
(zaa) by striking out from section 39(2) 'on the first Saturday of May in' and substituting 'in May';
- No. 4. Page 5 (clause 5)—After line 29 insert the following:
(zca) by striking out from clause 4 of schedule 1 'on the first Saturday of May in' and substituting 'in May';
- No. 5. Page 17 (clause 12)—After line 16 insert the following:
(5) A reference in another Act to an authorised person as defined in the Local Government Act 1999 will, until the relevant day, be taken to include a reference to an authorised person as defined in the Local Government Act 1934.

Consideration in Committee.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Local Government): I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

The amendments are purely technical and relate in the one instance to the fact that when the City of Adelaide Bill was passed it required an election of that council in the first week of May. The election is actually scheduled for the second week of May. Technically, without this amendment, the city council would have no form of governance for one week. The other amendment is to clear up for legal reasons the definition of an authorised officer. Both amendments are purely technical and were agreed to without dissent by both parties in the other place.

Motion carried.

OFFICE FOR THE AGEING (ADVISORY BOARD) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 9 November. Page 371.)

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): The opposition supports this very simple bill, which essentially collapses three committees into one, hopefully to make things work more smoothly, more effectively and more efficiently. It involves the committees from which the government receives advice on matters relating to ageing—the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing, the Older Persons Health Council (which was established by the ministers for health and the ageing in 1996), and a subcommittee of the Council of the Continuity of Care, Casemix and Older Persons Advisory Committee

(established by the ministers for health and the ageing in June 1995 and initiated through the South Australian Health Commission and the Commissioner for the Ageing).

This bill is a sensible move because there is obvious overlap between the functions of these three groups. The opposition agrees with the government's view that it would be better served by broadening the membership of the major committee, the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing, and dispensing with the other two committees. We are very pleased to see that the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing is a very active committee. It is chaired by Dame Roma Mitchell with an active group of people who are very intent on moving around the state, consulting and providing information to government about issues in relation to ageing.

I have been very intrigued about the two committees that are disappearing, that is the Older Persons Health Council and the Continuity of Care, Casemix and Older Persons Advisory Committee, and about just precisely what they have achieved over the time they have been operating. I would appreciate some advice from the minister on how many meetings each of those committees had, how many reports they delivered and the main subject matter of each of those reports. I would be very interested to know what they did achieve over their time of operation. Certainly, the matters they were inquiring into continue to be of concern to older people in our community.

I am also very pleased that the Minister for the Ageing in the other house accepted an amendment put forward by the opposition following a suggestion from the Council on the Ageing here in South Australia which increased, from four to six years, the aggregate number of years that a person could be a member of the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing. We thought that the suggestion from the Council on the Ageing was a sensible one, hence our amendment, and we are very pleased to see that the minister also agreed, accepted it and that it is part of the bill we are now debating in this House.

As part of the debate in the other place, my parliamentary colleague, the Hon. Carmel Zollo, referred to some concerns that had been around in the community about the future of the Office of the Ageing in the structure of the Department of Human Services. I was pleased to note that, in his reply in that place, the minister said:

The status and future of the Office of the Ageing was never in doubt.

He went on to say:

The office is an important office, and it is so regarded both by me as the minister responsible and also the Minister for Human Services. I am very pleased to have that reiterated so that it can be reported in *Hansard*, and I am certain that people in the Office for the Ageing will be pleased to see that has been placed on the record here in the parliament.

I would like to make one point. I understand that Mr Jeffrey Fiebig, the Director of the Office for the Ageing, is now undertaking an evaluation of domiciliary care services across South Australia. I think it is across South Australia; perhaps the minister can correct me if I am wrong. However, I know that he is doing an evaluation of domiciliary care services. I understand that he is working on that evaluation in a full-time capacity and that he has not been replaced as Director of the Office for the Ageing. I find that of concern when we know of the issues facing us as a community and as a society over the next 50 years in relation to having in place good plans for a changing demography in our society. I

would have expected that all hands needed to be on deck. I would therefore like clarification from the minister about Mr Fiebig's time allocation for the evaluation of domiciliary care services and whether or not his role as Director of the Office for the Ageing has been taken up by someone else and that time equivalent replaced.

In relation to the role of the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing, it is quite clear that it has a very significant and important role to play in the coming years. I have had the opportunity over the past few days to attend two important occasions at which ageing and issues related thereto and older persons were the major topics of consideration. The first was the Mitchell oration delivered last Friday night by Professor Gary Andrews from Flinders University. The title of his oration was, 'Ageing triumphantly'. I also attended for only half a day the Inaugural National COTA Congress which was held in Adelaide on Monday and Tuesday this week.

The Inaugural National COTA Congress was entitled, 'Older Australians: a Working Future?' This conference concentrated on mature people, the workplace and employment, and issues surrounding those matters. The congress brought together a wide range of very highly regarded speakers, including Don Edgar, currently Adjunct Professor with the Centre for Workplace Culture Change at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology; Emeritus Professor Sol Encel from the Social Policy Research Centre of the University of New South Wales; and Professor Graeme Hugo, Professor of the Department of Geographical and Environmental Studies and Director of the Key Centre in Research and Teaching in the Social Science Application of Geographic Information Systems at the University of Adelaide.

They were joined by a number of other keynote speakers who certainly provided wonderful information and answered many important questions asked by the people who attended that conference. I was there on Monday morning for the keynote address by Don Edgar in which he spoke about changing the culture of work and the workplace to take into consideration an ageing community. The things he said were extremely significant and important for us as politicians and also for politicians who have the responsibility to plan services for the future.

It was interesting to note that Professor Edgar made a special point—as did others—of referring to the survey by Drake Personnel which provided some very concerning information about the fate of older workers currently in the work force. I guess this is something of which we all have been aware, but the information from the Drake survey is of concern. According to the findings of this investigation, a very sizeable 62 percent of organisations make most of the selections from the 31 to 40 age group, while almost a third less have a greater penchant for those in their 40s. Shockingly, none of the 500 respondents would choose to employ managers and executives in their 50s.

We are all aware of the growing number of people who have been retrenched from positions that they have held as a result of downsizing and outsourcing under the new management credo of the 1990s. We all are aware of people who are retrenched in their late 40s or early 50s and who are not able to get any other work and the incredible toll that takes on them.

Interestingly, one of the people sitting near me explained that her husband, aged 54 and a senior executive, was being retrenched at Christmas this year. She mentioned that he would be applying for other jobs but that he was very concerned about whether he would get another job at his age.

They had adult children aged 25, 26 or 27 whom they had supported up to those ages while they were going through university. They had them at home. Now they were faced with having to use his superannuation if he was not able to get a position. Instead of having a number of years where they could concentrate on putting away money for their own retirement, those years have been taken up supporting their adult children, and things could be very different for them in the future. This is not an isolated case. We know that employment for mature aged people is a major issue in our community.

Don Edgar had a lot of very interesting suggestions for policy changes to cope with this, and it is certainly something which I have noted and listened to carefully. He certainly talked about the fact that in the years 2020 to 2030 people over 55 will comprise 20 per cent of the labour force and that employers will have no choice but to have those people working. It is important now for people to start to begin to understand how things will change the age demographics of our society. Our community will change considerably in terms of the number and proportion of older people, and we need to recognise that the skills, talents and experiences of these people will be vital for us in the years ahead.

The important thing is that we need to realise this now and we need to start planning for that time. With those comments, the opposition supports the bill and the opposition looks forward to the work of the newly streamlined, re-constituted ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing. We look forward to seeing how it will provide information to the minister to address the issues that I have mentioned.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): I use this opportunity to commend those people in the Office for the Ageing for the achievements that have been brought about since that office was established. I was delighted to be the minister at the time the office was set up. There are extremely dedicated people working in that office, and I commend them for the work that they are doing. As the member for Elizabeth said, I do not think that we recognise enough the value of our ageing population in this state, and I hope that as time goes by that is something that we will do more readily.

I am particularly pleased to be able to recognise and support the magnificent work of the Advisory Board on Ageing. When that board was set up, a need was seen for a body to be able to communicate more with the community. It was set up when the 10-year plan had just been approved and that plan had received significant community support, but a number of questions were being asked and it was appropriate that an advisory board be able to travel through country areas as well as the metropolitan area of South Australia to be able to answer those questions. More importantly, and as time has gone on, we have recognised the fact that the advisory board has been there to listen to older people throughout South Australia, and it has made a significant contribution.

I was delighted when Dame Roma Mitchell accepted the position as chair of that board. She has done an excellent job, as have all members of the board. I commend them for the time that they are giving and for the opportunity that they provide for people to have their say and to continue to have their say in this very important area.

The only other thing that I want to say is that I am pleased that, in recent times, the Office for the Ageing has become responsible for the Retirement Villages Act. I felt that was important. I also make the point that there are a number of

concerns in this area. I have significant concerns in my own electorate and I have heard concerns expressed from retirement villages around South Australia. I believe that there is a need for the act to be reviewed and for changes, not major ones, to be made to that legislation. Perhaps another opportunity will be provided to expand on the concerns that I have regarding that legislation and some of the activities that are taking place in retirement villages in some parts of South Australia.

I support the legislation. Once again I support and thank the officers who make up the Office for the Ageing for their dedication and their commitment. In particular I again thank the Advisory Board on Ageing for the magnificent work that it is doing in South Australia listening to all older people throughout the state.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I thank the two members for their contribution to the debate. The member for Elizabeth raised three specific questions. I do not have the information available here but I will certainly secure that information for the honourable member to answer those questions. I acknowledge the role of the Chairman of Committees and former minister, because he was the minister who had the idea of setting up the Office for the Ageing and the advisory board and who appointed Dame Roma as the chair of that board. There has been absolutely no doubt that it was an outstanding idea and it has worked well.

Dame Roma has been an outstanding chair. I cannot think of anyone who has made a greater contribution and made the point more clearly that older people within our community, even those over the age of 80, still have a very important role to play in that community and can play that role very effectively. Dame Roma served this state as Governor, both under the age of 80 and over the age of 80, and I am sure that she does not mind my revealing that, and she did that with great distinction and had enormous support from the community in the way she did so. Everyone admired her for her role. She is a person who has made an enormous contribution to public life in South Australia, and I admire the way that she has set out with an air of determination to travel around the state, which she does, and to visit various country regions.

Even though in her capacity as chair of the advisory board she comes under the Minister for the Ageing in another place, I see some of the results of her work, and I admire the way that she wants to link the work of the advisory board with the Home and Community Care (HACC) funding and make sure that they coordinate their activities closely, which they are doing. They have been travelling around the state on a joint basis, so the chair of the HACC advisory board and Dame Roma have travelled around the state together.

The honourable member also raised the issue of the Retirement Villages Act. It is correct that its administration has been transferred from the Office of Fair Trading to the Office for the Ageing and I think it is a very good move because, frankly, one of its key activities is to make sure that there is adequate and appropriate accommodation for older people in our community. This state has developed some very useful models. We made a great contribution and major advance towards establishing dedicated homes for the aged within this state in the 1950s. We were seen as a national leader amongst the states in the role that we played at that time, and that has carried on today. We were one state that set up at a very early stage the Retirement Villages Act. It gave guaranteed returns to the tenants, but there are some distur-

ing matters in the way in which some of those villages are administered and there is a need for tightening up the administration. There is also a need for amendments to the act.

I have sat down with some of the tenants and residents of these retirement villages, and I know some of the frustrations they have and how some people are able to step outside the act relatively simply. I will not go into the detail here but, as a result, where there is an aged facility outside the act, it leaves the people extremely exposed, and I have one of those within my electorate. I am delighted that the member for Heysen has raised that as an issue that we must confront. I welcome his bringing to my attention or to that of the minister in another place some of the examples that cause concern. I certainly welcome his or any other member's input as to where some of the weaknesses are in the act.

I am concerned about some areas, for example, the quality of the reporting and the evidence that must be put forward, the costs of which the tenants have to pay, but they do not always get detailed accounts or verification that the services that have been provided have been provided on the competitive basis that they are paying for. The question is whether they are paying through the nose for some of those services. The bill before us is a simple bill and I welcome the contribution from the two members who have spoken to it.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

HIGHWAYS (ROAD CLOSURES) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 27 October. Page 285.)

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): The opposition supports the second reading of this bill, which seeks to ensure that South Australia remains in control of its strategic road network. The other advantage of this bill is that it establishes a level playing field between individual local council areas. It is a shame that my colleague the shadow Attorney-General is not here today to deal with this matter, which involves road closures and on which he is probably the national—if not world—expert. Had he been here, we would probably be on this bill until close to midnight. I appreciate the fact that the development of this legislation was prompted by one council's desire to move a by-law banning heavy vehicles from arterial roads within its council area. While I can understand that council's concern about the heavy vehicle route—and I know that my colleague in the Upper House as a resident of the area also had concerns—the problems should not necessarily be resolved by back-door changes to council by-laws.

So, reaffirming the powers of the Commissioner of Highways in this respect means that the state government is able to maintain the integrity of South Australia's strategic road network. However, local government, and most particularly local communities, must always—and that is my firm advice to the minister, representing the Minister for Transport—consult with the state government when determining the strategic road needs of the state in terms of their impact on a local area. My colleague Carolyn Pickles was advised by the minister on the morning of the debate when this matter was discussed in the Upper House that the council which intended to move the by-law no longer intended to do so.

The question could therefore be: why are we proceeding with this bill to deal with a problem that is no longer there? However, I agree with Carolyn Pickles that the policy principles at issue are ones that have to be addressed. I note that the RAA supports this legislation. Carolyn Pickles sent it to the Local Government Association some time ago, and her office has been in contact with local government in order to try to get some response to this legislation. However, notwithstanding that, the opposition supports this bill as a commonsense move to make sure that there are not maverick actions that have a detrimental impact on our strategic road network. We support the bill.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I thank the leader for his contribution to the debate, and I appreciate the support he has given to the bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

MOTOR VEHICLES (HEAVY VEHICLES SPEEDING CONTROL SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 27 October. Page 287.)

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Again, the opposition supports this legislation. By way of brief explanation, the purpose of this bill is to introduce new arrangements for the management of speeding heavy vehicles. The scheme that we are considering today, which Labor supports most strongly, is designed to extend responsibility for speeding from drivers to owners by introducing penalties that impact on the owner. I am pleased—and so is my colleague Carolyn Pickles in the Upper House—that we finally have legislation which hopefully will take the heat off drivers who believe that they are under enormous pressures, and I applaud the Australian Transport Council in this regard. It has been obvious to us all that there have been considerable difficulties in this area. The whole issue of heavy vehicle safety covers not only speeding but also substance abuse, and we are talking often about the illegal use of amphetamines for drivers to stay awake so that they can speed to destinations in time. This is something of great concern, and it has been raised in coronial inquiries, the Supreme Court and elsewhere.

However, first and foremost, it is an occupational health and safety issue. It is about recognising that drivers of heavy vehicles are coming under enormous pressure, in many cases from employers, particularly unscrupulous employers, to meet ridiculously tight deadlines and, in so doing, potentially endangering their lives and other road users. We have all heard the stories about heavy vehicles going to Western Australia or Sydney being given deadlines that are impossible to meet and, as a result of that, drivers taking illegal substances to keep awake, speeding dangerously. This is an area where this legislation is long overdue. This measure is not about raising revenue or putting operators out of business but about creating a safe work environment not only for truck drivers but also for others who share the road. At a general level, this issue has been the subject of extensive media coverage, particularly in response, as I mentioned before, to a series of tragic circumstances. I hope that this legislation is a recognition by the parliament that we are beginning to understand the occupational environments of our often

forgotten truck drivers. In the Upper House, my colleague the Hon. Carolyn Pickles said:

The scheme is intended to reduce the incidence of speeding amongst heavy vehicles by making the registered owner responsible for repeated speeding incidents. The opposition recognises that this bill incorporates a staged set of penalties approved by transport ministers at the Australian Transport Council. . . . The hierarchy of penalties suggested under this legislation is a constructive approach to dealing with this problem, and the Opposition supports the planned advertising and public relations campaign so that all sectors of the road transport industry will be informed of changes.

So, I am very pleased that the opposition can support this Bill with enthusiasm as an important step forward to protect truck drivers, to reinforce their occupational health and safety and to protect other road users.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): I give notice to the minister that I would like to ask a couple of questions concerning the bill in the committee stage. I could try to do so during the second reading debate, but it might be better if it was done in committee. I just forewarn the minister of that.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Since the opposition, through the leader, has indicated that it supports this bill, it seems that it will pass rather readily through this House. However, I want to flag that I am not particularly happy with the intent here, inasmuch as the penalty for speeding will not, in fact, be imposed on the person who is doing the speeding it will be imposed on a third party. If a transport operator has a driver who is caught for speeding on three occasions, it is the transport operator who wears the penalty. Indeed, a driver who might have it in his mind to wage a vendetta against his employer could very readily place the employer in a position of severe financial embarrassment. The driver would merely have to risk quite a small cost to himself or herself personally, and the consequence of his or her actions could be that the vehicle concerned (and these vehicles are valued at several hundreds of thousands of dollars and more) could be put off the road for three months at the expense of the owner, and not the driver.

This is a very poor piece of legislation, because I believe that the penalty should be directed at the person who is committing the offence. There is a large assumption in this bill that it is the owners who are always the problem with speeding transports and are placing undue pressure on their drivers. I recognise and acknowledge that there is a problem in the transport industry of trying to squeeze the last dollar out of the business, because of the nature of the business: they are very expensive items of equipment and owners want them operating for as many hours in a day as they possibly can and they want their loads delivered as quickly as possible so that more loads can be moved in a day and in a week.

I think it is a shame that this is the best way that the government can find a solution to this problem, because it seems to me that it is penalising the wrong person. It is making large assumptions and, in so doing, is penalising the wrong person. This could have a serious detrimental effect, particularly in those circumstances, as I said, where an employee might have a vendetta against his or her employer.

I personally think that it is a very poor piece of legislation, and I am disappointed that the opposition has chosen to support it. I suppose I will just have to live with it, because it seems that it will pass. However, I am certainly most pleased to register in *Hansard* my displeasure with respect to this bill.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I support the bill, but with caution, because I understand what the member for MacKillop has just said and how this comes back on the owner. However, I take it one step further: the owner is, in some ways, often responsible for these truckies exceeding the speed limit, because it is the owner who can set unrealistic timetables for these people. If that is the case, I believe that they must share some of that cost because, in the end, the driver is obeying orders and is adhering to the timetable that is set. So, I believe that is where some of the responsibility should lie.

I believe we will have to wait and see what happens in relation to legislation such as this. Issues such as that which was raised by the member for MacKillop certainly can, and probably will, occur. However, I believe that they will be very much in a minority situation, because I know that truckies largely are very responsible people in the way in which they ply our roads, and most are very courteous and professional. However, as with everything else, there are the one or two cowboys (as I will refer to them) who ruin the reputation of their profession—and, indeed, that is what it is. These are the people whom we are trying to pick up. I have seen these people who take ridiculous risks in huge rigs. Sometimes I have seen them go past three abreast; when cars are overtaking and the truck is coming around the outside. I have seen them also with stock and machinery on the road, and some of these people (and there would be less than half a per cent) are absolute cowboys: they are dangerous and ought to be off the road. They are not responsible people and, like everything else, we need to put in a bill provisions that will pick them up.

Since the minister first addressed these problems with a bill two to three years ago, we have seen a huge improvement in the standards of our trucking companies. One company was put off the road for a few weeks, and it certainly got the message very quickly. That company is now a model of respectability in the industry. It has come from one side to the other. Certainly, like most industries, they will use all the latitude that the law gives them. I feel that, with respect to this issue, we are giving the owners of those vehicles the extra responsibility of talking to their drivers, setting realistic timetables and asking the drivers to adhere to those timetables.

I am confident that this bill will have the effect that we are trying to achieve, that is, to stop these huge rigs from speeding down our highways causing all sorts of problems, and generally to encourage responsibility in this industry. At the same time, we are rewarding those who do the right thing because, certainly, some of these companies that are cut pricing in the industry are able to reduce their prices because their drivers take risks and speed, thereby making it difficult for the law-abiding companies.

I support this bill, although with caution. I am confident that what the member for MacKillop said will not happen, but it could: we could have a driver waging a vendetta against the owner of a company and who could, in fact, in a matter of a day, have three or even four infringements and, in turn, put that truck off the road—and, of course, that could probably break that business. When an issue such as that arises, hopefully there will be a way for that person to be able to appeal against a decision such as that, where someone took out a vendetta against the owner of a company.

I applaud the minister for introducing a bill such as this. Indeed, I also thank her staff, because the minister has a very effective committee to advise on issues such as this. The

member for MacKillop, not being able to be part of this committee, ought to make plans, or change his situation, and he could then certainly attend and be part of the decision-making process. I am confident that one day the member for MacKillop may do just that.

It is a pleasure to serve on the minister's committee and to be part of the decision-making process—and, certainly, one day you, sir, will be part of this decision-making process. We have argued the long and short of this matter, and certainly this bill was sourced in that committee through the road transport representatives. I am confident that it will work, but we will wait and see. I support the bill.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I thank members for their contribution to the debate. First, the contribution made by the member for MacKillop raised certain matters of concern. I guess anyone would have that concern if they look at this bill in a practical sense. Certainly, I am sure that the minister would want to say that she will be watching very carefully to ensure that there is no retribution by a disgruntled employee against an employer. I think that was the thrust of the point made by the member for MacKillop. I thank members for their support for the bill.

The minister has asked me to indicate to the House that the Local Government Association raised the issue of emergency vehicles being required to have a speed limiter fitted. The Minister for Transport and Urban Planning undertook to investigate the issue. She now advises that she intends to put forward a regulation to exempt emergency and police vehicles from the new section 71H requirement to have a speed limiter fitted, using the power in section 145(1)(1a) of the Motor Vehicles Act to make regulations exempting a class of motor vehicles from any provision of the act. No doubt this issue was raised in another place. The minister has responded to that and I would ask the House to take note of it. I appreciate the contributions and support given to the legislation by the members of the House of Assembly.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3.

Mr CLARKE: My question relates to subclause (3), which provides:

For the purposes of this Part, a person is an associate of another if—

Then follows a series of definitions which I will come to in a moment. In terms of the concerns expressed by the member for MacKillop, I have similar concerns in one sense because, a few years ago, a former neighbour ran a trucking company. I made representations to the Minister for Transport because she intended to suspend the licence on a truck belonging to this particular trucking company when clearly the employee was at fault in terms of speeding rather than any misconduct on the part of the owner of the truck.

That matter was resolved but it seems to me that, on a reading of new section 71J, the Registrar need only suspend a vehicle if a number of speeding offences have been recorded against a person. Suspension is not automatic after the first offence: a prescribed number of offences is involved and therefore the Registrar must suspend. There is an opportunity for the owner, if he thinks that an employee is getting at him, to take corrective measures either through counselling or sacking the person. Despite what the govern-

ment might say about unfair dismissal laws, this act protects the employer somewhat because there is such a significant penalty against the owner that if an employee wilfully ignores the employer's instructions with respect to keeping within the speed limits and the employer exercises his right to dismiss that employee that employee will have very little, if any, right to complain about an unfair dismissal.

It seems to me that the government (and I agree with it as the opposition) has made the definition broad enough so that if the owner of a truck, howsoever described (whether it be trust, body corporate or whatever), exceeds the prescribed number of offences the licence relating to that truck is suspended. But there are a number of examples where an owner/driver of a truck or a number of trucks in effect works for freight forwarders. For example, say trucking company A, an owner/driver, is under contract to a freight forwarder such as TNT—and I pluck that name out of the air because it is a well known company, not because it necessarily conducts itself in this way.

That freight forwarder sets the schedule for the owner/driver and says, 'Look, I want you to deliver these goods to wherever within this specified period of time.' Within that specified period of time the owner/driver or the driver of that vehicle, to achieve the schedule set out by the freight forwarder, might need to speed. If the driver or owner/driver is caught speeding and he exceeds the prescribed number of offences that truck is suspended, but the originator of the schedule gets away scot-free. After reading the bill it seems to me that that situation is not catered for.

There are a large number of examples in that category. For example, Coles-Myer does not own a truck. That organisation got rid of its own trucks a decade or more ago and said to its drivers, 'What about becoming owner/drivers of these trucks and, instead of a wage, we will pay you a contract price to take our groceries from warehouse A to whatever number of stores.' Coles-Myer sets the schedule. It will tell the owner/driver, 'You will get to these stores by these times to off-load those products.' Under this bill, if a driver or the owner/driver speeds they will be caught by the legislation, the truck will be suspended but the originator of that schedule—and I will not say Coles-Myer because that might be unfairly labelling and I do not want to do that; I just use that as an example—which sets out the contractual terms for delivery of its goods is not caught by this legislation.

Am I right in terms of my interpretation of the bill and, if I am, has the government given any consideration to widening the ambit of the bill, either now or later, to ensure that those who set up the timetables suffer the same or a commensurate penalty as would the owner/driver or driver of the vehicle who has offended?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I appreciate the honourable member's comments. I appreciate that an owner/driver may be doing deliveries for a supermarket chain, and I understand that Coles-Myer contracts out its delivery work to a particular trucking company, but clearly that company will not accept a schedule that cannot be achieved.

They would be irresponsible if they did. Certainly, no company could then cancel a contract simply because the supermarket chain had set a schedule that could not be met because of the law. That would be a clear defence for the trucking company. Clearly, whether or not the supermarket company in the example given set that sort of schedule, it does not have to be complied with, and it would be a defence as to the fact that it was not complied with.

Mr CLARKE: I gather from the minister's answer that my interpretation of the bill is correct. My concern is that, whilst in a perfect world all owner/drivers are subject to the same laws and therefore none of them would accept unreasonable time scheduling because they would be in breach of the law, it is a fact that this industry is cut-throat. To what we in this House might see as an unreasonable time frame I am sure some of these freight forwarders would say, 'No, we don't believe that any of the people with whom we contract would have to break the law to achieve our schedules.' They will simply shop around amongst the owner/drivers—because it is such a competitive industry—to find somebody who will in fact accept the schedules and the risk.

I support what the government is doing in putting the onus right on the owners: if the drivers speed and the people concerned do not take necessary action, they will have a valuable asset which cannot be used for a period of time and which will cost them money. I agree with the government on that. I would like to see the government put the onus right on those who set the schedules in the first place so that they cannot act unreasonably and put the owner/drivers in an impossible position. Whilst I accept the minister's point that some trucking companies will turn around and say, 'That is an unreasonable schedule; I won't accept it,' there will always be some other poor truck drivers, owner/drivers in particular, who are up to their hocks in debt to a finance company and battling to meet their repayments and who will be tempted.

I want to redress that imbalance by putting the onus not only on the owners of the trucks to make sure that their drivers comply with the law, and on the drivers themselves, but also on those who write the contracts in the first place, so that they cannot insist on unreasonable schedules and, if they do, there will be a penalty for them. That is what this bill does not address.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I appreciate the point the honourable member is making, but the responsibility here lies with the owner of the truck. It does not flow through to someone who might be trying to contract the services of that company in setting an unreasonable schedule. Clearly, the responsibility is back to the owner of the truck. That is what this act tends to relate to, and that is where the offence would lie.

Mr CLARKE: Any piece of legislation obviously would be kept under review by the department, but will the minister assure me that the operation of this act will be kept under review and that, perhaps at the end of, say, 12 months, we can see how it has operated, so that if there are owner/drivers who are being pinged, quite rightly so, for breaches of the law in terms of speeding offences, and if there are a number of complaints concerning unreasonable time scheduling by freight forwarders, the government will consider amending the legislation to bring them within the scope of it as well?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The minister in another place has already given an undertaking to review this legislation in its operation. I am sure that on her behalf I can give that undertaking. Any members who have examples of where that might be the case should put their case to the minister. I am sure, knowing the minister, that she will act accordingly. At this stage, we should see how the act performs before trying to amend it further.

Mr WILLIAMS: The member for Ross Smith referred to some comments I made during my second reading contribution, and I did allude to the fact that it was the third offence which would bring down the weight of this amend-

ment on owners of vehicles. I still have serious problems with this legislation. We have all been making the assumption—and this is what the bill does—that it is the owner's responsibility. The member for Ross Smith referred to scheduling set by freight forwarding companies and gave a couple of examples where contractors might set unrealistic schedules. But we are losing sight of the fact that it might be the driver himself who makes a decision of his own volition to stop for a period longer than necessary on a trip which was scheduled in a realistic time frame.

For example, on a trip from Adelaide to Melbourne a driver might be able to save half an hour by exceeding the speed limit by a small margin. I know that a lot of trucks operate out of Bordertown, which is in my electorate and which is halfway between Adelaide and Melbourne, purely because the drivers make their home there and can drive to Melbourne and back, to Adelaide and back or right through and have their stopovers at their home with their family, which is a very sensible thing. But it could be the driver, of his own volition, who makes the decision to increase the amount of time spent on his stopover and thus force himself to break the law and the speed on the rest of the trip to make up that time to meet what might have been a very realistic schedule. I have problems with putting the onus of responsibility onto the owner of the vehicle rather than the operator.

Another serious problem I have with the bill is this: if we accept that this is the way we should address these matters, why is the only offence we are addressing that of speeding? If a driver of a heavy vehicle commits any of the other road or traffic offences which might be committed and which might indeed endanger the lives of other road users, why do they not also come within the ambit of this bill? Why are we paranoid just about speeding?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I will refer the member for MacKillop's comments to the minister. In terms of the speeding offence which has been highlighted nationally, it has been recommended that action be taken nationally. I really cannot answer whether the minister considered what other offences should be brought under this legislation or whether it should be just one offence. I will certainly pass on the honourable member's comments. As I mentioned earlier, the minister has promised to keep the act under review once it is operating. If the honourable member has ongoing concerns, he should bring them to the attention of the minister.

Clause passed.

Clause 4.

Mr WILLIAMS: I want to refer to proposed new section 71H. This whole bill does not address the offender. Rather, it addresses third parties and property. Proposed section 71H refers to the register which is held under this amendment and to a vehicle that has had a previous offence registered against it when another offence is being registered against that vehicle. So, now we are talking not even about the offender or the owner but the vehicle. It could be a completely different person driving the vehicle.

I realise that if the ownership changes we go back to square one as far as the register is concerned, but under proposed new section 71H we could have one driver committing an offence and being dismissed by the owner of the vehicle. The owner could employ a new driver and a few months later that new employee might commit a similar offence. We would then have two strikes. We could go through the whole process again, with the owner dismissing that employee, putting on a new employee, and then having

three different drivers committing three different offences. Even though the owner of the vehicle is trying his hardest to do the right thing, his vehicle could suddenly be taken off the road because the bill is addressing people other than the perpetrators of the offence. Would the minister care to comment?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I picked up the same point, and I cannot really answer that. We will have to monitor that carefully as part of the operation of the act. You could have a situation where you have three different drivers committing three different offences, each time counter to instructions of the vehicle's owner. The owner of the vehicle gives very clear instructions, 'You are not to speed.' He could put that in writing and everything else, and he might dismiss the driver for breaching that direction. He might then dismiss a second driver, and could be had up for a third offence because it relates to the truck. Despite all the good intentions of the truck owner, he would then be penalised. I guess that is where the discretion of the court comes into it, although it provides that the registrar 'must require' the device to be fitted. That is one aspect where we will have to monitor this legislation very carefully. I will certainly bring that to the minister's attention.

Mr WILLIAMS: The minister correctly pre-empted my next question about the word 'must'. The bill provides that the registrar must suspend the registration once there are three strikes against the vehicle. I wonder whether the minister and department responsible for drafting this legislation are really au fait with the latest developments in the road transport industry. I recently had the pleasure of meeting with a major transport operator in the northern part of my electorate who gave me a briefing on various aspects of his operation, and one thing he did was show me the latest technology that he is applying in the latest trucks that he has procured.

These trucks have a computer system which monitors a whole range of aspects of the vehicle's operation, including things as mundane as oil pressure and oil temperature. However, it also constantly monitors the speed of the vehicle, the time that the vehicle is stationary, and even the number of times and the duration that the driver touches the brake pedal. The owner of this vehicle and operator of this business can download the information from this truck via his fax machine at any time. He told me that in Germany the police can pull over a truck, plug their computer into the truck computer and download all this information. What they are really interested in is the speed and information relevant to the laws that might operate from time to time in various jurisdictions.

The latest technology is such that we do not need these draconian laws that apply to third parties and inanimate objects, because this sort of thing is being overtaken by the latest technology in the trucking industry. This operator told me that he was delighted to be able to put this equipment into his vehicles. We are talking about prime movers worth about \$250 000, and for a few thousand dollars he could have this equipment installed in the vehicle at the point of delivery. He had already spent \$5 000 or \$6 000 to have the necessary computer equipment in his office, and it was only a matter of a few extra thousand dollars per vehicle to have the equipment placed in the vehicle at the time of delivery.

This operator was looking forward to the day when the majority of trucks on the road had this sort of equipment installed, because he would then be able to compete on a level playing field. He believed that he was doing the right thing, but he was concerned that other operators, be they owner-

operators or shady trucking companies running a fleet of vehicles, were doing the wrong thing, and encouraging their drivers to drive for excessive times and at excessive speeds.

Perhaps instead of using this big stick approach, we should possibly be embracing the latest technology and using that approach. Instead of enforcing the fitting of speed limiters to vehicles, perhaps we should be enforcing the fitting of this other technology. This would mean that we could actually apply the penalty to the seat of the problem, namely, the driver at the time.

The technology not only has the ability for us to download all this information but also one can program into the truck's computer each driver's pin number, magnetic card or whatever so that one can always identify which driver was operating the vehicle at a particular time. I therefore urge the minister to take back to his colleague, the minister responsible for bringing this legislation to the parliament, the fact that there are other ways of achieving these ends. I repeat: it is very sad that this piece of legislation has come here and smacks of the paranoia which abounds in the community at the moment about speeding and which many people have about trucks on the roads. I believe, as the member for Schubert said in his contribution, that the vast majority of transport operators and drivers are very responsible people.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I thank the member for MacKillop for those comments. I think he is quite correct: with modern computer technology, it is amazing, first, what information one can collect about the vehicle, and secondly, how to download that information on a regular basis through to a master computer somewhere to monitor exactly what is going on with that truck. I am sure it will not be long before that is done on a routine basis. The newer trucks at any rate—I think since 1991—must have a speed limiter installed as part of the design of the truck in Australia.

We are only talking about older trucks, so I appreciate the point being made by the honourable member. I think it is a general point about the whole approach. I will refer that to the minister. I do not think it specifically deals with the substance of the bill: it is more a policy approach and how to go about trying to ensure that trucks are operated on roads in a safer manner. I appreciate the honourable member's contribution to the debate.

Mr LEWIS: I want to say much the same as what the member for MacKillop has said. I could save the time of the House by saying, 'Ditto' to what the members for MacKillop and Schubert said and, if he were here, the member for Stuart would have told the House the same. All that we are looking for is a realisation that there is a good deal of paranoia abroad in the community about trucks. I also know there is a large number of operators of businesses who require their drivers to do things which are crazy and unlawful and that that must stop. This measure is aimed at achieving that.

Notwithstanding that, on the other side of the coin, I have got to tell the House that some folk who have spoken to me are the kind of folk who wander through a conventional zoo, see an elephant from some distance and think, 'My goodness, that is a big animal', but when they get close to an elephant they find themselves so overwhelmed by the enormity of the organism that they are afraid. If the elephant were to sneeze or—I do not know how to say this in any other way—fall victim of flatulence, they would probably be frightened out of their wits because of the enormous shaking that would go on. If those same people were sitting behind the wheel of a Hyundai Excel and driving along the road at 85 km/h, having a pleasant drive where the open road speed limit or even the

110 km/h speed limit applies, and they were overtaken by a B double they would suffer almost the same consequences. They then come along to me and say, 'These big leviathans that are traversing the highways of our continent are a terrible danger. My goodness, if they rolled over they could squash a million ants. We need to be afraid for sleepy lizards. What chance is there for them to cross the road. They could not possibly dodge all those wheels.' I hear many arguments such as that but what they are really saying is that they have never been up close to a large truck before and that it disturbed their peace of mind when they were driving, more by ritual than reason, with their mind not on the job and suddenly hearing the airhorn of a B double about to overtake them.

I am relating something that was related to me in a casual conversation one Thursday afternoon after bowls when I dropped in to say, 'Hello' to the women bowling there and was regaled, I can say, by this story. I know that the woman was upset. I have not said anything that would tend to identify her, but she was so frightened at this first experience of being up close to a B double that she was of the view that I ought to do something about getting them all off the road. I cannot for the life of me endorse measures which make it more difficult for us to do things more efficiently. I know we must do things to make the roads safer for us all and to make cowboys comply with sensible safety rules and good manners and conduct on the road. If it does not become part of the culture or if it seems it has dropped out of the culture, then we have to codify it in this way. With those few remarks, I wish the measure swift passage.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I acknowledge the contribution by the honourable member. I guess in many ways it is similar to some of the remarks made by other members and that is why the minister will need to keep the operation of this legislation under close review.

Clause passed.

Clause 5 and title passed

Bill read a third time and passed.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

ALICE SPRINGS TO DARWIN RAILWAY (FINANCIAL COMMITMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Alice Springs to Darwin Railway Act 1997. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable the bill to pass through its remaining stages without delay.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The bill provides for amendments to the Alice Springs to Darwin Railway Act 1997 which authorised an agreement between the South Australian and Northern Territory governments to facilitate the construction of a railway link between Alice Springs and Darwin and the operation of a railway from Darwin linking into the national rail network at Tarcoola. The passage of this legislation will be an important step in the realisation of a new gateway to Asia.

This bill reflects the culmination of almost a century of work to bring about the construction of a railway linking Darwin to South Australia and from there to the rest of the Australian rail network. This marks an important moment in Australia's history. Construction of the railway will provide South Australia with an alternative and high-speed link to markets in Asia. The rail link will also provide jobs to regional South Australia and will be an icon construction project as we enter the new millennium.

The railway is a strategic infrastructure project that forms an essential part of the state's economic strategy. It will build on the momentum for economic growth that this government has fostered, lift confidence in the state's economic future and will provide opportunities during both the construction and operation phase for South Australian industry. This project comes at a particularly important time for the Upper Spencer Gulf region, which stands to be a major beneficiary of the work that will flow from the project.

In November 1996, the South Australian and Northern Territory governments signed an intergovernmental agreement recording the extent of the negotiations between the governments in relation to the Alice Springs to Darwin railway at the date of agreement and, in particular, agreeing in principle, subject to conditions, the financial contributions to the project to be made by each government. The agreement also contemplated that both governments would participate in a statutory corporation to be established for the purpose of holding title to the rail corridor and facilitating the management of the project.

The Northern Territory parliament subsequently passed the AustralAsia Railway Corporation Act 1996 to provide for the establishment of the AustralAsia Railway Corporation (AARC). Upon the establishment of AARC, an extensive and competitive submission process was conducted, resulting in three international consortia, all with significant Australian partners, being short-listed to provide detailed proposals. Following the receipt of detailed bids from each of the three consortia on 31 March 1999, the South Australian and Northern Territory governments announced on 7 June 1999 that the Asia Pacific Transport Consortium (APTC) had been selected as the preferred consortium.

APTC comprises: Brown & Root, a major US based multinational engineering and construction company that incorporates SA based project managers Kinhill as bid leader; SA based civil construction company Macmahon Holdings; rail maintenance construction companies Barclay Mowlem and John Holland; SA based US rail operator Genesee & Wyoming; and NPG Logistics as logistics manager. As can be seen, this consortium has significant South Australian and Australian consortium members. Since the appointment of APTC as preferred consortium, AARC has worked with APTC on the resolution of a number of threshold issues, which has resulted in AARC recommending to the two governments a basis on which the project can proceed.

Based on the proposal received from AARC, the South Australian, Northern Territory and commonwealth governments have considered and approved the provision of additional grant funding above the \$300 million initially on offer to the project. This has resulted in the need to amend the existing legislation relating to the project to provide for these changes. At present, the legislation places a limit on the state's financial commitment to the projects of \$100 million in 1996 dollar terms by way of capital grants. Clause 4 of the bill seeks to repeal section 6 of the act and replace it with an authorisation for the state to make funds available for the

performance of certain works in connection with the project up to a total amount of \$125 million.

Clause 4 also seeks to authorise the giving of a guarantee of up to \$25 million to the project, plus associated costs. This guarantee may be called if the estimated land bridge revenues are not realised by the operators of the railway. In addition to the above, clause 4 deals with the state's guarantee of the AustralAsia Railway Corporation. The bill authorises a guarantee of the performance by AARC of its obligations under any contract entered into by it for the purpose of the implementation of the Alice Springs-Darwin railway project. It is intended that the Northern Territory government will provide a similar guarantee. Other related obligations may also arise as the project is implemented.

The bill also sets out the requirements of the state to act so as to facilitate the implementation of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway project and ensures that money can now be applied for the purposes of the project. These requirements will provide assurance to the preferred consortium that state agencies will use the appropriate effort to expedite the necessary approvals and processes required by the state to bring the project to fruition and that financial commitments can be put in place as required. Clause 5 of the bill sets out the provisions for all building and development work carried out by or on behalf of the commonwealth on the railway line between Tarcoola and the Northern Territory border to be recognised as complying with statutory and regulatory requirements applicable at the time of the work.

In commending the bill to the House, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his support in the passage of this bill through the parliament in these two weeks. I requested of the leader that that might occur to facilitate and ensure that contractual arrangements would not be impeded, so that by March or April next year we could get contract sign off and then in May, June or July start construction. I put on the record my appreciation and thanks to the leader for facilitating the passage of this piece of legislation through the parliament. I seek leave to have the explanation of the clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

The measure will be brought into operation by proclamation.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 3—Definitions

This clause will provide definitions with respect to GST.

Clause 4: Substitution of s. 6

It is proposed to revise section 6 of the Act to reflect the financial commitments that will apply in relation to the authorised project and to ensure that appropriate appropriations are made.

Clause 5: Insertion of ss. 8 and 9

Three new sections are to be inserted into the Act. The Minister and other State instrumentalities and agencies are to be authorised and required to do anything reasonably required for the project and no further statutory step or authorisation will need to be taken or obtained before money can be applied for the purposes of the authorised project. It is also to be made clear that work carried out on the existing railway between Tarcoola and the Northern Territory border will be taken to comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements applicable at the time of the work, in a manner similar to section 11A of the *Non-Metropolitan Railways (Transfer) Act 1997*.

[Sitting suspended from 5.58 to 7.30 p.m.]

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): The opposition will support this bill to amend the Alice Springs to Darwin Railway Act. As the Premier has explained so

eloquently, the amendment provides for the appropriation of up to an additional \$50 million towards construction of the line, and this is being matched by the Northern Territory, with the commonwealth putting in an additional \$65 million. I will have more to say about these funding arrangements later.

The Darwin to Alice Springs railway is a project of national and strategic significance, as well as being of enormous importance to South Australia and the Northern Territory. This project will deliver enormous benefits to our tradeable goods and services sector of the economy. By providing an efficient corridor for our exporters into the Asia, the railway will improve the competitiveness of our exporters. In addition, the railway will facilitate new activities in the tradeable goods sector which were until recently not considered cost competitive. In these ways, the Darwin to Alice Springs railway will contribute significantly to addressing Australia's fundamental economic problem—our balance of payments and foreign debt. In addition, the project will improve Australia's external position by reducing our reliance on foreign owned shipping services which are a significant component of our Current Account imbalance.

Those are some of the longer-term benefits, but there are immediate ones as well. Given the very high levels of local Australian content, it should have high multiplier effects in the construction phase. I am very hopeful that this will give the upper Spencer Gulf cities the boost to jobs and the local economy that they deserve. In particular, we must use this opportunity to ensure that the BHP long products operation in Whyalla is presented in the best light possible to potential new buyers. And I know that is something about which the member for Giles will speak in her contribution as an enthusiastic supporter of the railway over many years.

I hope that this can be a new beginning for the cities of the upper Spencer Gulf. It gives those cities a breathing space in which to plan retaining their existing industries and to secure new and diversified investment opportunities. Also, environmental benefits will come from less reliance on road vehicles and freight ships. The recent and current Timor crisis has served to highlight the strategic defence significance of the line about which Kim Beazley, as a former defence minister, has also spoken on so many occasions.

I was pleased that the Premier acknowledged the bipartisanship that has gone into this project, as well as this legislation. While I was looking through my file today, I remembered that in 1995, I think it was, I met with the Chairman of the Darwin committee, former New South Wales Premier Neville Wran, who was investigating the viability of the rail link. Obviously, at that stage it was important that Neville Wran received a strong and clear message from both the South Australian government, as it did, the South Australian opposition, as it did, and the Northern Territory government and opposition, because of the substantial job opportunities involved, especially in the upper Spencer Gulf cities. At the time, I argued to Neville Wran that we needed to take the step up to exploit fully the massive Asian markets to our north, and trade with our Asian neighbours can only be maximised with the provision of a rail link from Alice Springs to Darwin. Of course, at that stage, we were arguing that the long awaited step would be of huge importance in the further development of South Australia as a transport hub.

Later, apart from making submissions to Mr Wran and having discussions with Shane Stone, the then Chief Minister of the Northern Territory and with Barry Coulter, who was

the minister responsible for the railway at that stage, I also travelled to Darwin to meet with opposition and government, unions and business leaders. Later, on 29 June 1995, I expressed my disappointment when the Darwin committee did not recommend a speedy start to the Darwin to Alice Springs rail project. A lot of us were arguing at government and opposition level about joining forces to stress the importance of the project to the nation in terms of exports to Asia, as well as to its significance in job creation for South Australia and the Northern Territory. Of course, it is a project that was mooted at the time of Federation and, of course, the federal government in 1995, when the Darwin committee put this project, said that the project was a goer but put a start date on hold. We argued that it would be a project of major importance to celebrate nationhood to mark the centenary of Federation.

On 8 March 1996, I wrote to Prime Minister elect John Howard. I wanted to write to him early in his prime minister-ship to seek a meeting with him to discuss the future of a project of national significance that was critical to South Australia's economic future. I was delighted to receive an early reply from the Prime Minister, who invited me to meet with him in Adelaide during his first visit to the state as Prime Minister. I was pleased that Mr Howard gave me some time to argue the case for the project from Labor's perspective as well as from the state's perspective. I must say that at the time Mr Howard, whilst he was aware of the support of the then Premier Dean Brown, the opposition, Shane Stone and the opposition in the Northern Territory, certainly conveyed the impression that he believed that at that stage the project was not viable, and he said that that was his principal concern.

Of course, that had followed not long after the Wran committee report, which said that the committee's final judgment on the railway was not if but when. However, since that time, leading through 1996 and 1997, a series of studies was done which demonstrated that the market for rail services was much larger than previously thought. Whereas the committee on Darwin assessed the rail market in 1994 at 785 000 tonnes, there was a revised estimate that I communicated to the Prime Minister of a second consultant's reports placing it at 1.1 million tonnes.

So, we continued with the project of jointly lobbying. I addressed Labor leaders nationally about the national significance of the project and, following discussions with my Northern Territory counterparts, I believed it was important to negotiate with the federal leader of the Labor Party, Kim Beazley, to secure support from Labor for up to \$300 million in funding from the commonwealth to help build the Alice Springs to Darwin railway link. On 22 August 1997, I was delighted that Kim Beazley, following his negotiations with us, told the institution of engineers:

The South Australian and Northern Territory governments and the all important private investors can be confident that a future Labor federal government will be a contributor to this important national infrastructure project.

Of course, at that stage, having secured a commitment of \$300 million from Kim Beazley, and with South Australia and the Northern Territory each pledging \$100 million, we were hoping that the Beazley commitment would help leverage a similar commitment from the federal government. We heard within days, at a joint news conference between the Prime Minister and the Premier, the announcement of federation funding of only \$100 million, and we were

concerned that tracks would not be laid with that commitment.

I do not want to be political tonight, but I think it is fairly true to say that there was a major announcement in 1997, just prior to the state election, and parts of the media presented the announcement as a done deal that the project would start immediately following the election. Whilst being supportive, I think most people at banking level nationally and people involved in the railway industry were telling us privately that, in fact, that was unlikely to occur without extra funding coming from the commonwealth. Indeed, it was always presented to us that there needed to be \$500 million in public commitment in order to leverage the necessary extra funding, or private investment, to secure a go ahead for the line. Therefore, we were very concerned the following year, in June, when there still was not any announcement of a start to tracks being laid. But then, of course, we saw the Prime Minister giving his support to a rival Melbourne to Darwin bid. We were concerned, and said publicly at the time, that this plan, whilst it may not happen, had the potential to do great harm to the Alice to Darwin proposal. Again, we were sort of pushing, by constantly raising the Beazley commitment, to have the federal government match Labor's commitment so that we could see a railway built rather than talked about. So, I think it is an example of where there has been bipartisanship right along the way. I certainly enjoyed briefings from Shane Stone and Barry Coulter.

In March of this year, when the final Alice to Darwin bids were due in, again, we hoped that there would be a firmer indication of the starting date for the long awaited construction of the line. But similarly, we were still being told by people involved in the industry that there needed to be extra money, hopefully from the federal government. So, the lobbying has continued. In September I was in New York and I met with executives of Genesee and Wyoming, a vital player with the Asia Pacific consortium, and again expressed my hope that the project could begin soon so that it could be completed shortly after our celebration of the centenary of Federation. I have to say that the executives of Genesee and Wyoming were very hospitable and explained to me their extensive interest in railways in a number of nations, including here in South Australia and in Australia, as well as in the United States and Canada. I believe that they were appreciative of our campaign to try to raise extra funding. Genesee and Wyoming, of course, would be the operators.

I know that there was a misplaced effort to say that I had met with a company called Halliburton, which I had never heard of and had not been near. I received a phone call when I was in Geneva to say that it was alleged that I had met with Halliburton and that—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Good old Dick. That's good to hear. However, I had not met with Halliburton, and it was interesting that there was an attempt to try to railroad (if I can use that word) a couple of business leaders, who somewhat naively gave comments to the newspapers, alleging that even though they did not know that I had met with this company, if I had and had said negative things, that would, therefore, be damaging. That was, of course, a lie, and subsequently one of them has explained how he was railroaded into giving that statement. But never mind: we are progressing. I think it is very important that, despite one almost glitch, when there was an attempt to somehow pretend that there had not been bipartisanship, the Premier tonight has at least acknowledged

that it is important that we have bipartisanship in and out of the parliament in promoting this project.

In terms of the funding, this bill makes additional financial commitments to the railway, bringing the total South Australian taxpayer contribution to \$150 million. The opposition will support this additional appropriation, but Labor regrets that our Liberal state government was not able, in Canberra, to make John Howard live up to his national responsibilities to provide more funding for the line. In a sense, we have let the federal government off the hook in terms of the clear national significance of the project economically, in terms of exports, jobs, manufacturing and the strategic and defence interests. I am disappointed that the federal Howard government did not match Kim Beazley's commitment to provide up to \$300 million for the line. Never mind: we are now in the position where, while this amendment has Labor's support, we will be seeking assurances as to the implications of some of the clauses.

I think it is vital to ensure that the bill not open up the possibility of the South Australian taxpayer inheriting additional liabilities should the project encounter difficulties. We do not want this to be the mouse trap approach where tracks are laid and continue to be laid but the project then runs out of money and then, therefore, the South Australian and Northern Territory governments have to again dig deep. We were told before the 1997 election that all that would ever be needed from the South Australian taxpayer was \$100 million. We were told that all that would ever be needed to secure the completion of the project was a total public funding commitment of \$300 million. We said that that was not true, that there needed to be an extra \$200 million, and I suppose we were right. We have now an extra \$200 million needed to secure a start on the railway and, unfortunately, the South Australian taxpayer is filling the gap, because the federal government has not fulfilled its national responsibilities.

It is vitally important that we ensure that the bill does not open up the possibility of the South Australian taxpayer inheriting additional liabilities should the project have financial problems downstream. If the possibility exists to accumulate liabilities as a result of this amendment, we need to be made fully aware of our obligations now. And we need to know what is the nature of the guarantees to be provided to the AustralAsia Rail Corporation in clause 6. The clause certainly seems to open us up to continuing, or more and more liabilities.

I am also concerned about the fact that nowhere does the bill deal with the role of the commonwealth. Nowhere is it stated that, if the project encounters difficulty, the commonwealth will inherit any residual liabilities. Yet, as this is a project of national significance, the commonwealth should assume responsibility for any liabilities. Can the South Australian government guarantee that, after the extra \$50 million has been appropriated through this bill, the South Australian taxpayer will not again be asked for money?

It is my view that this is a historic step forward. We all want to see the contract signed in the first quarter of next year. We all want to see the tracks laid midway through next year. We want to see the benefits to South Australia in terms of exports and lifting our manufacturing industries.

We also want to see this project, like other great projects, including our submarine project (a bigger project involving \$6 billion), giving a confidence lift to our state, as well as being an iconic symbol of nation building in terms of the completion of a north-south railway line that was promised

in 1911 in exchange for South Australia's giving up the Northern Territory. Of course, for the Spencer Gulf it is particularly important. I have already mentioned that it will make BHP Whyalla a better prospect for sale.

I am not pretending here, of course, because I have already been advised by BHP that there will be no real addition to the work force as a result of this project. In fact, at one stage someone said that it would create one or two extra jobs at BHP Whyalla. That is not the point: it is a potent symbol to any would-be buyer that it is an ongoing operation with a guaranteed flow of work for the railway. Indeed, one would hope that not only would the steel for the rails be manufactured at the long products division but perhaps even steel sleepers. I am not sure whether that has yet been—

The Hon. J.W. Olsen interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The Premier advises that it is more likely to be concrete, but down the road we hope that that would also be sourced out of South Australia. The next step is to ensure that we maximise the local industry and jobs content, because this railway will be built outside our state. We must ensure that as many jobs as possible come from the Spencer Gulf regions and that it not only lifts Whyalla but also Port Augusta, providing a confidence boost for the Spencer Gulf cities. We hope that, with the passing of this bill, the Alice Springs to Darwin railway will become reality.

I think it is an example of a project, as it was with the upgrading of the airport, where bipartisanship can pay off for South Australia. In that spirit, the South Australian opposition, despite some of the problems we have in terms of the lack of extra federal funding, is delighted to support this bill.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I am pleased to participate in this debate. This project has been long in coming and I congratulate the government and all those people who have been associated with what has been a most difficult exercise. I well recall driving through my electorate, I think in 1983, and listening to the then Leader of the Opposition, Bob Hawke, being interviewed on the ABC. I have since learnt that Lloyd O'Neill was sitting next to him because Mr O'Neill told me of their conversation some time afterwards, particularly as he had fallen out with Mr Hawke.

He said that Bob Hawke was waxing on the radio that if he was elected Prime Minister the promise made by Malcolm Fraser would be honoured. Of course, if that had taken place we would not be having this debate today: the railway line would have been built; it would basically have been paid for by the commonwealth; and this project would have been providing benefits to the state. I thought it was necessary to put that on the record because sometimes people have short memories in relation to these matters. I well recall the occasion and the annoyance that existed at that time.

I also remember being at Tarcoola when Gough Whitlam blew the side out of a hill—it was not with hot air but explosives—in about 1973 when construction of the Tarcoola to Alice Springs rail line commenced. That massive project was built ahead of schedule and well inside budget. The great disappointment to many of us who attended the opening in Alice Springs was why the line was stopping—why was the line not continuing on? I understand that the first 30 or 40 kilometres of survey from Alice Springs had already been carried out—it was all ready to go. I believe that the well-known railway engineer, Mr Smith, was involved in that project and his team was all ready to proceed; however, nothing happened.

Ms Breuer interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: If the honourable member does not want to listen she does not have to stay.

Ms Breuer interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: You do not have to stay.

Ms Breuer interjecting:

Mr Venning: It was a compliment, Gunny.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: A compliment? I did not think I got many compliments in this place because I am normally easily put off; I am also shy and retiring! I understand the honourable member's interest: this is very important to her constituency. It is also important to mine because, obviously, it will provide a great deal of work to those people at Clyde Engineering in Port Augusta in terms of servicing all the extra rail traffic which will, no doubt, be passing through Port Augusta. I would like to see one other rail project completed at the same time as this project commences, and that is the extension of the Pitchi Richi rail line from Stirling North into the old railway station at Port Augusta.

If we had those two projects we would have not only a large national project that will bring great benefits to the people of this country but also one of the great tourist train journeys in the world, and I look forward to that particular project being completed. This is one project where governments sometimes must spend public funds even though, in the short term, there may not be a great return for the government. It is the role of government, in my view, to provide resources, after proper consideration, for projects which would not be constructed by private enterprise unless the government got involved. This is one such project and I have no trouble with the taxpayers being asked to make a contribution.

My understanding is that, after 50 years, the railway line will revert to joint ownership of the Northern Territory and South Australian governments. In the long term, therefore, the investment is protected and will become a valuable asset. The constituents of the member for Giles will produce the high quality railway line that is necessary and, obviously, it will be necessary to produce railway lines for a long time into the future as they continually wear out.

Further, I am aware that there has been a very high cost to the Australian taxpayers in relation to our involvement in East Timor, particularly delivering supplies, mainly fuel, to Darwin. This project will greatly assist us because I am of the view that we will be in that part of the world for a long time to come. I well recall attending a public meeting in the town hall some years ago when Paul Everingham was the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory. He made an impassioned speech on this matter. At the same time, of course, he was endeavouring to get the road sealed from Port Augusta to Alice Springs.

The former Mayor of Alice Springs, who is now one of my constituents at Wirrabara, reminded me of the occasion a couple of weeks ago. On that occasion Paul Everingham was handing out bookends which were actually little bits of the old railway line located south of Darwin. I still have them as a memento.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes. I am sure that Mr Everingham will be very pleased about what has taken place because he did work very hard towards that particular project. I can also say that, just before the last state election, the Premier gave me the privilege of witnessing the agreement between Mr Stone and himself, which was countersigned by Her Worship the Mayor of Port Augusta. I have a photo of that rather unique occasion hanging in my office at Port Augusta,

so I am pleased to have made a very small contribution in relation to this project.

I am looking forward to attending the ceremony in Alice Springs when the first sod is turned as it will be a great occasion not only for South Australia but for the nation as a whole. As I said a couple of days ago, I was very disappointed with the mean and miserable attitude that has been displayed by certain sections of the media in eastern Australia, particularly the recent editorial in the *Weekend Australia*, which cast considerable doubt on this project. I thought that it was not only uncalled for but grossly inaccurate and unfair. It would appear that all large development projects should take place on the eastern seaboard. As a federation I believe that we are all entitled to an equal share of resources. As I say, I thought that that sort of comment was uncalled for.

I am very pleased that the Prime Minister showed great leadership in committing the commonwealth to the extra funds and ignored the pressure which those newspapers and their friends attempted to impose on him in terms of pouring cold water on the project. I look forward to the project's proceeding as rapidly as possible.

I commend the Premier and all those who assisted him on bringing it to a conclusion. It is really a very historic occasion for the people of this state and for this parliament. Having been promised the railway in 1911, I sincerely hope that it does not take us that long to realise other promises. All those who have been associated with the project deserve a great deal of credit. I commend the Premier and the government for their involvement, and I support the bill.

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Mr Speaker, \$150 million is a lot of money in regional development terms in South Australia. I expect that the South Australian government plans to get a great deal of return from its \$150 million investment in the Alice Springs to Darwin railway. In that respect, I certainly welcome the Partners in Rail project which will assist industries in South Australia to get the maximum return from work available from that Alice Springs to Darwin railway. Indeed, it is absolutely essential that that project proceed in order to ensure that the Upper Spencer Gulf region benefits as much as possible from this huge commitment in funds as, indeed, might other companies in South Australia.

Of course, the railway will be built in the Northern Territory rather than in South Australia. This commitment of funds is an important issue when it is considered that this railway will be built in the Northern Territory and will greatly advantage the port of Darwin rather than necessarily the port of Port Adelaide or the trucking interests in South Australia. Given that we, rather than the commonwealth government, are making this huge commitment, it is appropriate that a little extra money be spent on something like the Partners in Rail project to ensure that South Australia benefits to the maximum extent from this investment.

I understand from the Premier's statement that the regional development boards and the councils in the Spencer Gulf area will be included in reference groups regarding this project. I think that is essential. Those groups in the Upper Spencer Gulf have shown a great commitment to this project and to enhancing their area, but I will leave further development of that theme to my colleague the member for Giles who, of course, knows far more about it than do I, being on the ground herself and part of that community.

I reiterate my concerns that this is a substantial investment by the South Australian government. The Premier has said

that it will bring about a return in the order of \$250 million to \$600 million over a 25 year period. We do not have the details of that costing. I presume that the modelling for that has been good. I certainly hope that this project is successful and does produce those returns to South Australia alone. I would be interested to know, if the project does not succeed to that extent, what liability the South Australian government might have if the consortium running the Alice Springs to Darwin project is not successful in ongoing terms and what liability devolves upon the South Australian and Northern Territory governments in that event.

I reiterate the leader's concern that the federal government has not been more enthusiastic about this project and has not committed the funds required to make absolutely certain that this important infrastructure project has sufficient funds not only to build the basic infrastructure but also to make sure that as a business prospect it has sufficient start up capital to ensure that it develops the business over those critical first few years. Certainly, there is no doubt that other freight industries will be very competitive with this rail industry. The shipping industries advise me that they are confident that their shipping freights will still be competitive with the railway, and of course the road freight companies will fight hard to retain their share of the business.

So, it is very important not only that there are sufficient funds to ensure the laying of the tracks and sufficient handling facilities in the port of Darwin but also that there is sufficient start up capital for the company which must weather those first few critical years in ensuring that the freight captured by this company is in sufficient quantities to make the Alice Springs to Darwin railway viable. That being said, I certainly hope that the railway will provide an additional impetus for developments in the Gawler Craton and other industries in the Upper Spencer Gulf, as has been mooted, and that this freight track and the facilities and industry that will come with it will give that added impetus to the mining and manufacturing industries in the north of our state as well as to the tourism industries and infrastructure in general. I am certainly optimistic in relation to those developments and hope that the Alice Springs to Darwin railway infrastructure will provide the promised economic benefits both to South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): It is a very proud moment indeed that we are here tonight debating this Bill, because it has been going to happen for almost 100 years. After all these years, it will finally happen. I always think that seeing is believing but, as far as legislation decisions are concerned, so far this is the green light. I will be there when, hopefully, they turn the first sod. This government will deliver the goods as it has done with so many other projects. This government is getting a reputation for delivering the goods, that is, long-term projects which we have talked about for generations but which have never come to fruition. Suddenly, in a matter of one term of a government, things are actually happening.

I remind members of various projects, such as the Mount Lofty summit, clean water for the Barossa, the Gomersal Road and cheap and reliable communications for all people in our isolated areas via the new computer links. Of course, I should always mention the Morgan to Burra Road, another 60 year project which has actually happened in the term of this government.

I do believe in miracles, but more so in good, solid government to deliver the goods. I thank the Premier for his personal involvement in this project. He has worked tirelessly

to achieve this result, and future generations for many years will be thankful for his magnificent stewardship and his perseverance on this major state and national initiative. It is a substantial victory against the doubting Thomas's, particularly those from Victoria and New South Wales, who threw up everything else as alternatives to this project; but, at last, we win.

I thank the Northern Territory Chief Minister, but in particular the previous Chief Minister (Hon. Shane Stone), who, along with our Premier, was one of the original movers and shakers of the project. I also thank the Chief Minister before him (Hon. Marshall Perron), who had a lot to do with setting this up, and also the Hon. Barry Coulter, who at that time was the minister responsible for the railway in the Northern Territory, the 'railway' being this one in the territory but only on a plan, not on the ground. He did a very good job, and I have heard him lecture many times on this subject.

Last, but not least, I want to thank the Prime Minister who, although he took some convincing, did realise that the project has real merit and enormous benefits to the whole country, and came to the party to allow the project to proceed. It says a lot for his debating skills, because I know that he had some powerful cabinet members to convince in relation to the value of this project. He obviously did so; he has won the day and Australia wins a magnificent asset.

I have never needed any convincing on this railway line. I have been an advocate of rail as a means of long term viable transport for years. Members of this House would know that has always been the case. I want to tell a little secret as to why that is. The long term members would know that many years ago, when my father was a member in this House, they put a new railway line right through the middle of our farm. At the time it was catastrophic. But we were told by the various boffins that this would be a major railway line—and the Deputy Premier would know this—and that this would make the Mid North of our state, and we as a family should not stand in the way of this railway line going through the middle of the property, as it was proposed.

Ever since then I have served on council and in other areas and have promoted railways, hoping that one day these people would be proved correct, because they have not been up to date. If this comes about, I can say they were right and I am pleased and not quite so sore about their putting a railway line right through what is probably the best land in the Mid North—and I am not biased! That is the reason I have been very strongly promoting railways because I wanted to see that promise of so long ago come true, and it looks as if it might.

I have made many speeches in this place on rail issues, as members know. In 1995, I spoke at the annual conference of the Country Liberal Party in Alice Springs, at Lassiters Casino to be precise, on 25, 26 and 27 August. It was the first Stone ministry which held the party conference in Alice Springs, and I was invited to speak on the Adelaide to Darwin railway line: the proposals—a pipe dream or reality. I did so, and I was certainly made very welcome. I remember that with great fondness, and I made many friends there with whom I have kept in touch.

Adelaide will become the national freight centre of the nation, and we have discussed this issue in the ERD Committee and in the report which we tabled a few weeks ago. If the eastern states see the merit in this and put the intermodal transfer stations at Parkes, all the freight from southern Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria would come up

to Parkes and then down through Broken Hill, South Australia and out through the top. Likewise, an intermodal on the Western Australia side at Tarcoola would do the same thing, so certainly this will be a natural funnel. There will be an enormous amount of freight moving through this city, heading north for export to Asia and neighbouring countries.

This afternoon the member for Hammond made a speech in relation to that ERD report and talked about a concept design of a rail project that was to by-pass Adelaide, therefore going around the Adelaide Hills. That proposal has been raised many times with me, because it goes through a large part of my electorate, through Sedan, Cambrai and related areas. It may have merit, but politically it would be very difficult. I noted his comments and we may see some development in that respect in the future, depending how much the Darwin railway catches on and how dependent we become upon it.

Asia has had its economic problems but there are positive signs that they are pulling out of those. The beauty is that this railway will come on stream just at the right time to take advantage of the Asian resurgence. Another benefit is that freight will be exported at a far quicker rate. Ships are not always in the port of Adelaide and, if they are in port, they are not necessarily going the right way. Now the new fast freighter catamarans working out of Darwin will be able to move types of freight far more quickly than we have experienced. We were visitors to Tasmania and guests of Incat just a few weeks ago. It is an amazing Australian-built craft, and these will have a large part to play in the new fast freight, realising these seas are shallower and usually fairly calm. They are great seas for these very fast catamarans with a shallow draft to ply. We will see movements we have not seen before, particularly from Darwin and Nagoya in Japan.

Just looking at the map which I picked up at the Alice Springs conference, it brings into range very quickly within three days places such as Ngoya (Japan), Seoul, Beijing, Taipei, Hong Kong, Hanoi, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta and Port Moresby. That list is awesome when you consider the populations of those countries. Those places are within three sailing days of Darwin. When you see that, and work out the potential of it, it is awesome to say the least. Inside Australia, the towns and potential areas for development along this line will receive a huge boost. I remember talking with people at Tennant Creek. It is amazing how that centre will come alive when a railway like this goes through. It is a bit of a sleepy hollow, a marvellous little town, but its residents will not believe their luck when this line comes past.

Many areas will receive a huge boost, particularly the Lake Phillipson coal, iron and steel projects. This will be a tremendous fillip for such projects. It will open up all those far northern regions that have been inaccessible because of the remoteness of that area. There is a huge potential for central Australia to become a valuable and viable producer for the country. Economic spinoffs in Adelaide will be huge, as has been mentioned already in the various speeches, with the tremendous infrastructure that is involved with cement and steel. I heard the other day off the record—and I am now putting it on the record—that some of the tradesmen who will be required to lay track are looking to do some practice work, and I am happy to offer them the line between Angaston and Nuriootpa on which to practise. When they tender, they will need to get it right, and they will have to have trained teams in place.

Certainly, the spinoffs will crop up everywhere. It will affect most people in this state one way or another. All those small businesses, supporting the infrastructure, not only during the development and building stage but once it is up and running, will go on for a long time. The benefits will be truly enormous. There is also the gas pipeline that the Premier intimated a couple of days ago could run down from the Timor Sea.

Then there is the Ord River pipeline that we have talked about, which has been a dream for most people. But with this government, dreams have a habit of coming true. It is obviously a long way off, but if we keep talking about projects like this I believe in the end that that dream will come true. As technology advances, as we get the capacity of solar power and long storage batteries to drive the pumps, this could become a viable option. To get all that water in the northwest of the Ord River (and I was there only five weeks ago) could solve many of our problems, not only here in South Australia but inland as well. There is water to spare; we just have to get it here. I certainly look forward to that.

With the optimism that is about with the announcement of this railway line, projects like this could actually become a reality. We must lay the ground work now for our future generations, and with the technology they will develop them. This could well become the greatest train journey in the world and be a fantastic fillip for tourism. Starting at Darwin, this could be the great Ghan train trip down through the centre of one of the largest continents on earth. The world is full of train buffs. They are on every continent. Everyone loves a train ride. This one has to rank with the best in the world. It would be an experience, not just a means of transport.

This would be the closest link to one of the most heavily populated regions in the world. Darwin could well become the front door of Australia, not only boosting enormously our economy, but also being a vital link to our defence forces. Visitors will start in Darwin and then travel to Ayers Rock, which is Australia's icon, and then down to Adelaide and, of course, to the Barossa (not being biased). Certainly, there is fantastic potential in this.

This is a credit to many people. Again I pay the highest tribute to the Premier. He has battled through thick and thin. It has been very difficult, and this must be a tremendous personal reward for him. Long into the future we will remember the battles he has had and I hope he will be on the first train to Darwin. Certainly it is a historic moment, and as a rail buff it is certainly the highlight of my time here in this parliament. With every other member of this House, I wish the APT consortia all the best with the venture. It is a 100 year old project come to life now and it is a very strategic infrastructure project for our state. I also note that some very significant South Australian companies are involved in the consortia, and I wish them all the best too. Certainly, it is a great day and I support the bill.

Ms BREUER (Giles): I am certainly delighted to speak to this bill tonight. Of course, the subject is very dear to my heart. Unfortunately, I am not as old as the member for Stuart—I do not think anyone is—and I am not able to go as far back in history as he can on this issue. My commitment and involvement go back to the early 1990s when Whyalla hosted a special conference at the Middleback Theatre attended by members of state, federal and local government who had a major interest in this railway. Then Mayor Russell Reid was a passionate advocate for the railway and we spent

many hours in council negotiating, talking to people and trying to create interest throughout Australia for this project.

It will be very good for the people of regional Australia. It will create jobs, services will need to be provided and there is the opportunity, I believe, for real tangible benefits for that part of the state. I want to pay particular tribute to the Leader of the Opposition for his role in this decision. Mike Rann has been a very regular visitor to my electorate for many years and on every occasion he has been there he has urged governments of the day to enable this railway to go ahead because of its importance to regional Australia. He certainly issued many press releases on this matter. I have a very thick file of press releases which go back many years. I believe that he was able to generate a major awareness in the media of the importance of this railway to our communities and I think he kept it on the boil for many years, so I genuinely thank the Leader of the Opposition for his role in this matter. I believe he has a real understanding of what is required in regional Australia in relation to jobs.

However, I do not want this government and the Premier to believe that this railway is the answer to all our problems in Whyalla. I have a great fear that the people of Whyalla are to be ignored by both the federal and state governments because of this wonderful announcement. Unfortunately, when I am listening to some of our civic leaders in Whyalla, I am often reminded of that wonderful scene from the Monty Python film, *Life of Brian*, where a group of people is strung up on crosses waiting to be crucified and as they hang from the crosses they are singing, *Always look on the bright side of life*.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Ms BREUER: This situation occurs regularly in Whyalla. The Mayor of Whyalla has been very positive over the announcement by BHP to sell BHP Long Products, and then he was positively ecstatic about the railway decision. He has been very much supported in this by Barbara Derham, Chair of the Flinders Area Consultative Committee. I envy their optimism, but these people have continued to show this optimism over and over again. We have to face up to the realities of our situation in Whyalla, and it concerns me that we get so caught up with enthusiasm for projects that we forget where we are really at.

It will be very good for Whyalla, but it will not solve our problems in the long term. I urge the Premier to keep this in mind and to keep telling the Prime Minister that it is not the answer to Whyalla's problems. It will help—

Mr Venning: This government delivers.

Ms BREUER: We are talking about a community of 24 000 people in Whyalla and, if BHP failed to sell BHP Long Products, I have a fear that in three or four years' time it will walk away and our community will die. I have a transcript of an email which was sent to all BHP mail users and which was to be passed on to other workers and employees in BHP. It states:

BHP steel-transitional management structure.

For the non-core businesses, the major changes involve combining BHP Long Products, Tubemakers. . .

We are no longer core business of BHP and this concerns me. I believe that both the state and federal governments must pressure BHP to give a long-term guarantee to Whyalla that the plant will not be closed down if there is no buyer for the division. The state and federal governments must look at other assistance for our region also, and perhaps revisit the steel assistance plans of the 1980s.

The rail decision has wrongly given people the impression that Whyalla and the rest of the Spencer Gulf region will be all right now and that all our problems are now solved, but that is not the case. The order for BHP steel—and I agree that it is the biggest single order that the company will ever get—is only for a short term. It is not a guarantee for a new buyer of long-term work.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Ms BREUER: It is a lot of steel and I am very pleased that we have that order, but it is not the long-term answer. We are looking at perhaps two years, and that concerns me. People will forget about us and think that Whyalla is okay now, but we still need support from our state and federal governments. Other problems will not be solved by this ribbon of steel. Indeed, it makes the prospect of things such as the steel mill proposed using the Coober Pedy deposits most unlikely, because why would they build a mill at Whyalla when there is a railway next door and you can cart your products? Why would they not build it in Darwin? Those sorts of things are of concern and we have to be very careful that we still get our fair share of what happens in that area.

While the order will certainly help BHP and the construction phase will mean new jobs for our people and orders for local firms in our region, the government must help us to ensure that BHP gives the best deal possible to the new buyers of BHP Long Products division. We must also work with the federal government to ensure that we are given maximum assistance through federal and state intervention. Maybe we need to look at enterprise zones or other measures, but it is essential that we get the same deals that have been offered to BHP companies and to people in the eastern states. I have concerns that they forget about us here, while in the eastern states they are much more efficient at lobbying and therefore are able to get better deals for their areas. We must not be put aside and forgotten about. It is absolutely essential that the message gets through to people that, while we very much welcome this railway, it will not cure all our ills.

Before concluding tonight, I put in a request for the people of Coober Pedy. The current railway line bypasses Coober Pedy by about 30 to 40 kilometres. Tourists or residents who catch the train to Alice Springs can stop off at Coober Pedy, but they actually disembark about 30 kilometres out of the town, usually at night. They have to make arrangements to travel into the town. It is an isolated spot and, if no-one is there to greet them, they are in real trouble. Coober Pedy thrives on tourism, and I would urge the Premier and the Minister for Tourism (who are both here) to urge the consortium to look at building a branch off the main railway line and into the township because this would greatly benefit the township of Coober Pedy.

Certainly, we are expecting this to be one of the great tourism tracks of the world. Last year I travelled to Perth on the Indian Pacific because it goes through my electorate and I wanted to see what it was all about and to travel through the area on the train. A chap was on the train who had flown in from Canada; he got off the aeroplane, got onto the Indian Pacific, travelled from Sydney to Perth, and when he got into Perth he was catching an aeroplane that night back to Canada. He had travelled on the train purely because it was a great train ride. The possibility of train rides across to Perth and up to Darwin is an incredible prospect for tourism. So, if we can get this branch into Coober Pedy it will be make it so much easier; tourists can stop off there, have a look around for a couple of days and then move on again. I hope that the

Premier and the Minister for Tourism hear this plea and keep it in mind.

Finally, I thank the Premier for his role in getting this railway. He must be very proud to be the Premier of this state now that this great announcement has been made because there has been a history of promises and hopes in the last 100 years, but he was able to make it happen. I sincerely congratulate him on this and I thank him on behalf of the people in our region.

I hope this railway means that all our hopes will be realised and that it provides the impetus we need in our region to get new industries there, to get people working and to provide confidence to people in our region that we have not been forgotten, that there is a future for us and that we do not have to pack our bags and move down to the city.

Mr McEWEN (Gordon): I think all South Australians applaud the work that has gone into what is now going to come to fruition after something like 100 years, that is, the final stage of the Adelaide-Darwin railway line. We are investing in our collective future, and that is what it is. We must not look at this in the short term: we must take a long-term view. This is about our collective future which means that, when dealing with the detail of the bill tonight, we must look beyond the construction phase and, when we look at the extent of the financial commitments, we must look to the guarantees long term, not just the guarantees in the construction phase. I will be looking to the Premier a bit later in the evening to expand on what is contained in clause 6, particularly paragraphs (c), (d) and (e), in terms of what could be long-term financial commitments by the state to what in effect will be private enterprise.

More importantly, we must remind ourselves that charity begins at home. South Australian taxpayers' dollars are being used to build something in another state as a means to an end. The end is to give to all South Australians access to a north-south rail corridor. The important thing is that it is for all South Australians. Taxpayers from across South Australia will be collectively contributing to the funding, and that is why I go to the Environment, Resources and Development Committee's 35th report titled 'Rail Links with the Eastern States', and remind the member for Schubert that he now has a major challenge on his hands. He as the Presiding Member of that committee must see that those committee recommendations are brought to fruition because, without them, there will be a lot of sad South Australians. We are going to rely on the Chairman of that committee to see that he argues this committee report and its recommendations, three of them in particular.

The committee recommended that funding be provided for the improvement of railway lines through the Adelaide Hills, with particular emphasis on reducing cross-looping, minimising curves and increasing the height of the tunnels. They are all important in terms of through movement of freight. More importantly though—and this is where the people of the South-East will have a particular eye on the member for Schubert to see that he champions our cause, as he must as Chairman of this committee—

Mr Venning: I will.

Mr McEWEN: I am delighted to hear that he will do so because the big one is that the committee recommended the standardisation of the railway line linking Mount Gambier to Wolseley, Heywood and Millicent. It is imperative that, as part of this project and not at some later date, we seek a commitment to put into effect that recommendation; other-

wise, we will be locked out of this asset. People of the South-East who are funding this asset will be locked out of the opportunity. We must standardise that broad gauge rail link now. It is a commitment that we must follow through, and we will certainly look to the member for Schubert and his committee to support us in that regard.

Mr Venning: Hear, hear!

Mr McEWEN: I am pleased to hear him say that because without it we are not part of the long-term vision: we are not part of it beyond the construction phase. We are happy during the construction phase to sit back and acknowledge that, although our dollars are being spent, there will not be much immediate economic activity in the South-East. We accept that and we are delighted to hear what this will mean in the short term for Whyalla and in terms of creating jobs. We are delighted to reflect on what it will mean in the construction phase, but the real investment is in creating long-term opportunities for all South Australians, and we will be very saddened if we are denied the opportunity and do not get a commitment here and now that we in the South-East will be part of the opportunity. As part of this process, we expect to get a commitment to standardise particularly the Mount Gambier-Wolseley component of the infrastructure so that we are part of the vision. Our dollars are being used; we want to be part of the vision; and we want to be part of the vision now.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): The purpose of my remarks is not so much to applaud what has already been said by others, although that deserves applause because as far as I understand it not one member in this place does not see and has not spoken of the enormous benefits that will accrue to Australia as a nation and to South Australia as part of that nation in consequence of taking the decision at this time.

The bill as it comes before us is to ensure that there are adequate funds from the public domain (that is, the taxpayers' purse) to ensure that the project goes ahead expeditiously and that from day one the proponents of it, the successful bidders, will know that it will be viable for them. I suspect that they were aware, and perhaps did not acknowledge it, that they will do much better than they have argued and that in consequence they will be very pleased, and properly so, by virtue of the fact that they have succeeded. Not only will they succeed but also we will succeed.

The Premier in particular, as the leader of the team that negotiated this final deal, and the people who assisted him in this measure (and I do not know who they are) deserve commendation for what they have done in achieving it. There is no question about the fact that we have waited almost 100 years to get what we need, but we have now got it. We would not have got it if we did not have someone controlling the process who could see what a reasonable outcome it represented. The Premier and the whole negotiating team have been more than generous to the proponents in providing this additional guarantee.

The clever part about the guarantee is that it cannot be called up (for the additional \$25 million) unless there is some shortfall later on. I have no doubt that there will be no shortfall in the revenue that is generated, given the thousands upon thousands of tonnes that can be carried from southern Australia on this railway to Harbour East in Darwin for dispatch to our near north in East Asia—to those markets that will grow more rapidly than any markets any time in the history of human civilisation.

As part of my argument in support of that proposition, let me say that we are in a part of the world that has an ideal climate for the production of high vitamin concentrate foods, that is, fresh vegetables or other fresh food. We do not need to preserve it. We can produce what people need in a diet which they enjoy all year around, and there is no question that the things they are accustomed to getting in the Northern Hemisphere during their summer and autumn we will be able to provide to them in the off-season. They will get this fresh food at prices which a greater percentage by far will be able to afford than is otherwise possible. It will be at prices which will generate thousands upon tens of thousands of jobs for us.

There really is no reason why there needs to be any unemployment in Australia from this point forward. We do not have to reduce wages and disposable incomes to achieve that now that we have this rail link. The reduction in freight costs of getting perishable goods from southern Australian producers on this rail link to Darwin's Harbour East and then on wave-piercing catamarans with capacities of 10 000 tonnes and more that can travel at 45 knots into harbours in Seoul and Nagoya in the first instance, and then into China or anywhere else in the whole region that is willing and wishes to pay for them, will bring the freight costs of those perishable foods, which are presently bearing the costs of air freight into that region and its markets, way down to a fraction of what they are now.

The Hon. J.W. Olsen interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: I am pleased to have the Premier confirm my understanding of that point. All air freight between now and any time around Christmas/new year is booked. So, if you have stuff to sell in East Asia and it is perishable or semi-perishable, there is no chance you will be able to get it onto the existing freight services out of Adelaide into the marketplace, anyway. It is, if you needed it, a sign of the fact that the market exists—even at these prices—and that the capacity to produce and deliver is there. I have said that ever since I graduated from Roseworthy (and it is well known now). After a few short years, I became a self-employed, full-time advanced, intensive horticulture producer on broad acres, after having introduced the irrigation technology necessary to make that possible, as well as pioneered the use of plastic mulch film and slow release fertilisers in this continent. All those things mean that it is now not just a few hundred million dollars at the margins. We are now talking about billions of dollars of additional export income which can be derived from utilising this linkage between the production areas in the cool/temperate and temperate—the mild maritime climate areas of Australia—into that huge market which, as its regional economies grow, will most certainly expand demand for what we have to offer. There is no question at all about that.

I have no difficulty with the call made by the member for Gordon for the standardisation of the rail links between Serviceton, Naracoorte through to Mount Gambier and even maybe across to Millicent, if that is what is seen as viable. I would say to the members for Gordon and McKillop that it may well also result in the standardisation of the track from Naracoorte to Kingston, if the quantity of horticultural products that can be collected along the way warrants it. The test for that is not whether the government is willing to put up the cash but whether it is seen to be viable by companies such as Australian Southern Rail, to do the standardisation which will provide access to the freight that can be generated from the horticultural production that would then be undertaken economically and profitably in those localities.

It is more than just horticultural production. There is fresh meat, as well as a good many other commodities which at present do not have adequate competition between road transport freighters which service the area overall. They cannot make it happen in a way which will enable bulk production to come out of that area at anything like the capacity which the area has to produce it. It is only commodities at the higher value end of the marketplace such as in cut flowers and some of the higher value per kilogram commodities that can be carried by road out of that area to airports and freighted into those markets.

So, I do not have a problem with that. I would back that any day. I would back any indenture bill the member for Gordon might wish to bring in here—or, indeed, the member for Schubert, if he is worth half his salt as chairman of the committee. In fact, the member for Gordon has challenged him to see that through, to do the lobbying to ensure that people understand how to provide the service. I would encourage any bid to do so. I know the Premier and the rest of the cabinet will be willing to provide access to or, indeed, a transfer of that infrastructure on a long-term lease to anyone who wishes to operate it.

When I first heard of the success of the bid and that we would then have a consortium building the Alice Springs to Darwin link, I was compelled to comment upon the need immediately to prepare and construct the bypass of the Adelaide Hills section of the track between Murray Bridge and Adelaide. I have mentioned this in the context of an earlier debate this day, but I now elaborate in some measure upon it. We do not really need to do as the member for Gordon has suggested and, indeed, the Environment, Resources and Development Committee has recommended—to spend millions upon millions of dollars realigning the track through the Adelaide Hills from Callington up over Mount Barker junction and Balhannah, and then down through the tunnels and the sharp curves and badly cambered track through Clapham and into Adelaide. The speed at which trains can travel along that track, even if we manage to realign it in part, will still be so slow as to be a severe restriction on the ability of trains to rapidly get produce out of south-eastern South Australia and Western Victoria into Harbor East, Darwin to take advantage of the new technology that is available through the wave piercing 10 000 tonne plus catamarans that can travel at more than 40 knots. At present, we know from wave tank experimentation that they will travel successfully at more than 45 knots. We can construct them now, if we wish to, with a capacity to carry around 14 500 to 15 000 tonnes each. I do not know what that would be in terms of equivalents in passengers. I will come to that later.

I want to make the point that we ought not to be too concerned to do much work on the track between Callington and Adelaide. I urge the Premier to go into the world marketplace and see whether he can find someone willing to build, own and maintain a track between, say, Murray Bridge and Balaclava, or wherever it is that the connection is made north of Adelaide. No doubt that track has to cross the Mount Lofty Ranges. It should do so where the elevation above sea level is a mere 200 metres or so instead of being in the order of 500 metres such as at present, where the track has to come up through Mount Barker junction from Murray Bridge, onto Balhannah, and then down the western slopes. Those gradients are too steep. The radius on the curves is too sharp, the tunnels too low and the camber on those curves is so bad that you will never be able to properly fix it in a fashion that

is in any way economically competitive with the alternative investment of capital in taking the trains through what the geologists call the Kapunda gap, where the elevation above sea level is only a matter of a couple of hundred metres.

Every train that will run on this track will be 2 000 tonnes plus. Why heave that weight of freight four times a day up over the top of a saddle at Mount Barker junction and Balhannah when you can save the greenhouse gas emissions that it costs to do that, by taking it through the Kapunda gap and on successfully through to Darwin Harbor much more quickly than will otherwise be possible if you try to fix up that antiquated route through the Hills?

The other benefit in doing it, of course, is that the residents of the Hills—increasing in number as they are every month—find it very unpleasant, to say the least, to have to put up with the increased grunt that the three high powered locomotives now connected to those long trains make to lift that freight over that barrier. If you live anywhere within a few kilometres of the railway line, in some of the valleys there, on calm nights when the inversion layer is in place 20 to 50 metres above the landscape, the sound bounces back off the inversion layer along the valley for some considerable distance without being dissipated in the way in which it is normally if there is no inversion layer in place—which I think is inversely proportional to the cube of the distance—and awakens and annoys them.

Do not bother with the noise pollution, the slow down or the inefficient use of fuel: bypass it. Put a marshalling yard and a freight breakdown yard in the Murray Bridge locality—whether it is at Murray Bridge or Monarto is no fuss to me. I speak not so much as the member for Hammond, I suppose, but as someone who has an interest in engineering and doing things efficiently to save money. We will then find that the capacity for horticultural production and other perishable foods which can be produced in greater quantity in areas west of Melbourne will increase dramatically, along with the increase in production that will occur in South Australia to meet those markets, because the cost of getting the product into the customer's hands will come down so much that demand will increase not by 20 per cent, not by 50 per cent, not by 100 per cent but by several orders of magnitude—it will be tenfold plus.

Anything between 10 to 100 times as much as we can sell now, relying upon air freight, will be possible once we have rail freight to Darwin Harbour East and catamaran freight out of Harbour East into those Asian markets. It is simply a matter of supply and demand. It will mean that the price required of the end consumer will come down through the effect of competition to the point where demand in volume terms—in the tonnage that we can sell—will go up exponentially. That is what excites and delights me.

The other benefit of avoiding going through the Hills is that we will be able to double stack on the flat tops the containers that have this freight in them, which we cannot do, and will never be able to do, because the tunnels in the Adelaide Hills will never allow it: the clearance is not there. The money we would spend to retunnel that line to make that possible will be far more than the money we would have to spend to build the line from Murray Bridge through the Kapunda gap to Balaklava, or wherever we rejoin the line on the northern track out of Adelaide. My plea to the Premier is to get that idea bedded down quickly before, as I fear, the eastern states financial mafia start to attack it.

The last thing I want to say is that, as members of this parliament in the state of South Australia—whether we are

Independents, Liberal, Labor, National or anything else—our resolve must be to prevent the nonsense of the argument of a railway from Melbourne across the Murray Valley, across the Darling Valley and across the area of the north-eastern tributaries of the Lake Eyre Basin to ever be advanced as a viable alternative. That is piffle. The high cost per kilometre of building the culverts, causeways and bridges rules it out. It is not just 50 per cent dearer; it is, again, several orders greater in the cost of trying to construct a railway line through that country. That would be regrettable, and I do not ever want to see that happen.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I do not intend to speak for overly long tonight on this bill, but—

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: The member for Schubert clearly has friends in the gallery whom he is attempting to impress. This is a serious issue. I rise tonight to talk on this bill, but I must declare an immediate interest in this piece of legislation. I am the member for the port of Adelaide, and I think that there are issues involving the Alice Springs to Darwin railway that need to be canvassed here tonight. That is not to say that we are not supportive of the railroad. As my leader has indicated, of course, we are—

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: Sorry?

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: Not at all. As my leader has said, as a party we are supportive of this project. However, I have a port in my electorate, and there are issues about which I would like to question the Premier, quite legitimately, when we go into committee, because I think that the future of my port and the workers and the future strategic role for the port of Adelaide, in the new freight landscape of South Australia and Australia, is a very important issue.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: No, we did not want the ship breaking and we have not got the ship breaking—and good luck to those who may wish to get the ship breaking.

Ms Breuer interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: Whyalla is competing with Lahore.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: Karachi perhaps. I just flag the fact that I would like to ask some constructive questions of the Premier. I do not want to be at all critical: I simply want to know where the Premier sees the port of Adelaide fitting into his future plans for freight in our country. I know that the Premier has a deep affection for Outer Harbor and Pelican Point—it is a wonder that he does not want us to build a train engine construction factory at Pelican Point and some bogey construction facilities, and perhaps there could be a steel mill there. No doubt, the Premier has some thoughts on that. Anyway, that is a bit flippant.

Another issue that concerns the opposition—and I hope the Premier will again take this in the spirit in which it is meant—is what would appear, on first reading of the legislation, to be some potentially open-ended issues when it comes to financial liability. I acknowledge that the Premier has committed a further \$25 million to the project, with a further potential \$25 million on top of that. I understand that that will be paid for by a government in four years' time. How generous of him to commit a future government to that. However, I can understand why he has done that for the strategic interests of the state, and it will be for future governments to budget that.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I am sure you would not. Equally, I am quite happy to find a place for that in a future budget for which I am responsible. However, what concerns me, quite honestly, are some of the new clauses. New section 6 is headed 'Extent of financial commitment', and it provides:

The minister is authorised, on behalf of the state—

what is in brackets, of course, is something that we need to be conscious of—

(and despite anything previously contained in the preliminary agreement)—

and it talks about making funds available. It then provides:

(b) to give a guarantee or guarantees of any debt incurred in connection with the authorised project up to a principal amount of \$25 million. . .

I understand that. Then we move on to some sections that do concern me, and I hope that the Premier can give me some answers. New section 6(c) provides:

To give a guarantee or guarantees in connection with the performance by the AustralAsia Railway Corporation of its obligations under any contract entered into by it in connection with the authorised project;

Clearly, we are giving guarantees to AustralAsia Railway Corporation which, I understand, is a joint statutory corporation with the Northern Territory and for which I do not think the commonwealth has any liability. I would like some detail on the liabilities involved in that instance. I am concerned about the next paragraphs which provide:

(d) to enter into other contractual obligations for the implementation of the authorised project; and

(e) to pay or contribute to other costs and expenses incurred in connection with the activities of AustralAsia Railway Corporation or the authorised project,

and the money required for these purposes, and for any other purposes associated with the legally enforceable agreement referred to in section 5, and for any other legal obligation that may arise out of a matter referred to in a paragraph appearing above, is to be paid out of the consolidated account. . .

Could the Premier walk us through that, either in his closing contribution or, perhaps, in committee. We need to know what sort of liabilities are there for us into the future. As the opposition shadow Treasurer, I think it only appropriate, and indeed quite legitimate, that in a constructive, bipartisan approach we simply explore what financial liability may be incurred by future governments, be they Labor or, heaven help us, Liberal. We at least need to know the potential liabilities. I flag those few issues. It is a major construction project and one for which there will be many variables, be they weather, or whatever, in terms of construction.

I will be interested to know what contingency has been built into the estimated cost of the project should there be weather problems. It is a large financial commitment. I would be interested to know from the Premier, if we do incur cost overruns, whether the state and territory collect those or whether the private financiers will be required to pay their contribution. Indeed, what discussions have been held with the commonwealth to meet any obligations? The nub of my questioning will be: is there a likelihood that further costs will be incurred by the state of South Australia, particularly given that the bill provides that the minister be given the authority to enter into other contractual obligations following the passing of this bill that will simply have to be picked up by the consolidated account?

I believe they are quite appropriate questions, asked in the true bipartisan spirit that this bill is being dealt with. Equally,

they are questions that need to be answered, and I am sure the Premier can provide those answers which will enable the speedy passage of this legislation.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Local Government): I am glad the member for Hart is on our side. If that is a fulsome endorsement of the project, I have heard better. I rise on this occasion because there are few times, I think, in the life of a parliament when we do something that is likely to be remembered not only by this parliament but by South Australians for many decades to come. This government, I believe, can be very proud of its record. It can be especially proud of its achievements in capital works. We have seen the nearing of the completion of the tunnel through the bottom part of the Mount Lofty Ranges.

We have seen the completion of the extension of the airport runway. We have seen the first stage of the freeway that runs down to the south, and a number of other projects, all of which are very significant capital works. We have also in this parliament seen the agreement of the parliament to lease our electricity assets—again, a most significant matter. It has been a parliament that has had a great deal of significance and has, I think, taken South Australia forward.

I have been privileged over the past 15 months to be Minister for Employment. I said to the leader when I was appointed by the Premier that if I ever was in the unfortunate position of being the minister to preside over the level of unemployment that he did I would offer my resignation. As a result of this government's efforts we have seen every month for the past 15 months the trend for unemployment reducing—again, a significant contribution to this state by this government.

This government deserves much more credit than it is generally accorded in the public. However, having said all that, the bill we are passing tonight is likely to be seen by the people of this state and this nation as one of the most significant bills ever passed by this parliament, by the Northern Territory, and by the commonwealth for its part, because in each period of time, if we are lucky, we see a project that is of national importance.

It was in the 1920s that the transcontinental railway linking the east and the west was finished. The Sydney Harbour Bridge was such a project. But the last project which happened when I was growing up and when people such as the member for Ross Smith, I do not think, were quite—

Mr Clarke: The Great Wall of China, was it?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: No, it wasn't: it was, in fact, the Snowy Mountains Scheme.

Mr Clarke: Ben Chifley?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I do not remember Ben Chifley. It was a great Australian project in which this nation took inordinate pride. It was a huge feat of engineering—an accomplishment in which every Australian before and since has taken pride. Such was the accomplishment of the east-west railway; and such, too, will be the accomplishment of the final link between the north and the south of which this bill marks the completion. It was a promise which was made to this nation when it was newly formed and a promise which has taken a long time to be fulfilled by successive commonwealth governments in this country. It is a promise which now comes to fruition, I would say, because of the leadership of this Premier and because of the leadership—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The member for Peake can scoff but if he can point to anyone else in the country, apart

from the Chief Minister in the Northern Territory, who has been pursuing this matter so assiduously—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am talking about people of consequence—for so long, then I would like to point out—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Let me digress to remind the member for Ross Smith something he should know. Brutus was a very bipartisan person, too, and look what happened to Caesar.

Mr Clarke: He taught you everything you knew.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I knew him as little as I knew Ben Chifley.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: That is entirely cruel. This is an important project for this country. I can remember, as a very young boy, seeing in my grandfather's shed a map that he had brought back from the Second World War. It was in fact a Japanese map of the northern side of Australia and was part of the Japanese plans for the invasion of the north of this continent. I have also done a lot of reading about what was then called the Darwin line. There was a military plan—

Mr Foley: The Brisbane line.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am sorry, the Brisbane line; thank you. I am pleased the member for Hart has at last proved that he knows at least something. It was the Brisbane line; the honourable member is correct. There was a military plan whereby, if necessary, a great proportion of northern Australia was to be abandoned. Luckily for this nation, that policy was never put into place. It would have been better for this nation had that railway line—that important link between north and south—been completed for strategic and military purposes. That was not the case.

It is also true that perhaps one of the reasons it has not been completed was that the country, based as it is on the eastern and south-eastern rims, the more verdant agricultural parts of the nation, has always looked traditionally towards Europe and European markets rather than towards the north. This railway line marks a significant shift in Australian policy to acknowledge that our future, in particular our economic future, as the member for Hammond says, probably lies to the north with the growing markets of our near neighbours. I would therefore like to congratulate the Premier, the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory and the Prime Minister on some initiative and some vision. I think this parliament, and I know—

Mr Clarke: Can't you grovel a bit more?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith will contain himself.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I know that it is after tea, sir, and that we make allowance for some of the members' making light of this, but it is a significant debate which this parliament should indulge in in due gravity, because it is an important and significant decision not only for this parliament but for this nation. It is one of the most significant things that this parliament can do as we approach a new time in our history. What we do here tonight is much more important to the future of this nation than what the Australian nation did in terms of the referendum on Saturday. This is most significant.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The member is wrong: I did not say this about ETSA. This is one of the most significant things that we can do. I conclude by actually giving some praise to the member for Giles. It is rare in this place to hear

a member of the opposition fulsomely praise a government on its achievements. I heard her tonight without qualification praise the government for its achievements on this. I know that I have heard on occasion the Hon. Murray De Laine do similarly. There are too few members in this House who are prepared to stand up and give credit where credit is due. I for one—and it does not matter which side—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I have sat on both sides of the House, as have you, sir, and I do not think it matters which side of the House we sit on, but when somebody has the courage—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: No, I am talking about it in this sense: when somebody has the courage to get up and say honestly that somebody has done a good job, I think everybody in the House appreciates not only the sentiment but the honesty of the people involved. I commend the member for Giles for her words, as in the past I have commended on occasions the Hon. Mr De Laine for his words when he has given credit where it is due. So, credit to the government. I hope this bill has speedy passage through both Houses. I sincerely hope that not long hence we see the economic developments both to Whyalla and to the northern Spencer Gulf towns in terms of the construction but, more importantly, ongoing developments for this nation in terms of a thriving economy for this state in part driven by a new railway.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Mr Speaker—

Mr Clarke: It won't go through Penola.

Mr WILLIAMS: It might well do. The passing of this piece of legislation is a historic occasion for South Australia and is the fruition of what has been a dream of many South Australians and Territorians for a long time. Indeed, some 80-odd years ago, when the Northern Territory was removed from the care and control of the South Australian government and taken over by the federal government, the federal parliament promised that the rail link between Adelaide and Darwin would be completed. As the member opposite said, it is a shame that we have taken so long to bring this project to fruition, because this is a major project. The member for Unley mentioned the Snowy Mountains scheme, and today I believe the Premier referred to an icon project. This certainly is an icon project not just for South Australia but Australia.

I find it incredibly frustrating that our federal government did not choose to apply a much greater proportion of the funding which has been put in out of the taxpayers' purse but chose to stand back and, I believe, bully the South Australian and Northern Territory governments into providing a substantial amount of funding for what should be a commonwealth project from start to finish. We are led to believe that 7 000 jobs will be created. In this day and age when unemployment in this nation is still at about 8 per cent we might conclude that a lot of those 7 000 jobs will be new jobs created in our economy at large and will have some significant effect on the budget bottom line of the federal government. With the savings that the federal government will make on welfare payments during the completion of this project it could have afforded to put more dollars into this project rather than force the very small governments of South Australia and the Northern Territory to put their hands into their very limited pockets and come forth with this amount of funding.

Having said that, I believe it is incumbent upon us to pass this legislation and it is incumbent upon South Australia, having been backed into the corner, as it has been, to find the extra money and to ensure that at this late stage this project does indeed proceed. A lot of work has already been done on this project. Quite a substantial amount of money has already been spent. About 14 or 15 months ago I had the opportunity to travel to Darwin to inspect some of the construction work at the proposed terminus, new port and wharf facilities at Darwin. The people in Darwin were very excited about the completion of this rail link, because they were putting a lot of effort and money into their port facilities and had already committed \$100 million to building a new port somewhat south of the existing port, a port which will handle most ships that traverse our oceans these days.

The wonderful thing that a lot of us do not realise about having a major port in Darwin linked to the rest of the nation through the rail network is the fact that Darwin is substantially closer to a lot of the major capitals of South-East Asia than it is to other capitals in mainland Australia. Most importantly, Darwin is very close by sea to Singapore. Most people who talk about world trade in the future suggest that Singapore will become the most important hub of worldwide trade. Darwin is not very far from Singapore, and this very important rail link will bring Singapore much closer to the rest of Australia.

I have not had the opportunity to listen to the whole debate, so I am not quite sure what has been brought to the attention of the House, but the corridor that has been secured to build the rail link through the Northern Territory is not what we would consider a standard rail corridor perhaps a chain wide. A substantial width of land has been secured so that in the future we can use it for other purposes. There is plenty of land to install road links parallel to the rail. There are also plans so that some time in the future there will be room to build pipelines to pipe water from that part of Australia, because it does have a genuine surplus of high quality water which obviously falls in the monsoon season and runs out into the oceans and seas to the north of our continent.

A lot of forethought has been put into this project. A lot of work has already been done at the Darwin end. A lot of engineering planning has already been done. Once we have tied up the financials and passed this piece of legislation we will be very close to seeing on-ground work occurring. As the Premier suggested, in the early part of next year we will actually be able to proceed with the project. I am one who hopes that that indeed is the time line. Whilst I am referring to the financials, in the committee stage I will have some questions to put to the Premier about some of the guarantees indicated in the bill. At the appropriate time, those questions will be put, and I am sure that other members are just as anxious as me to know what guarantees are being offered and what risks might accrue to the government of South Australia.

I was not able to listen to the member for Gordon's contribution, but I do believe that he referred to rail facilities within South Australia. Of course, we all know that the history of rail in Australia is very sad and sorry. The problem with rail in Australia is that we spent all the money and did all the engineering work in a very parochial fashion in the last century, and ended up with a hotchpotch mishmash of gauges and bogey exchanges, etc., and we have had a very inefficient rail system for most of the history of white settlement in this country. At last we are getting to the point where we will

have a truly national rail grid traversing the length and breadth of this country.

Unfortunately, one of the most productive areas of South Australia which has a rail link running right through the heart of it, from north to south and some spurs at the southern end, is still serviced by a broad gauge rail line which is virtually isolated from the rest of the network, and I am talking about the rail line that runs from Wolseley to Mount Gambier, and then from Mount Gambier west to Snuggery (just short of Millicent) and east to Heywood in Victoria. It would be a crying shame if we did not take the opportunity over the next few years to provide sufficient funds to bring that particular rail line to standard gauge so that once again it could be connected to the rest of the network and this most productive part of our state could proceed to forward its freight via the rail network.

Just to give some idea, because members may be unaware, about 60 per cent of the state's export production is from our rural and regional areas, and about 60 per cent of that production comes out of the South-East of the state. I will give an indication of the volumes of freight which are carted through that part of the state—and the member for Ross Smith has talked about Penola being the centre of the transport hub: the people of Penola have been concerned for a considerable number of years about the amount of freight carried because the main highway runs through the main street of the town. Being a small rural town with just over 3 000 people, they have measured that around 400 heavy vehicles per day travelling through the main street of Penola. That is a substantial amount of freight, and I will acknowledge that some of that freight is local freight and would not get onto the railway anyway. Some of it is local pine logs going back and forth to the saw mills in Mount Gambier, Nangwarry and Tarpeena. But that is a lot of freight that traverses the Riddoch Highway.

I spoke in a different debate today about Bordertown, at the northern end of that rail line. Bordertown, which is just a stone's throw from Wolseley, is quite a transport hub in itself, at the junction of the north-south highway and the east-west highway between Melbourne and Adelaide, and is a very convenient place from which to operate road transport. On my understanding, approximately 200 trucks, including semitrailers and B-doubles, actually call Bordertown their home base and operate out of Bordertown both east and west.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: We are getting to them. One particular operator out of Bordertown tells me that he freights in and out of that part of the South-East 3 000 containers per year. That is approximately eight per day. To be quite honest, one of the reasons why he came to me was that he was having trouble getting them onto the rail at the moment. So, there is great potential in that part of the state to put freight onto the rail. If we go further south—and the member for Ross Smith just reminded me that I have not mentioned Millicent—the standard gauge which ran from Mount Gambier through to—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: They pulled up the line from Millicent to Beachport in 1956, and I do not think that will go back in, but the rail line from Mount Gambier to Millicent was certainly operated to Snuggery, which is just east of Millicent, where the Kimberley-Clark paper and pulp mills are situated. In recent years, the portion of the line that actually ran through the rail yards in the town of Millicent and extended to the west of the town has been removed. The rail has been pulled up. Since then, in the last 12 months, SACBH

has constructed a major grain handling facility to the west of Millicent, and it would make great sense to reconstruct the standard line right through the town of Millicent back to the new grain facility.

With the demise of the wool industry, in rural areas we produce a lot more grain than we used to. It would make sense to transport livestock by road freight because of the timeliness, but certainly when we are handling grain the majority of that should be on rail rather than on road freight. I would urge the government to look very seriously at not only subsidising the construction of the rail from Alice Springs to Darwin. One of the recommendations of the recent 35th report of the ER&D Committee concerning rail links with the eastern states is the standardisation of the rail lines linking Mount Gambier to Wolseley, Heywood and Millicent. Conflicting evidence was given to the committee. A spokesman for Rail 2000 suggested that that work could be done for about \$3 million. Other evidence suggested it would be more than double that. I am unaware of the figures, but with respect to the economics within this state, it would be another icon project to actually standardise that line.

People have often said that rail is last year's technology. I believe that rail, particularly in an energy hungry world which we are entering in the next millennium, will be tomorrow's technology. We should be doing everything we possibly can to make sure that the whole of our state is part of this national grid.

In conclusion, I would commend the Premier for the work he has put into this exercise and the government for following it to this stage and bringing this project to fruition. It is with great pleasure that I will be supporting this bill. The only thing I add is that I hope the government has the foresight to ensure that the whole of South Australia has access to the port of Darwin.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I would like to make a brief contribution to this debate. At the outset I commend the Premier and all those involved in the work that has gone into this project. I will not repeat the points made by other members, but I would like to focus on a couple of specific aspects. I would totally endorse the remarks of the member for MacKillop about the Mount Gambier connection. That is something that should be pursued in the very near future. My main concern is that the Melbourne to Bordertown section of the line be upgraded. I know that work is being carried out at the moment, and the speed limit on that section for both freight and passenger trains has recently been lifted, but a lot of work still needs to be done on that section, as it did not receive the full standardisation upgrade that occurred from Bordertown to Adelaide several years ago. To get the full value out of the Alice Springs to Darwin link, I am keen to see that Melbourne to Bordertown section upgraded as quickly as possible, and certainly in time to link in with the Alice Springs to Darwin project.

As the member for Hammond suggested, there are alternative routes to the current route through the Adelaide Hills. I would be the first to acknowledge that there are problems in the Adelaide Hills with the tunnels in terms of carrying double decker containers. As we know, the rail system has low slung carriages or cars at the moment to carry containers, but we cannot carry double stacked containers because of the tunnels, and to change those tunnels would cost a lot of money. We have problems with the curves on the lines through the Hills which, among other things, create noise and speed problems. With the size of train we are

talking about for Alice Springs to Darwin, which is one to two kilometres in length, the Adelaide Hills is not an ideal section of track at the moment. I think it is worth thinking laterally and looking at ways of bypassing that section, as was indicated earlier by the member for Hammond.

The money being put into this project by the taxpayer is significant. I do not have a problem with that. In fact, I have always leaned towards Keynesian economics. So-called economic rationalists—whom I tend to label irrationalists—would have a problem with a project such as this because they would say that the government has no role in contributing to the funding of such a project. But, if you take a narrow accountant's view of projects such as this you would end up doing very little.

If we look at the spin-off benefits and social benefits in terms of employment and the various multipliers, not to mention possible defence benefits—something for which I have argued for many years in relation to this project—we end up with a benefit which is far in excess of what a narrow economic or accounting view would provide. I remind members that when the Adelaide Railway Station was built there was a great controversy on the grounds that it was too extravagant and it was out of proportion, but I do not think too many people today would argue that way.

This is a project of vision. It does require significant government funding but, if we put it in the context, for example, of what it will cost us to be in East Timor for 12 months (which is probably in the order of at least \$1 billion), we see that the government contribution to this project is of a much lesser order. I look forward to the day when the last dog spike is driven in and when members and others can travel on that section of rail link. The potential for tourism is there and I believe, importantly, it will not only open up alternative opportunities for freight but it will also bring South Australia into focus as a central transport connection for the whole of this continent and, indeed, for this part of the Asia Pacific region.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): Like the member for Fisher, I will be reasonably brief with my remarks. I believe that when one looks at the landmark opportunity that the state has as a result of the bill that we are now debating in the parliament, one realises that it is probably one of the most important bills which has been debated in this parliament in modern time. Certainly, from my point of view I would say, boldly, that it is the most important bill that I have been able to support in the six years I have been in this parliament.

When we look at the situation with respect to infrastructure and the opportunities that are currently being developed in South Australia, we see that clearly one of the big benefits to this state will be significant infrastructure development to allow us to get closer to our markets, particularly those in Asia. While I appreciate that difficulties are being experienced in many countries in Asia, it is also pleasing to see some strong economic indicators starting to come out of countries that first went into recession in Asia, for example, Thailand. When you are looking at the mid and long term future of a state—and that is what this government has been about since it has been in office—you do not rebuild a state in five minutes. In fact, I have said on numerous occasions in this House that when it takes 11 years to put a state into the difficulties that we encountered in 1993, if we could reinstate this state to where it was prior to that 11 years of difficulty

that we encountered between 1983 and 1993, we would be doing well as a government.

This railway line was promised when Federation occurred, yet it has taken 100 years to get the support of federal, state and territory governments to put this project into place. I believe that we should be getting accolades for this project. In giving those accolades, as a member of the government I put on the record my appreciation of the leadership that the Premier has shown in fighting for this project for the six years that we have been in office. When we look at projects such as the Adelaide to Darwin rail line and the fight put in by the Premier on behalf of the government in respect of car tariffs and the opportunities which have now been announced (such as at GMH where we are seeing a potentially \$1 billion per annum economic income on a recurrent basis for South Australia as a result of recent trade opportunities to the Middle East), we can see that, if the government is focused on fighting for these things which are in the best interests of South Australia, irrespective of our size, we can achieve and win at the end of the day—and this is a significant win for South Australia.

My colleague the member for Fisher has touched on the fact that many members of sub-branches in the RSL for a long time, even before I came into politics, have talked about the importance of getting some infrastructure into Australia that would help us in a time that, hopefully, we will not see within our shores, that is, a conflict or a war. It is important for that reason and, indeed, for value adding all the opportunities which we have and which we are currently developing in South Australia, such as Food for the Future which has a long-term vision.

Often people are critical of governments because they tend to develop what they see as knee-jerk reactions and bandaids measures for four year terms. But, if we look now at the jigsaw puzzle which is being developed for South Australia and which is for the long-term future, it will allow people in 10, 20 or, indeed, 50 years to look back and trace the record of the period that this government was in office. It will show that we developed long-term opportunities, including the sustainable permanent opportunity for our young people as a result of building economic opportunities of which this rail link will be a prime part.

From the point of view of my own electorate, and while I understand what the members for MacKillop, Hammond and Fisher and others have said about the need to capitalise on opportunities within our own regions in South Australia with respect to this rail link, I put on the public record that I think the Southern Partnership—which is a partnership between federal, state and local government in the City of Onkaparinga and industry in our region—should be looking seriously at what we can do to capitalise on this opportunity; and I will be taking this up at the next meeting I have with the City of Onkaparinga. The wonderful results that we have been getting in the McLaren Vale wine region with international and national gold medals for wine are no secret, and, as a result, export opportunities are booming to Asia and other parts of the world.

We have an opportunity to capitalise on the Adelaide to Darwin rail line. The only weak link is the fact that the railway line between Adelaide and Port Stanvac is under-utilised because it is a broad gauge railway line. I believe that, if we were to think laterally and work cooperatively, we would be able to find the money to develop a standard gauge rail line between Port Stanvac and Adelaide so that the southern region of South Australia, particularly the Willunga

Basin, the Fleurieu Peninsula, Lonsdale and other industrial areas which include companies such as Britax Rainsfords, Walker Australia, Mitsubishi, and so on, could become a transport hub for the area. We could capitalise on our natural opportunities and load containers at Lonsdale and send them along a standard gauge railway line into Adelaide to hook onto the Adelaide to Darwin rail line.

I understand that it would cost a few million dollars to do that but, given that we have the corridor, the sleepers and all the other infrastructure in place, it is something which the City of Onkaparinga, together with both federal and state members, should be exploring. That is another example of an opportunity for a region not far out of Adelaide to its south, which some people would say was geographically disadvantaged but which I suggest is actually geographically advantaged if we are prepared to be lateral in our thinking and capitalise on the good work that is being done in our region.

Contrary to some sceptics in this state and nation, I believe that we have not only an opportunity but also something that is now guaranteed to further cement a sustainable growth pattern for South Australia similar to that to which we were accustomed prior to the Bannon era when Labor mortgaged the state, put in risk capital and spent a lot of money from which we see no benefit at all. I believe that, while some colleagues have said that a significant amount of money from state and federal governments is being put into this project, when we look at a partnership approach between the state government, the Northern Territory, the federal government and the private sector through the consortium, in real terms this will be one of the cheapest investments in history that any government or any state has put into economic development opportunities.

Recently when at the Australasian Police Ministers Council, I had the opportunity to look at Homebush and the Sydney Olympics development. That is a \$3.2 billion development, and \$3.2 billion, interestingly enough, equates approximately to the money that was lost during the Labor period with respect to the State Bank. I understand that the federal government is putting in \$500 million or thereabouts, and it will be a great economic opportunity for Australia. However, the Olympic Games with its \$3.2 billion investment will do nothing in the long term for Australia compared with what the Adelaide to Darwin railway line will develop for not only South Australia but I am sure Victoria and the Northern Territory for an investment by our state government of less than \$100 million.

From the point of view of the investment by the territory, our state government and Canberra, which is less than \$250 million or \$300 million or thereabouts (I do not have the exact figure), I highlight in real terms how this is a great long-term investment for Australia and particularly South Australia and the Northern Territory with far less money going into it than has been put into the Olympic Games by the New South Wales government and the federal government.

I commend to all in this House this opportunity for South Australia. Finally, I thank a magnificent constituent of mine, Mr Brian Doube, for the fantastic support he, on behalf of a large section of my community, has given to the Premier on a regular basis in the work that he has done nationally to ensure that the Adelaide to Darwin rail link is now a reality.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the House be extended beyond 10 p.m.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I thank all members who have made a contribution on the legislation before the House. The support of members from both sides of the House to this project is welcome. As many members have indicated, it will be one of the most important pieces of infrastructure that has been put in place in South Australia's history. The fact that it has taken us almost 90 years to put in place and to be able to implement a commitment given to South Australia in 1910 says it all. Over that period there has been a determination and a commitment by government to bring this project to fruition.

It was former Premier Tom Playford who sought to take up with the commonwealth government the obligation it had of 1910-11 to build the rail link to Darwin. Upon seeking advice, Premier Playford was advised that the commonwealth had not breached the agreement because the agreement that was entered into did not have a completion date and timetable set into the agreement. As no time had expired, no agreement had been breached, and where Premier Playford had sought to take issue legally with the Adelaide-Darwin rail project, the advice was that he could not proceed because the federal government had not breached its contract. Therefore, the fact that we have been able to negotiate between all the parties and to secure a contribution from the commonwealth is a significant step forward.

I express my appreciation to the Prime Minister who, throughout this process, has shown a desire for this project but on very strict criteria. The Prime Minister made clear to me in discussions in both March and June this year that, for any additional commonwealth funding, we would have to demonstrate that the project was bankable and that it had a business plan that had commercial viability underpinning it. Before we returned to the commonwealth to negotiate two weeks ago, I contacted the Prime Minister indicating informally what the ask would be upon which this project could proceed. We were also able to present from Deutsche Bank and Macquarie indications that this is a bankable and therefore commercially viable project. It was with those reassurances to the Prime Minister that he was prepared to give the commitment to match the funding of the Northern Territory and South Australian governments to ensure this project could proceed.

This is a visionary project that will serve this nation and this state over the next 100 years. There is one other aspect that I should mention. I noticed a letter to the editor, I think yesterday, talking about the investment of taxpayers' funds and suggesting that the consortium gets to own it. It does not. It is a BOOT project—build-own-operate-transfer. At the end of 50 years the owners of the track and the line itself will be the government. Upon completion of the lease, this project will return to ownership of the respective governments in relation to their contribution. Therefore, even more so, this is a project of significance.

Over that 50 years, the value of the project will be related directly to the quantum of traffic that is able to be built up and traverse the project. In 50 years' time, not only will we have returned to us infrastructure that has to be maintained at a standard during those 50 years but also we will have effectively a built-up business enterprise using that infrastructure. To that extent in 50 years' time, whilst that shall not worry me too much, the government of the day will have the opportunity to roll over a lease or put in place some other arrangements, underpinned not only by the infrastructure but

an operating enterprise that has built up the business opportunities over that line and therefore the value of it.

I again thank all members for their contribution. A number have suggested additional works of infrastructure and capital works that ought to be put in place. I indicate to the House that we will undertake a range of additional studies to look at how we might further advance this project now that we have got the core component agreed to. I have asked for work to be done in a couple of areas so, while we are proceeding with this, other infrastructure could be put in place. That has to run the gauntlet of preliminary estimates, and that will take some time. However, the suggestions put forward by various members will be given serious consideration by the team that has the responsibility to oversee this project as it goes forward. I thank all members for their support through to the second reading stage.

Bill read a second time.

Ms HURLEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: In my contribution to the second reading debate, whilst expressing strong support for the railway and the opposition's support for this bill, although regretting that the commonwealth has been allowed to abrogate its clear national responsibilities to provide further funding for this project, I raised the concern that probably most South Australians have—that, whilst it is vitally important that we secure this project, we do not want the project to be a bottomless pit for the South Australian taxpayer. When this legislation was dealt with previously, we were given undertakings that \$100 million would be the extent of South Australia's financial contribution to a project that will, after all, be built outside our state. We have now been asked to make another call upon the Treasury of up to \$50 million. The central question I want to ask the Premier is: will he give this Committee a categorical guarantee that there will be no further call on the South Australian taxpayer to top up this contribution if, indeed, the project runs into financial difficulties?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Does the leader mean in the capital sense or in the operating recurrent sense?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: On the first basis, capital.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: In relation to capital, as I mentioned in my speech concluding the second reading, part of the conditions the Prime Minister put down in his discussions with me earlier this year, in about March and June, was that, if further funding was required, we had to demonstrate the bankability and the commercial viability of the project, and that it would be inappropriate to ask for further funds unless we could demonstrate that. Therefore, during much of this period between 7 June when Asia Pacific Transport Consortium was nominated and the time when we went back to the Prime Minister, work was undertaken with Deutsche Bank and BT, then Macquarie (having purchased BT), as to advice through the consortium and independently to AARC that this was a bankable project, and effectively there was a business plan and a viability that would underpin the operation. That was provided to us; in fact, I understand that independent advice was given by them to federal treasury to reassure the Prime Minister of the bankability of the project.

Based on that, there clearly is a position where this is the maximum amount the government of South Australia expects to commit to the project. The \$125 million has been sourced by adding on \$25 million in an additional year over that which is already budgeted. In the forward estimates, we have four amounts of \$25 million. The first \$25 million has not been spent because it is not in this current year, so that will roll over into the first year. The first year we will get \$50 million; then there is \$25 million and \$25 million, and \$25 million will be allocated out of the capital works program in that fourth year at the end—another year of \$25 million is added.

In relation to the \$25 million that is part of the guarantee, the South Australian and Northern Territory governments have guaranteed \$50 million. That will be paid in the tenth year after the start of operation, that is, if operations start in March 2003, then in March 2013, if the volumes of freight over the line do not meet a certain agreed benchmark in the contract, the consortium can call in the \$25 million guaranteed by the two governments. So, there is that possible exposure. In relation to the operation of the line itself, the business opportunities and threats are the sole responsibility of the Asia Pacific Transport Consortium. There is no underwriting of the operations of the rail line.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: There's no recurrent funding whatsoever?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, and that is clear and quite specific. This is a capital injection to establish a business enterprise that will operate and then, if it does not operate successfully, that is matter for the consortium: it is not a matter of call on government. The other point that I want to emphasise, as I did in my remarks closing the second reading debate, is that, at the conclusion of the 50 years, the asset reverts to the ownership of the respective governments, that is, in terms of the component of contribution. Of course, in 50 years' time a business enterprise will have been built up over that rail link. The real value of that railway line will not be the asset which is required to be maintained over the 50 years at certain benchmark levels; if an enterprise has been built up over that with volumes on it, that is the value of the line itself, and that will revert to respective government ownership.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The Premier said that he did not expect to be asked to contribute more in terms of capital works. Has the Premier told the chairman of the consortium, Rick Allert, 'That's it! No more. Zero chance. No more call on the taxpayer; the government and the parliament will not allow it'?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The reason for South Australia's contributing \$150 million whereas the commonwealth and the Northern Territory are contributing \$165 million is that I refused consistently to go further and indicated that I expected the others to pay a greater contribution than South Australia. It has been made very clear to them that we are legislating for the second and last time on this matter, and the figures are quite specific. If there was doubt that, in three months' or six months' time, we would be having to do any other 'top-ups', clearly we would not be back into the parliament with a set dollar figure, which is the basis of the contribution. So, in answer to the leader's question, this amending bill is quite clear and specific in respect of the sums that we are to contribute.

I have also sought assurances from the consortium personally, as well as through AARC. I have also sought an assurance from the Chairman of AARC, Rick Allert, as well

as Deutsche Bank, Macquarie and BT's advice (and I can be assured on their advice) that this is it: this is a project that can now be delivered on these figures, and in each instance I have been assured of that fact.

Mr McEWEN: Given what the Premier has just told the committee in relation to the \$125 million, why are we amending section 6 of the principal act to include paragraphs (c), (d) and (e)? Can the Premier explain why we are incorporating obligations and, to my mind, therefore underwriting risk? Why are we including those three paragraphs if our only commitments are in relation to capital, which are clearly covered in paragraphs (a) and (b)?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The reason why these clauses are included is related to the AustralAsia Rail Corporation, the negotiating body acting on behalf of the two governments. It has no depth beyond that. Therefore, the governments have to underpin the operations, the obligations and the commitments undertaken by AARC to the consortium. Failure to do so will mean that the consortium would not be able to approach its bankers to ensure that we can put in place a bankable project.

Let me go on to give members some examples. Paragraph (c) refers to the concession deed between AARC and the consortium. Under the concession deed, the South Australian and Northern Territory governments guaranteed the performance of the AustralAsia Railway Corporation. A key obligation by them is to guarantee that the Asia Pacific consortium can have a 50 year lease over the line. So, that is an obligation: the AustralAsia Railway Corporation, in seeking tenders, has given a commitment that the successful bidder can operate over this line for 50 years. But AARC is no entity, so it cannot make, of itself, that commitment. Therefore, the governments have to give the obligation to AARC, which then gives it to the consortium, upon which the consortium can go to the bankers and say, 'We have a 50 year lease, and it is a guaranteed 50 year lease, that we can operate on this line.' So, that is what paragraph (c)—or the key obligation—is for.

There is also an obligation from both the South Australian and Northern Territory governments to give a clear title to Asia Pacific. So, once again, we are giving a title to enable the consortium to operate on the corridor and put the railway line on that corridor and have access to it for 50 years. That is another one of those commitments or obligations. There are no direct financial obligations under the concession deed.

The concession deed also sets out obligations of Asia Pacific—that is, the consortium. It must build the rail line to a specific standard and maintain that standard until it is handed back to the states in 50 years' time. So, there is a benchmark standard that must be maintained. Importantly, the deed to which I have referred formalises an already implied performance guarantee through acts of parliament in South Australia and the Northern Territory when the AARC was created to negotiate on behalf of the two governments.

Paragraph (d) refers to other contracts attached to the project. That allows both the South Australian and Northern Territory governments to be signatories to the concession deed. So, you give the authority for that to take place. Mechanisms where South Australia and the Northern Territory implement performance guarantee are provided under paragraph (c); there is authority under new section (c) to give clear title to the corridor, the track and the lease over it for 50 years; and this creates a provision for both states to deal directly with the consortium rather than through the AARC on other matters should that be necessary—for

example, maximising industry involvement for South Australia.

Mr FOLEY: What is the situation in terms of the liability if there is significant damage to the line? The line will be going through an area that previously has had no rail through it before, and the weather conditions are a little unknown. I am mindful of some of the floods that we have seen in years gone by in that part of the world, and what would happen if we lost 100 kilometres of line. I assume that the consortium would perhaps be a self-insurer. What happens then? Are we liable to a portion of the repair work?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, the advice that has been given to me clearly is that the operator is responsible, upon construction of the line, to maintain that line for the 50 year period and to ensure that, when it is handed back, it is in the condition and standard of a good operating serviceable line, which includes that during the period those matters are, as the honourable member has mentioned in his question, an insurable risk upon which the operator has the obligation. It is not the state's.

Mr FOLEY: I appreciate the Premier's response to the Leader of the Opposition and, indeed, to the member for Gordon. I think that he has given a categorical guarantee and assurance that no further liability financially is attached to the state. We look forward to that being the case in the future. If not, I might send the Premier a note, if in five years' time I find I am stuck with a bill, if I am lucky enough to be Treasurer.

The future of the port of Adelaide is clearly an issue that is close to my heart, close to the community that I represent—and also close to where I live, I might add. Can the Premier outline what he sees as the port of Adelaide's role in the new infrastructure with the Alice Springs to Darwin rail line? I would be interested to know whether he sees the port's playing an ever increasing role and how that fits in with the railway line.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I see that as a complementary role. Provided that the port of Adelaide continues its efficiency, enterprise improvement and performance in container movements and the speed of container movements through the port, and provided that the port of Adelaide continues to have a good industrial relations record—which it has had, and I acknowledge that—with the sort of increases that we have seen in volumes of container traffic (and I think last year there was an 11 per cent increase in container traffic through the port of Adelaide)—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes—we will see that continuing expansion. This will open up a range of other opportunities for South Australia. The volumes and transport mode that it will open up will create further opportunities for Port Adelaide, not contract the opportunities for Port Adelaide. Some people have put to me that, if we build the railway line, every container out of South Australia will go over the railway line, not out of the port of Adelaide. That is just a nonsensical argument. It is not an argument that can be sustained, and it will not be sustained.

With the preconditions about which I have spoken, I have no reason to believe that, on the performance of the work force and the management of the port of Adelaide, it will not continue to strive to be the better operating port in Australia. If it does that it will secure its future. What we will see with this rail link over a period of time (and it might take us 10 years from now) will be intermodal build-up in South Australia in terms of a transport hub. By that, I mean double

stacking containers through the port of Darwin, both ways. We will see trucking—single stack, obviously. Given, in the short term, the difficulties we face—as I think the member for Hammond referred to in terms of the bridges between here and Melbourne, and the significant cost (although we are going to review that) of the rail line running around the Hills rather than through the Hills—we will have intermodal services put here in South Australia.

If viticulture, aquaculture and other industries continue to expand substantially, as the clear indications are in South Australia, then the volumes going through the port of Adelaide will simply continue. For example, the only option for General-Motors is to ship directly from the port of Adelaide to the Middle East. It would be illogical to land bridge that freight to Darwin and then take it to the Middle East. Ranges of products logically fit with the port of Adelaide. Part of our problem—and the member for Hammond also referred to this earlier—is that there is no air freight excess or availability out of Adelaide between now and approximately Christmas.

We are freighting out chilled pork through the air freight service. A rail line will enable that chilled pork to go out through Darwin. You cannot freight chilled pork in containers out through the port of Adelaide: it must be frozen pork because of the time lines. I am advised that the return to producers will increase by about \$1.50 a kilogram if, instead of shipping out frozen pork in containers through the port of Adelaide, chilled pork is shipped from the port of Darwin because you cut down on the sailing time to Singapore, Manila and Hong Kong where principal amounts of chilled pork are currently going to meet the market potential.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: All I would ask is that the honourable member make some inquiries about the value of chilled and frozen pork on the Asian market particularly, the quantities of pork that market is currently buying, and how we might continue to service the market in the future. The honourable member might be interested in a new development which will happen soon and from which we hope to see a further expansion of pork production in South Australia.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: So does the member for Giles. I do not notice the member for Giles complaining about her \$1.5 million.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, I will. That is a practical example of an alternative transport infrastructure that frees up another piece of transport infrastructure that takes a time sensitive good to the market. The more infrastructure we have the greater volume we can carry and, in that respect, hopefully, we can drag back, with reliable land bridging through Darwin, greater air freight out of Adelaide Airport and, in terms of the port of Adelaide, we will get a return of the containers and the freight that is being trucked from Adelaide to Melbourne and Sydney to exit their ports and airports because we do not have the capacity here.

I have not checked the figures for the past 18 months to two years but 80 per cent of cut flowers were being exported out of Melbourne. We truck the flowers to Melbourne to put them on a plane. That is why we must free up the air freight space—

Mr Foley: We will get more planes in.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: We are. I am glad for the interjection because, on Saturday, Singapore Airlines is bringing in its fourth service which, on a weekly basis, will

bring another 25 tonnes of air freight space out of South Australia. We are working on it and the volume is increasing. We are also working on trying to get a dedicated cargo operation out of Adelaide, because what we must do to get the flowers back from Melbourne and Sydney airports, and others, is to ensure that we have reliable air freight services over a 12 month and longer period to enable producers to break their contracts out of Melbourne and Sydney and be guaranteed freight availability out of Adelaide.

That is what we must do and we are working on that at the moment. As the Asian economies pull out of the decline of the past year or two, the volumes and opportunities in the Asia Pacific area will be staggering. We either position ourselves to meet them or we can let the opportunities pass us by. We are intent on making sure we meet them.

Mr FOLEY: I note that the Premier used the words 'land bridge' and 'bridge' at least six or seven times during that very good answer, and I appreciate the answer. Given his passion for bridges, I remind the Premier that at the last election he promised to complete the rail infrastructure in Adelaide. To get the intermodal service, to make the port efficient, to get the containers moving through the port as quickly and efficiently as possible the third river crossing is required over the Port River. Given the need for rapid freight movement we must remember that we have that terrible bottleneck with this train snaking through Port Adelaide. It is very inefficient. The train chugs into Port Adelaide as the trucks rumble through. When will you deliver on your election promise to build that bridge to complete your vision for infrastructure in this state, which I share?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: As I promised in 1997, we are continuing and persisting in pursuing—

Mr Foley: Consistently pursuing this area, which means you have done bugger all.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, what it means is that we have constantly asked the commonwealth government for funding for the third river crossing. We have also taken up with the commonwealth government the fact that, in this past year, South Australia was the only state not to get substantial funding under—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I did mention the federal representatives—a federal government road funding program from which we are not getting our fair share at the moment. We are seeking the support of federal cabinet ministers and I raise the matter with the Prime Minister on every occasion we meet.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Some preliminary design works have been undertaken as well as some costings in relation to train intermodal services at Gillman and/or Dry Creek South. Discussions are continuing with ASR in relation to that and also with some industrial interests in the port of Adelaide environs. I am well aware of the commitment to the third river crossing. It is important. It is one that we will pursue. The member for Hart rightly points out that we have not yet delivered, but I simply point out to the member for Hart that it has taken us six years to conclude the rail link deal with Darwin successfully.

We have been working on the airport for approximately five years. We have still got a little way to go on the airport terminal but I had meetings last week and I have further meetings next week in an endeavour to try to bring that to some conclusion by the end of this year so that construction can start next year. The purpose in mentioning that is simply

that major infrastructure projects cannot be delivered overnight but, if you persevere, you will get there. I give a commitment to the member for Hart that the priority on the third river crossing is still there. The momentum is maintained but we need, with a capital spend of that nature, to have federal government funding, and rightfully there ought to be federal government funding.

Mr Foley: And private sector funding.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: And private sector funding. The private sector is keen and has made representations and submissions to government as to how that might be funded.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, it is.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, and the commercial and industrial interests in the Port Adelaide area are prepared to support a toll on the basis that a toll to go over a third river crossing will be far less expensive than the time taken driving through the centre of Port Adelaide. The short answer is that it is not there yet. We have not forgotten it, and we are pursuing it. I put to the member for Hart that we have demonstrated a capacity to stay with these things and to get there at the end of the day.

Mr VENNING: The 50 year lease includes the line from Tarcoola, which is already there. After the 50 year lease expires, the states get back their rails. I understand that ARTC controls the line from Tarcoola at the moment. After the 50 years expires, do we get back the existing line and the Northern Territory gets the new line?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Given that this railway line will serve for 100 years or more, it is an important question. The Tarcoola to Alice Springs line is a commonwealth government-owned line. It was built, constructed and recently upgraded by the commonwealth government. For the term of the lease, it is a peppercorn rental for the consortium over the 50 years. At the conclusion of the 50 years that, of course, reverts to commonwealth ownership, and the Alice Springs to Darwin line reverts to the two governments that have committed funds to the project.

Mr VENNING: So, we actually will own half of the line from Alice Springs to Darwin after 50 years?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: In effect, yes.

Mr WILLIAMS: Noting the member for Hart's interest in his Port Adelaide electorate and his question about a third river crossing, I was pleased to hear the Premier's response to that question, too. I refer to the hope that the rail link between Wolseley and Mount Gambier, Millicent and Mount Gambier and Mount Gambier and Heywood would be standardised. I believe the member for Gordon referred to that, and the 35th report of the ERD Committee recommends that. One lot of evidence to that committee suggested that the cost of that would be some \$3 million: another piece of evidence suggested it would be more than double that.

In my second reading contribution I did refer to Penola and to the problem of 400 heavy vehicles a day traversing its main street. There is a proposal to put a bypass around Penola, but that has been costed by the department of transport at \$11 million. Indeed, it would be cheaper to standardise the railway line from Wolseley to Mount Gambier and from Millicent through Mount Gambier to Heywood than to build a bypass around Penola. Does the government have any plans, or is it willing to set in train plans, to standardise the line from Wolseley to Mount Gambier and from Millicent through Mount Gambier to Heywood?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The issue of the standardisation of that line has been raised on a number of occasions. There is not within this structure a specific commitment to do so. In my second reading contribution I mentioned that a number of members, including the members for MacKillop, Gordon and Hammond, had put forward a range of additions and alternatives to the current rail network to build on the infrastructure. I have indicated that we will look at a number of aspects in terms of how we can value add on the railway line now that we are putting it in place and how we can enjoin a number of communities in that rail line.

The practical example put forward by the member for MacKillop that it would be cheaper to standardise the line than to put in the bypass is a valid point. I will be more than happy for that to be referred to the minister for some further advice. Certainly, in relation to the task force that we are putting together, Partners in Rail, one of the tasks is not only to identify the opportunities in the construction phase but also to look beyond that and to ask: what are the other alternatives that we ought to be considering now that we have this rail link; what are the opportunities to really build on this transport hub and this rail transport network for the state's interest? I indicate to the member for MacKillop that it is a matter I will refer to the minister for specific consideration.

Ms WHITE: Roughly, how long will the journey take from Adelaide to Darwin? The Premier mentioned that fresh produce would be one of the freight commodities going to Darwin. Roughly, how long will the journey take compared to putting produce on a plane?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It will take about 48 hours from Adelaide to Darwin. It will save three days sailing time from Adelaide to Singapore.

Ms WHITE: I understand that it may be different for different freight or produce, but what is the cost differential between transporting goods by train as opposed to plane or ship?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: What the member for Taylor really wants is a freight rate list, because the freight rate involved in an oyster being flown out of Adelaide is a lot different from that applying to an air conditioner on Air International.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Well, there are a lot of differences—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: That is exactly the point that I am attempting to make for the member for Taylor. Her question was almost nonsensical, but I am endeavouring to answer it on the basis that some products can go by air freight, some by ship and others lend themselves to this land bridging, which is over land by container and then by ship from the port of Darwin. This port will be a private sector-operated port that will not have some of the constraints on it as prevail in Sydney and Melbourne, thus reducing through-port costs over Melbourne and Sydney and therefore creating a competitive advantage for this route. But it is simply impossible to give examples as requested by the member for Taylor, because different products lend themselves to different transport options.

Mr LEWIS: I do not presume to know more than the Premier, but from the research I have done on this matter I can tell the member for Taylor that the shipping costs using the rail freight from Adelaide to Darwin and then current freight rates into the east Asia markets, say, Nagoya in Japan, would be in the order of 15¢ to 20¢ a kilo, depending on the

bulkiness of the item you were shipping and the extent to which refrigeration, if any, were required. It would be as low as 13¢ for unrefrigerated items, whereas the cost on air freight would be in the order of \$2.60 to \$3 a kilo, again, depending on the regularity of the shipments you were making and therefore the space that you booked on a regular basis and the bulkiness of the item you wished to ship.

So, honourable members can see that there is a huge difference. If it is, say, 15¢ a kilo compared to \$3 a kilo, there is a 20-fold difference, so we can land a tonne of lettuces suitable for the Japanese market in Nagoya by air for the same amount of freight cost as we can put a container of lettuces into that market, as far as freight goes, and freight is a huge component of the price at the moment of those perishable items that we are selling into that market place. We will immediately expand enormously, our ability to put people into production here, knowing that we have markets there, because the viable selling price will be so much lower. We will still be able to make good profits for our growers and producers here in Australia. That to my mind is the most exciting aspect of having won this deal.

The extent to which we will be able to ramp up production in aquaculture and horticulture in all domains once we get it in place is quite incredible. The added advantage is that the technology, as I said in my second reading contribution, to build the 10 000 tonne plus wave-piercing catamarans is already in existence, and that will bring down—

Mr Foley: Big catamarans!

Mr LEWIS: They are big, and they will travel at 45 knots.

Mr Foley: 10 000 tonne catamarans at 45 knots?

Mr LEWIS: Yes, so stay out of the way, brother! There is no question about the fact they will handle rough weather. They will be able to go straight through storms. They will not have to look for passage around. There will be very few storms that they will not be able to cope with. I think that is extremely exciting, and the fact that we can do it will enable passengers to come from those countries to buy our tourist product.

Mr Foley: How big are the Incat ones?

Mr LEWIS: Just a bit over 1 000 tonnes—about 1 200 tonnes.

Mr Foley: So these are 10 times bigger?

Mr LEWIS: Yes, in freight capacity. They are already designed and wave tested. Everything is ready to go. That is the thing I like about it, Mr Chairman.

Clause passed.

Clause 5.

Mr MEIER: I refer particularly to proposed new section 9 which refers to building and development work carried out on the railway between Tarcoola and the Northern Territory border. I have already had an inquiry from my electorate regarding how a company can register its interest to supply components for the construction of the railway line. Is the Premier able to indicate to this committee what procedures a company should undertake if it believes that it would like to be involved in its construction?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The Partnership for Rail project team, which Roger Hartley will head up, will be the source of direct information and advice. Could I encourage the company in question to register an interest with the Partnership for Rail project team? That will ensure that they are on a mailing list for advice in the future. The team will also be going out to country and regional areas of the state to explain the opportunities. For example, if we are going to have 7 000

construction workers direct and indirect, someone has to feed them. We think that South Australian businesses ought to be providing the food and beverage services for the construction gangs, for example.

In addition to Roger Hartley's group, Graham Sutton from the Industrial Supplies Office will actually be established within the Asia Pacific transport consortium, so within the consortium itself we will have an officer working with the Partnership for Rail project team to identify tenders contracts, and, on a mailing list of a company that might be interested in it, they will check that company's capabilities, skills base, and whether it is ISO 9000 standard, etc., which will be

required I think as a base to tender for contracts for the consortium. They would then be on a tender call list perhaps almost automatically. I invite the member to let them know of the announcement that we made yesterday.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.37 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 11 November at 10.30 a.m.