

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 17 July 2003

The **SPEAKER (Hon. I.P. Lewis)** took the chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE

Ms BREUER (Giles): I move:

That this house congratulates the Royal Flying Doctor Service on achieving 75 years of service and providing a vital lifeline support to rural and outback Australia.

It is with pleasure that I move this motion. A few weeks ago, the Royal Flying Doctor Service celebrated its 75th birthday. It is a service of which we in Australia can be very proud. The Royal Flying Doctor Service is a not-for-profit, charitable service providing aeromedical emergency and primary health care services, together with communication and education assistance, to people who live, work and travel in regional and remote Australia. Most people have heard of the Royal Flying Doctor Service but it is not until you go into outback Australia that you appreciate the value and importance of it to the people in those communities. The service depends on funds provided by the commonwealth, the state and the territory governments, and also on contributions donated by the general public, by businesses and the corporate sector.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service provides many services. It provides a 24-hour emergency service to victims of illness or accident who are in serious or in a potentially life threatening condition. It has primary health care clinics at remote sites. Regular clinics are conducted at isolated sites by the Royal Flying Doctor Service's doctors and its nurses, and it also brings in other specialised health professionals and, in some cases, it brings in state health practitioners. The services include but are certainly not limited to routine health checks and advice, which is very important for people in those remote communities. The service performs immunisations and child health care which is really important for a remote and isolated mum and dad with regard to the safety of their children and their own personal satisfaction. It also conducts dental clinics and eye and ear clinics and undertakes radio and phone consultations.

Consultations by doctors and nurses are carried out by radio or by telephone with people at very remote locations. So, if people are not able to get into a community where there is a doctor, they are able to consult the Royal Flying Doctor Service by telephone or radio and have a consultation. With regard to the provision of radio communication through the Royal Flying Doctor Service bases, with the advent of the telephone to the Outback, this service is not as important. However, for many years radio communication for the Outback of Australia was done through radio bases.

Many people do not realise that the Royal Flying Doctor Service provides medical chests. It provides over 3 500 medical chests containing an extensive range of drugs and medical supplies, and they are located at remote locations throughout Australia; for example, many are at isolated pastoral properties, indigenous communities, out-stations, remote mining sites and also, would you believe, in lighthouses. One of the things for which the Royal Flying Doctor Service is most noted is its interhospital transfers, where it transfers patients between small, rural or remote hospitals to

the larger metropolitan hospitals. Many members would be aware of that from their communities. I know that the Royal Flying Doctor Service aeroplanes can regularly be seen at the Whyalla airport, and they fly many people in life threatening situations to hospitals in Adelaide.

The figures involved are quite interesting. On average, the Royal Flying Doctor Service attends 498 patients a day, and in a year it may attend 181 621 people. It averages 59 aerial evacuations a day and over 21 000 every year. It averages 15 health care clinics a day throughout Australia and over 5 000 every year. Each day on average it flies about 36 571 kilometres. In a year, it flies well over 13 million kilometres. It has an average of 110 landings each day and over 40 000 each year throughout Australia. The Royal Flying Doctor Service owns 40 aircraft, and it has 19 bases throughout the country. It has 433 staff and 104 counsellors. The aim of the service is to provide a service to improve the health of people living in the bush. The level of health services provided in rural and remote communities is far below that of our urban counterparts, and we are aware of this. People in the bush have poorer access to and less use of health care services. Of course, this can affect the lower health status of these people. The Royal Flying Doctor Service is vital in those areas.

The idea of the Royal Flying Doctor Service is forever linked to its founder, the very Reverend John Flynn, of whom I am sure everybody in this place would have heard. It is a story of achievement that gave courage to the pioneers of inland Australia. In 1911 the Reverend John Flynn took up his first appointment at Beltana Mission in the North of South Australia. Flynn became very close to the people in the Outback, and in 1912 he was appointed as the first superintendent of the Australian Inland Mission, the bush department of the Presbyterian Church. He began his missionary work at a time when only two doctors served an area of some 300 000 square kilometres in Western Australia, and over 1.5 million square kilometres in the Northern Territory.

Flynn began establishing bush hospitals and hostels in remote outback areas which alleviated much of the dread associated with the great loneliness of the inland. However while it provided an important service, it really was only scratching at the surface of the problem of caring for people in the Outback. The problems of distance and communication remained, with many people dying from the lack of medical treatment.

The aeroplane was beginning to prove itself as a reliable means of transport. Radio was very much then in its infancy, but it was displaying a remarkable capacity to link people thousands of miles apart. Flynn saw the potential in these developments, along with Lieutenant Clifford Peel, a young Victorian medical student who had developed an interest in aviation.

While most of us have heard of John Flynn, very few of us have heard of Clifford Peel. Peel, hearing of Flynn's ideas, combined them with his own and wrote to John Flynn from the boat which took him to the war raging in France. The gist of Peel's letter, dated 21 November 1917, was that aeroplanes would overcome many of the transport problems of the inland. In particular, he saw missionary doctors administering the needs of men and women scattered throughout Australia. Peel outlined the cost of adopting aircraft for the Australian Inland Mission's medical work, the speed and distance the early planes flew and the support facilities needed.

Flynn was immediately impressed by the idea and published Peel's ideas in 1917. Unfortunately, Peel did not

live to see the enormous impact it was to make—he was killed flying over German lines in France shortly before the First World War ended in 1918; but, certainly, his remarkable vision lives on today in what is now the Royal Flying Doctor Service. John Flynn had set his considerable fundraising abilities to use for several years and, by 1928, the Australian Inland Mission had sufficient money to establish a Royal Flying Doctor scheme. On 15 May 1928 the Aerial Medical Service was established as a one-year experiment at Cloncurry in Queensland.

After many years of dreaming, hard work and planning the Royal Flying Doctor Service was a reality. The trial year began without a radio network. The problem of raising distress calls in time was one of the major frustrations the service faced, but the answer came with the development of Alf Traeger's now famous pedal radio. Alf Traeger was another famous South Australian, and many of us have heard of his pedal radio. Alf was based in Coober Pedy for many years. In the first year of that great experiment 50 flights were made, 18 000 miles were flown, 225 patients were treated for various illnesses and injuries, and at least four lives were saved.

By 1932, AIM had a network of 10 little hospitals across the centre, and continued to grow over the next few years. It suffered serious financial difficulties during the period but it caught the imagination of people around the country and the world and prompted John Flynn and Dr Alan Vickers (a flying doctor) to push for a network of Flying Doctor bases spread across the continent with government support. In 1934 the Presbyterian Church handed the service over to a new organisation, the Australian Aerial Medical Service, and, over the next few years, sections were established across Australia with operational bases at Wyndham, Port Headland, Kalgoorlie, Broken Hill, Alice Springs and Meekatharra, along with additional bases in Queensland.

In 1936, a coordinating federal council was created. In 1942 the service was named the Flying Doctor Service and the Queen granted use of the royal prefix in 1955. The growth of the service made heavy demands on available funds, and repeatedly John Flynn and his associates had to launch public appeals for donations. While some government financial aid was made available on occasions in the early days, regular government subsidies—both federal and state—only became an established practice later on. Even today the service continues to rely heavily on money from trusts, donations and public appeals for part of its annual funding.

Fundraising remains an integral part of the working day for the service and the volunteers who play an important role in the establishment of the Flying Doctor, and they are still the backbone of the organisation. Anywhere one goes in Outback South Australia one will find tins on counters, and all sorts of things, to raise money for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Recently, a neighbour of mine, Mr Peter Kirkby, unfortunately passed away. For many years Peter was a worker at Moomba for SANTOS. His funeral was held in Adelaide, and I was amazed at the number of people who turned up, including many of his friends and co-workers from Moomba.

I was amazed at the funeral to hear the number of comments made by people about the work he had done in raising money for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. I realised at that funeral that this is a very important part of the culture at Moomba and other isolated mining communities, which all work very hard to raise money. They appreciate the importance of the Royal Flying Doctor Service to them and to other

isolated communities in Australia. Obviously, Peter was an exceptional man, and he did an incredible job of raising thousands of dollars for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

He was a good man and he believed in the service, but I was so pleased to see that so many people at his funeral are also doing similar work for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. It is an organisation that, apart from the medical assistance it gives, creates community spirit in Outback Australia, drawing people together. It plays a vital role in saving lives, but it provides comfort for those who are far away from medical services. For example, Coober Pedy is 10 hours from Adelaide and Roxby Downs is five hours from Adelaide. It is comforting for those communities to know that the Royal Flying Doctor Service is there.

When an emergency call is received by the Royal Flying Doctor's communication's officer someone can be in contact with a doctor, a nurse and a pilot within 30 seconds, and an aircraft can be airborne within 35 minutes. Today, people are still isolated but, with the network of bases across Australia, no-one is more than two hours away from medical help. It is interesting because, as one drives to Coober Pedy, one will see that a landing strip has been prepared on the Stuart Highway. It is very interesting to see. I have never been fortunate enough to see a plane come into land but I always have a vision of Japanese tourists driving along that highway in the middle of nowhere and a plane coming towards them.

I can imagine the reaction that would create but, of course, the procedure undertaken is very safe. It is really interesting to see this landing strip on the Stuart Highway on the way to Coober Pedy and to Alice Springs. Another sideline of the service was the famous School of the Air which began in 1951 in Alice Springs and which, for many years, used the Royal Flying Doctor radio network to link children and their teachers to conduct their education. As a result of changes to technology, the children no longer have to use the Royal Flying Doctor Service radio network.

For many years they used telephones, but now they are using the internet, which means that children and teachers are able to see and talk to each other, which is an amazing link for these children in the Outback. For many years the facilities available to the Flying Doctor Service provided that education service to those children. Since 1928 the service has grown into one of the most respected organisations in the world. It covers an area equivalent in size to Western Europe and it operates from 20 bases, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. No longer is it just for the people of the Outback: the Flying Doctor territory is just one hour's drive out of most capital cities in Australia.

With the improved conditions of roads and facilities in the Outback, the service is also becoming more involved with the ever-increasing number of tourists visiting Australia's remote locations; and this week's tragedy highlighted the need for that service in Outback South Australia. Today I want to extend my sincere congratulations and thanks to the Royal Flying Doctor Service and all those involved in its 75th anniversary.

Time expired.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I support the motion moved by the member for Giles, which highlights the outstanding service provided to the people of the inland by the Royal Flying Doctor Service. I am fortunate to have in my electorate of Port Augusta three aircraft and a base, which provides services to thousands of South Australians day and night. Last week I attended a function at the golf club at Port

Augusta at which a cheque for \$45 000 was handed over to the Royal Flying Doctor Service by a small group of dedicated people at Port Augusta who continue to raise money for this most worthy cause.

It was pleasing to see Clive Kitchin recognised with a Centenary of Federation medal for his work in helping the Flying Doctor, and also Judith Jenkins, both of whom have made an outstanding contribution on an ongoing basis. As someone who appreciates the value of this service, one has to think how difficult the circumstances were when the Flying Doctor first commenced. With the assistance of GPS you can virtually fly to a gate in the dog fence. You have ground stations, sealed airstrips, plenty of fuel and satellite telephones. When the Flying Doctor Service first commenced people could not even imagine those sorts of facilities.

I received in the post today a journal which is put out by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and which gives a breakdown on various accidents. A small article is headed, 'Flying Doctor marks 75 years'. It is interesting to read it, because it sums up what took place. The article states:

The Royal Flying Doctor Service has celebrated its 75th anniversary. Its first official flight, on 17 May 1928, covered 73nm from Cloncurry to Julia Creek. The service used a De Havilland DH-50 aircraft hired from the then infant bush airline Qantas.

The aircraft was able to carry a pilot and four passengers at a cruising speed of just under 150 km/h. The DH-50 flew 95 572nm for the Flying Doctor until it was replaced in 1934 by a DH83 Fox Moth. In its first trial year, Qantas charged two shillings per mile flown and provided an engineer at Cloncurry. The federal government paid half the cost of maintaining the aircraft, with the rest funded by donations.

The Reverend John Flynn, superintendent of the Australian inland mission, founded the service, but a great contribution to his vision was made by World War I flyer, Lieutenant Clifford Peel, a young Victorian medical student with an interest in aviation. Peel wrote to Flynn, outlining the costs of using aircraft for the mission's medical work, the speed and distances the early plane flew and the support facilities needed.

In the 1930s and 1940s, RFDS operated mostly De Havilland aircraft, such as the DH-50, D-83. . . Later, Beechcraft Baron, Travelair, QueenAir and Duke, Cessna 180, 182 and 421B, the Piper Cherokee, Chieftain and Navajo—came to dominate. For many years, the RFDS successfully operated the Australian Nomad aircraft.

Since the 1980s the RFDS has been using Beechcraft Kingair 200Cs and C90s, the Conquest C425 and the Conquest II. The newest types in its fleet are Pilatus PC12s and Cessna 404s.

When one sits in the cockpit of a Pilatus and looks at the equipment available to the pilots and the information which comes up on the screens, one cannot help but think about the trying conditions under which those early pilots flew. As someone who has done a bit of flying around the bush, I really believe that Australians do not recognise the contribution that these early pilots made to a wonderful service to the people in the Outback. I am always concerned that these people seem to be always in need of money.

I believe that the taxpayers of Australia would support the commonwealth government's making an even greater contribution to the service. I am strongly of the view that the government should provide the aircraft, and the Royal Flying Doctor Service should have to look after only the running of it. At the end of the day, money is spent in other areas, but I firmly believe that the Royal Flying Doctor Service should have the best aircraft possible, so that the people who fly in the middle of the night to isolated locations can do so in the safest fashion possible, and get there as quickly as possible to bring the people back to medical facilities.

One of the reasons why I was so keen to see the hospital redeveloped at Port Augusta was to ensure that the people

who were brought to the base could have the best medical facilities available to them. I believe they have got that at the hospital at Port Augusta. The people who work there give a great service, so it is a very good combination. I am pleased to support the motion—as I believe every member of the house would be. I believe, also, that the community at large in South Australia strongly supports this organisation. We should never forget the great contribution of all those people who laid the foundation.

Mr CAICA (Colton): I endorse the remarks made by the previous two speakers. I will be very brief in my contribution.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAICA: No, it does not mean 10 minutes. I will do my best to finish in 9½ minutes! The Royal Flying Doctor Service has a great history, and it has made more than a significant contribution to the lives of many people in the Outback and, indeed, many Australians. Things have come a long way since 17 May 1928, when a small aircraft was leased for the princely sum of five shillings per mile and took off on the inaugural flight of what later became the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

We now find, some 75 years later, that the Royal Flying Doctor Service is widely recognised as the world's most unique provider of aero-medical services. Last year it flew over 16 million kilometres across Australia and provided services to around 197 000 patients. Like the Treasurer, I am not good at mathematics but that equates to quite a few people per day who utilise this outstanding service.

I would like to touch on the central operations component of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which is located in Adelaide. While I do not know too many people connected with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, I do know people who have required and utilised that service and who speak very highly of it.

With respect to the central operations, it began in 1939 in Alice Springs and now operates from bases in Adelaide and Port Augusta, and from the Uluru Medical Centre. In 2002, Royal Flying Doctor Service central operations assisted more than 45 000 people, which equates to 123 people for every day of the year. It operates in the most remote areas of Australia, servicing mining, pastoral and other rural communities. I do know John Lynch, who works at the Royal Flying Doctor Service and who is a constituent of mine. He is Executive Officer of central operations.

I will highlight the outstanding and significant contribution that he and his staff, and indeed the various other people who work there, including the volunteers, make to the lives of people who at times require the service. I expect that the Royal Flying Doctor Service is a bit like an ambulance service or a fire service, where you hope you never need them. But it seems that this year 45 000 people, certainly with respect to the central operations, are thankful they exist. They do a fantastic job.

Alice Springs acts to service some of the most remote areas of Australia, as every member in the house realises. It encompasses a full aero-medical service, a preventive health services program, a communications base and a museum and tourist facility. I was very surprised to read that the tourist facility in Alice Springs attracts more than 100 000 national and international visitors each year. It goes to show that there are many reasons to visit Alice Springs, one of which is to visit the tourist facility of the Royal Flying Doctor Service central operations based in that town.

Also within the central operations is the Port Augusta base, and the member for Stuart spoke in some detail about that. I do not need to go into any greater detail because he highlighted the outstanding contribution made by the base at Port Augusta. He also said that there are three aircraft up there. As every member in the house is aware, the member for Stuart is familiar with aircraft. If he says they are good planes, I would back his testament of that. If he knows anything, the honourable member knows planes.

The Port Augusta base was established in 1955, and it services the vast rural and remote areas of South Australia through its emergency retrieval tasks, and also via an extensive primary health program to areas that would otherwise be markedly underserved. The communications staff deal with emergency calls and medical schedules for the Port Augusta service area and surrounds. It is very important that the people who receive those emergency calls have an understanding of the medical requirements. They are an important link in the process. From the understanding that I have gained of the Royal Flying Doctor Service over the last couple of weeks, the success of its operations, together with everything else, is based on its fine communications network and the very confident people working at the communications centre and receiving those emergency calls. Having come from an emergency service, I certainly understand the importance of the people who receive those emergency calls. They have the ability not only to ensure that the most appropriate service is dispatched in the most efficient and effective way but to remain cool, calm and collected at a crucial point in time when others might be falling by the wayside through panic or whatever. The communications centre personnel deserve the tribute of the house as much as anyone else.

Some people might not realise that Adelaide is a base for the central operations. The Adelaide hangar of the Royal Flying Doctor Service has operated aircraft out of Adelaide since 1988. The tasks performed by the crews from the Adelaide hangar differ somewhat from the traditional Royal Flying Doctor activities. A very large portion of their work involves the transfer of patients from country to city hospitals for specialist treatment or a higher level of care. I am sure that members realise that this service has often been referred to by the media as the 'air ambulance'. They perform an outstanding job. People are brought to Adelaide on the Royal Flying Doctor Service planes and the retrieval team is often met by the equally outstanding ambulance service people we have in South Australia. It is a very efficient process. I hope and trust that members of this house will not require that service, but it is very comforting to know that that service is available. It is something of which all South Australians, indeed all Australians, should be very proud.

As the member for Wright said, it is iconic and nothing matches it throughout the world. In addition, the Adelaide hangar is also often called upon to undertake emergency retrieval flights, as I briefly mentioned. Retrieval flights are staffed by a combination of Royal Flying Doctor Service personnel and external retrieval teams based at the larger Adelaide hospitals. All of us know those hospitals well—the Royal Adelaide, the Women's and Children's, the Queen Elizabeth and the Flinders Medical Centre. They have a very important link to the Royal Flying Doctor Service and it makes it a one-stop shop, I guess, in respect of the requirements of injured personnel from outlying and provincial regions. In the retrieval situation, the Royal Flying Doctor Service flight nurse assists with the stabilisation and transport

of the critically ill patient and ensures that implications of altitude, physiology and other matters are considered during stabilisation and transport.

People who have been involved in any form of medical matter know that the most crucial part of a patient's care is the initial stabilisation. The Royal Flying Doctor Service crews have those skills and ensure that patients arrive in a suitable state so that they can receive acute care treatment at their destination. The flight nurse is also responsible for cabin safety as it applies to members of the team and patient. There was an interesting article in the paper recently which suggested that many of the problems associated with aeroplane crashes and so on are by virtue of the fact that the cabin crews might not necessarily be as good at their task as they should be.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr CAICA: By dint, I thank the member for Croydon for that; he is very good at correcting one's English, and I often need it.

Members interjecting:

Mr CAICA: Yes, he did, and I appreciate that. The flight nurse is responsible for cabin safety, which is crucial. I thank the house for allowing me the time to speak on this motion.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I have great pleasure also in being able to say a few words in support of the motion moved by the member for Giles. It has been interesting listening to the contribution of members who have preceded me in this debate—and I will be interested in hearing other members' contributions—and to hear the enormous range of things that can be said about this service. I would like to touch briefly on a number of them and introduce some others. The Royal Flying Doctor Service is really a cultural icon of Australia. When we think about Australia, what it stands for, our culture and what we do, this service is one of the things that comes to mind and it is up there with the best. It certainly is for me and I believe that is the case generally in the community.

I listened to what the member for Giles said—which was complemented by the member for Stuart—in relation to the early days: the idea originating with Reverend John Flynn of the Australian Inland Mission, the contribution of Peel and others to making a reality a dream and a vision of providing medical help, aid and support to people in outback Australia. Of course, we city dwellers have no conception of just how difficult it is for people who live in isolated communities. My only experience of the Outback is as a place where I might go for an enjoyable holiday, a camping trip, but I have never stayed for long periods and experienced the isolation. It is inevitable that people living in isolated communities and on farming and station properties will have accidents or become ill and require medical attention and help. Their children may also require medical attention.

We who live in the city have little conception of what it is like to live in an isolated community and how important it is for a service such as this to provide that medical help and certainty. People are confident living in those areas knowing that, if they need help and certainly if they need to be taken to Adelaide or even to another centre where appropriate medical attention is available, we have a service in Australia that will do the job. When we think about just how the service has developed over the years from that very first inaugural flight in 1928, as the member for Stuart explained, in a de Havilland aircraft, through to today, we can see that things have come a long way. Just a few months ago, on Sunday

11 May, I was given the honour to commission three new state-of-the-art Pilatus aircraft from Switzerland.

I agree with the member for Stuart's comments, especially when you look at the Pilatus aircraft that they have just acquired. I was given the opportunity to go on a little flight with some of the other official guests at the commissioning. We did a 20-minute circle over the metropolitan area in the new Pilatus plane. We were shown over the plane; we saw where the nurse and the doctor sat, as well as all the communications technology and medical equipment that is fitted into these advanced planes. I concur with the point made by the member for Stuart: when you look at what the modern planes have today and think about what they had in those very basic, early days, it shows the fantastic dedication of the early pioneers of the service. They would have been flying in very trying conditions; they would have been landing on inland air strips (probably air strips of varying quality); and they would perhaps have put their own lives at risk in providing this service to others.

So famous is the Royal Flying Doctor Service that, some months ago (and I cannot remember the exact date), they announced that they had won a contract to go to the Middle East and provide expertise helping the countries there adopt a similar service for outback areas. This is a fantastic achievement. I was able to go and talk with John Lynch, the CEO of the central operations group, and he said they are very pleased that they are able to do this. It shows that we are right up there, and we are the best in the world in the provision of an air ambulance retrieval health service to rural and isolated communities. I have not heard since how this project is going, but I am sure that they will be able to lend their fantastic expertise and all the experience that they have gained over 75 years, and that we will see this service adopted in other countries. And good on the Royal Flying Doctor Service: it is another great achievement. The fact that they have been able to do this puts not only the service but also Australia on the map. This is a fantastic example of Australians being innovative and creative.

I would like to spend a couple of minutes talking about the work done by the Department of Human Services and the Royal Flying Doctor Service because, of course, the flying doctor service is a very important plank in the health system in South Australia. The department and the flying doctor service have been working together cooperatively for many years. The flying doctor service provides both a critical and a valuable service to rural, remote and metropolitan areas of South Australia. The government, of course, has a firm commitment to addressing the health needs of all South Australians and will be working with the Royal Flying Doctor Service to achieve that and to ensure access throughout the state.

For the interest of members, the government has committed over \$5 million in the last financial year to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and it does this through direct grants and also air ambulance recoveries. They provide, as others have mentioned, emergency evacuations as well as inter-hospital transfers and clinic flights to rural, remote and isolated communities, involving teams of nurses, doctors, allied health personnel and specialists. They have also changed their role and moved into a broader range of services in the primary health care area.

Unfortunately, I will run out of time in terms of being able to describe all those things, but I particularly want to pay tribute to everyone involved—John Lynch, the CEO; Vanessa Bouilly, the Chair of the Royal Flying Doctor Service; and the

hundreds of volunteers throughout the state who give their time and effort to fundraising. I also congratulate the Variety Club of South Australia for the work it did in the acquisition of the new three Pilatus aircraft that I had the honour to launch earlier this year.

Time expired.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): It is not often that we can come into this place and congratulate an icon. As a child living in a rural area of South Australia but close enough (at Cambrai) not to have to rely on the Royal Flying Doctor Service, I grew up with many stories of the flying doctor service. I remember some of the *Movietone News* stories featuring the pedal wireless, and hearing about Lucy Garlick and John Flynn. So, it is with great pleasure that I today congratulate the Royal Flying Doctor Service on 75 years of outstanding service to the community of South Australia and of service in so many different ways.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service not only supports those who live in rural South Australia; it is also of enormous benefit to those of us who are used to having readily accessible medical services when we move outside the metropolitan area and when we set out to explore our great Australian countryside. In that way, it is of service to us, in that overseas visitors who come to Australia (especially those who do not understand how demanding and harsh our Outback climate is) have the protection, support and comfort of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Certainly, I think that our tourism industry would not be doing nearly as well if we did not have the flying doctor service to provide the link that so many communities need.

We all have our stories about the flying doctor service (even those of us who live in metropolitan Adelaide). Certainly, when my brother and his partner went on a trip across the Simpson Desert I was very pleased that one of the first things they organised was a flying doctor radio to take with them.

Today, I have been asked by a former president of the Legislative Council and a very important minister for the status of women and minister for the arts, the Hon. Anne Levy, to thank the flying doctor service on her behalf for the great service they gave her. Some members may know that when the Hon. Anne Levy retired she, together with most of us, had a list of things that she wanted to do. One of the things at the top of her list was to visit the—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

Ms THOMPSON: Anne Levy retired some years ago.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

Ms THOMPSON: No, I do not have my list, yet. But, Anne Levy certainly had a list of things she wanted to do when she retired. At the top of that list was a visit to the Coongie Lakes, and she had prepared that list for some months. But, like many plans, this one was thwarted. On day two she was walking along a creek bed somewhere off the Strzelecki Track when, at about 11.30 in the morning, she stepped on a stone which turned over, taking her ankle and leg with it. She found she was experiencing great pain and could not put any weight on her leg, and immediately surmised that it was broken. Anne was with a group of people who quickly worked out that the nearest medical help was the nurses' station at Moomba, some five hours away. The only painkillers the group had was Panadol so they gave her a couple, put her in the back of the four-wheel drive and set out to drive the five hours to Moomba. They were a bit nervous because they knew that the nurses clocked off at 5 o'clock

and their estimated time of arrival was very close to that deadline.

During that trip, Anne found that she could not let her foot touch the ground at all. She had to sit for five hours, holding her knee in her arm (virtually holding her leg together) to minimise the impact of the vibrations as her four friends drove her to Moomba. She says that, in a way, once she got to Moomba she does not know an awful lot more of the detail, because the nurses at Moomba quickly worked out that indeed she had very badly broken leg and put her on a morphine drip. After that, some of the details became a little obscure. However, she knows some of the history.

The Flying Doctor Service did not take long to arrive (arriving at about 8 o'clock) and loaded her on board the plane. She says that she does not think that a doctor was on board, but simply a paramedic. Unfortunately, the morphine meant that she did not know even the name of the paramedic or the pilot. However, she would very much like to convey her thanks to those people who cared for her, as well as to the nurses at Moomba.

The trip itself was quite long as, sir, you would understand. However, so many in the world do not understand the distances involved. A patient was already on board the Flying Doctor aircraft, and he needed to be dropped off at Broken Hill. So, from Moomba they flew to Broken Hill and proceeded to Adelaide, where they arrived at about 4 o'clock in the morning. An ambulance was waiting for her at the airport, which took her away to St Andrew's Hospital, where she was expected. She was sent quickly off for an X-ray, which confirmed that the break in her leg was quite complicated and that indeed she needed orthopaedic surgery. She was still on morphine so, by that time, she did not care an awful lot. However, afterwards she was told that if she had not received that prompt attention and been operated on within a 24-hour time limit after her injury, she would have been left with severe debility in her leg for the rest of her life.

Anne was pleased to report to me that, as a result of the intervention of the Flying Doctor Service getting her to Adelaide in time, the operation was so successful that she was able to dance to celebrate Bastille Day this week. So, that is just one of the many stories of city people who have been assisted by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

I want to briefly mention the contribution of other people to the history of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in the time remaining. In addition to the name of John Flynn, from my youth I remember the names of Alf Traeger and Lucy Garlick. You, sir, probably know that Alf Traeger was an Adelaide engineer who was employed as a radio expert and electrician by the Australian Inland Mission. Traeger set his mind to the problem of power generation for the wireless receivers that were being used to summon the Flying Doctor Service. His previous experience with generators and his engineering qualifications led him to invent a hand-cranked generator, which was a cheap and durable solution that provided sufficient power but required two operators—one for the generator and another for the radio itself.

My information is that a spectacular demonstration of the new system was staged at Cloncurry in far western Queensland for Melbourne Cup Day in 1927—two Australian icons coming together! The excitement and possibilities for these new inventions were obviously enormous. After various experiments, Traeger found that it was too difficult for an operator to use one hand to turn the handle while the other hand was being used to operate the morse key. Traeger

overcame the problem by equipping the generator with pedals, and so the famous pedal wireless was created.

Traeger's pedal wireless had a social impact and brought significant changes to life in remote places. The change was more far-reaching than providing help in emergency medical situations. It also helped reduce the isolation and loneliness by enabling people who lived hundreds of kilometres apart to speak with each other. People were still physically isolated from each other, but the loneliness for many was eased, as help and friendship were now only a call away on the pedal wireless. Another important figure was Lucy Garlick.

Time expired.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): It is wonderful to hear the total bipartisan support on this motion to congratulate the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and I certainly add my congratulations. I move:

That the question be now put.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Torrens may wish to have a conversation with other members of the chamber, but not by shouting across the chamber. If it is her desire to have such a conversation, she should sit with them.

The house divided on the motion:

AYES (20)

Brindal, M. K.	Brokenshire, R. L.
Buckby, M. R.	Chapman, V. A.
Evans, I. F.	Goldsworthy, R. M.
Gunn, G. M.	Hall, J. L.
Hamilton-Smith, M. L. J.	Hanna, K.
Kerin, R. G.	Kotz, D. C.
Matthew, W. A.	Maywald, K.A.
McFetridge, D.	Meier, E. J. (teller)
Penfold, E. M.	Redmond, I. M.
Scalzi, G.	Venning, I. H.

NOES (22)

Atkinson, M. J.	Bedford, F. E.
Breuer, L. R.	Caica, P.
Ciccarello, V.	Conlon, P. F.
Geraghty, R. K. (teller)	Hill, J. D.
Key, S. W.	Koutsantonis, T.
Lomax-Smith, J. D.	McEwen, R. J.
O'Brien, M. F.	Rankine, J. M.
Rau, J. R.	Snelling, J. J.
Stevens, L.	Such, R. B.
Thompson, M. G.	Weatherill, J. W.
White, P. L.	Wright, M. J.

PAIR(S)

Brown, D.C.	Rann, M.D.
Williams, M. R.	Foley, K. O.

Majority of 2 for the noes.

Motion thus negatived.

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): I congratulate the member for Giles on this motion congratulating the Royal Flying Doctor Service on 75 years of extraordinary service to rural and outback Australia. The Minister for Health has asked me to make several remarks that she was unable to include in her own contribution to this debate, and they relate to the recent commissioning of three new Royal Flying Doctor aircraft by both the Premier and her in May this year. The commissioning of the three PC12s was related to the anniversary celebrations of the Royal Flying Doctor Service that we are debating this morning. The three aircraft were purchased

from Switzerland and the cost of these aircraft was largely underwritten by the Variety Club.

With respect to the contribution that has been made by the Variety Club to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, these aircraft will have the logo of the Variety Club emblazoned on their fuselage. The Variety Club has contributed in excess of half a million dollars towards the purchase of these three new aircraft, and that is an extraordinary contribution by a voluntary organisation to this exemplary service. The first of these aircraft came into service in early 2002 and the balance are in the process of now being commissioned. With the addition of three new aircraft there will be a total of nine PC12 aircraft in the central operation fleet and one Piper Chieftain. Each new PC12 costs around \$6 million to fit out, so we can see the major contribution the Variety Club is making by way of its fundraising contribution.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr O'BRIEN: It is. The government has also contributed over \$5 million in the last financial year to the Royal Flying Doctor Service through direct DHS grants and air ambulance recoveries.

Turning to the history of the Royal Flying Doctor Service over the past 75 years, it is really a story in part inextricably linked with that of the founder, the Very Reverend John Flynn. It is a story of achievement that gave courage to the pioneers of the inland. In 1911 the Rev. John Flynn took up his first appointment at Beltana Mission in the north of South Australia, very close to where I spent my later teenage years. Flynn became very close to the people of the outback and in 1912 he was appointed as the first superintendent of Australian Inland Mission, the bush department of the Presbyterian church. Flynn began his missionary work at a time when only two doctors serviced an area of some 300 000 square kilometres in Western Australia and 1.5 million square kilometres in the Northern Territory. Flynn began establishing bush hospitals and hostels in remote outback areas and in doing so alleviated much of the dread associated with the great loneliness of the inland. While they provided an extremely important service, in reality they only scratched the surface of caring for people in the outback. The problems of distance and communication remained, with many people dying from lack of medical treatment.

Flynn told many tales to illustrate the need for medical care in the outback. One such story was that of Jimmy Darcy, a stockman hurt in a fall near Halls Creek in Western Australia in August 1917. Found badly injured, Darcy was transported by friends to Halls Creek, 30 miles away, a 12-hour journey. There was only one person who knew first aid—

The SPEAKER: Order! The members for Unley and for Morialta may wish to have a conversation, but it would be more orderly if they were to sit on the benches rather than turn their back on the Speaker.

Mr O'BRIEN: That was Mr F.W. Tuckett, the postmaster, who quickly saw that Darcy's injuries were of an extremely serious nature. After trying unsuccessfully to contact doctors by telegraph at Wyndham and Derby, he finally thought to telegraph 2 000 miles to his former first aid lecturer, Dr Holland, in Perth. Following diagnosis by Morse code, Holland went on to instruct Tuckett through a painful bladder operation with a pen knife.

Ms Thompson: That's amazing!

Mr O'BRIEN: Yes, isn't it? Holland then set out on a 10-day journey from Perth to Halls Creek by cattle boat, Model T Ford, a horse-drawn sulky and finally on foot. When

he arrived he found that, although the operation was successful, Darcy, weakened by undiagnosed malaria and an abscessed appendix, had died the day before. In relation to the abscessed appendix, my grandfather lived in an area of outback New South Wales west of Wee Waa and also died of an abscessed appendix in the mid 1930s, so I can see from my own family experience the impact a service like this can make on people who pioneered the opening up of rural and outback Australia. The tragedy elbowed even war from many Australian newspapers, and more than any other single event attracted nationwide attention to the need for doctors, hospitals and nurses in outback Australia.

By 1903 the first powered flight had taken place, and by 1918 the aeroplane was beginning to prove itself as a reliable means of transport. Radio—then very much in its infancy—was also displaying a remarkable capacity and capability to link people thousands of miles apart. Flynn saw the potential in these developments and, together with a Lieutenant Clifford Peel (a young Victorian medical student who had developed an interest in aviation), he started to work up the concept of a flying doctor service.

Peel, having heard of Flynn's ideas, combined them with his own and wrote to Flynn from the ship which was carry him to the war in France. The gist of Peel's letter (dated 21 November 1917) was that aeroplanes could overcome many of the transport problems of the inland. In particular, he envisaged a missionary doctor administering to the needs of the men and women scattered between Wyndham and Cloncurry, and Darwin and Marree—an enormous area of Outback Australia.

Peel outlined the cost of adapting aircraft for the AIM's medical work, the speed and distance that the early planes flew, and the support facilities required. Flynn was immediately impressed by Peel's ideas and published them in the church's *Inlander* magazine in 1917. Unfortunately, Peel did not live to see the enormous impact that his ideas were to have. He was killed whilst flying over German lines in France shortly before World War I ended, but his remarkable vision lives on today in what is now the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

John Flynn set his considerable fundraising ability to work for several years, and by 1928 the AIM had sufficient money to establish a flying doctor scheme. Supporters of this project included the industrialist, H.V. McKay, manufacturer of the Sunshine Harvester; Hudson Fysh of Qantas; and, on the ground, George Simpson, a young Melbourne doctor who had heard Flynn speak many years before. On 15 May 1928, the Aerial Medical Service was established as a one-year experiment at Cloncurry in Queensland. This first experimental year of service proved to be a tremendous success, and fortunately it survived the economic catastrophe that we now know as the Great Depression.

Time expired.

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): I join with the rest of the house in congratulating the Royal Flying Doctor Service on achieving 75 years of service and providing a valuable lifeline for Outback South Australia. I believe that is almost axiomatic. I actually congratulate all members opposite for their new-found profound interest in the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and I hope that will be translated into additional resources for this service. I also point out to you, Mr Speaker, that this house has many fine traditions, one of which is freedom of speech. Debate has just concluded on whether this matter should be truncated, and I did something that I would

not normally do, that is, I voted against the continuation of the debate. As I said, I would not normally do that, but there are other matters listed on the *Notice Paper* today that are profound importance for the people of South Australia.

Ms Bedford interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: Nobody. The member for Florey says—

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Unley to come back to the substance of the motion before the chair.

Mr BRINDAL: The substance of the motion before the chair is that I was the school principal in Cooke for three years, and I had a lot to do with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. There is no-one who would congratulate the Flying Doctor Service more than me, but I hope that all members of this house will consider not only this matter but all the matters listed on the *Notice Paper* today and make sure that they all get a fair hearing before we go home this afternoon..

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): I would also like to speak in support of this motion. The Royal Flying Doctor Service is, by any standards, an organisation with a remarkable history, and it has an ongoing record of exceptional achievement. We have heard some extraordinary stories from members who have spoken to this motion today, and I think it is important that we speak to this issue.

Looking at this subject in fairly statistical terms provides some insight into how good the Royal Flying Doctor Service is and, similarly, how important is ongoing medical care for rural and remote communities. In 2001-02, the Royal Flying Doctor Service attended 196 996 patients; performed 25 977 aerial evacuations; flew 16 602 491 kilometres; made 49 210 landings; and provided 57 085 telehealth consultations.

Ms Rankine: That's amazing!

Mrs GERAGHTY: I think these figures are staggering. As the member for Wright says, it is absolutely amazing, particularly when it is considered that this service operates 40 aircraft and has a total of 511 staff Australia-wide.

As most members would be aware, the Royal Flying Doctor Service was established by the Reverend John Flynn (a Presbyterian minister)—

Ms Breuer: He's on the \$20 note.

Mrs GERAGHTY:—and he is also on the \$20 note—who began his missionary work with the Australian Inland Mission at a time when only two doctors served an area of 300 000 square kilometres in Western Australia and 150 000 square metres in the Northern Territory. Flynn began establishing bush hospitals and hostels in remote outback areas, and this alleviated some of the difficulties and isolation of inland life. We can all appreciate how isolated people in the Outback can be at times. Whilst an important service was being provided, it was in no way an adequate or comprehensive means of providing for the medical needs of the many folk who lived in the Outback. The problems of distance and communication remained a grim reality with many people dying from a lack of medical treatment. Regrettably, even today some people die because we cannot get treatment to them in time.

Flynn saw the potential for aviation to solve the problems of distance in the Outback and set about implementing ideas and raising funds. By 1928, sufficient money had been raised to establish a flying doctor scheme. On 15 May 1928, the Aerial Medical Service was established as a one-year experiment at Cloncurry in Queensland. By 1932, the Australian

Inland Mission had a network of 10 small hospitals and it had suffered considerable ongoing financial hardship.

In 1934, the Presbyterian Church handed the service a new organisation, the Australian Aerial Medical Service. This then led to the establishment of additional operational bases and the expansion of the service throughout inland Australia. In 1942, The Australian Aerial Medical Service was renamed the Flying Doctor Service and the Queen granted the 'royal' prefix in 1955. The growth of the Royal Flying Doctor Service is a realisation of Flynn's idea of a mantle of safety for those living in the Outback.

However, the Royal Flying Doctor Service is more than just a flying medical service. Its existence has played an important role in allowing for the settlement of much of inland Australia. Serious illness or injury often meant death for those living in our remote areas. The ability to access speedy medical assistance fundamentally has changed the nature of life in the Outback. The use of communications technology is integral in allowing the Royal Flying Doctor Service to do much of its work. This was especially so in the early days of the service, when pilots and doctors relied on communication as a means of overcoming the immense distance that separated patients and doctors, with radio being used as a means of assisting pilots and doctors in quickly locating those needing assistance. Flynn was active in creating the infrastructure to allow the service to operate, and this saw a progression from a radio powered by a hand-cranked generator to the pedal radio up to the telecommunications infrastructure that is in place today.

The use of radio technology saw an end to the relaying of urgent messages via telephone links, and even the physical relay of messages. In a contemporary setting where the volume of information available is staggering and the means of communicating it are highly sophisticated, one can only admire the effort that was put in to establish a core component of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Interestingly, only 2 per cent of calls are now made by radio. However, despite the evolution of communications technology, Flynn is quoted as saying of the development of the Royal Flying Doctor Service:

Without a wireless transmitting station at every isolated homestead, an aerial ambulance service would be 75 per cent futile.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service is an organisation with an extraordinary history—and certainly we have heard quite a bit of that today—and an impressive list of achievements. In 75 years it has established itself as an enduring Australian icon and a testament to Australian ingenuity. Importantly, the Royal Flying Doctor Service continues to provide Flynn's mantle of protection to those in remote areas. It is a guarantee, as best we can have it, of safety in a very difficult environment.

I want to mention quickly the role of women in the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Women took on the role of radio operator on the stations and were able to very competently develop a 'bushy' type of community over the air. I understand that over time this became the 'gala session' and allowed neighbours to communicate with each other, and those neighbours could be hundreds of kilometres away. The session was clearly named after the chattering of our grey and pink native parrots. I also want to follow on from the member for Reynell, who mentioned Sister Lucy Garlick, who actually drew up a numbered chart of the human body so that it could be shared between the isolated residents and the doctor. So, when someone rang up with an illness, a com-

munication over the radio could have gone something like, 'I've got a rash on my No. 20,' and the doctor would say, 'Rub some No. 46 on it.'

Time expired.

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): I, too, would like to add to this morning's contributions. It will not surprise members that I want to follow on from the angle of what women have achieved through the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Before I go into that, I want to point out to members that, while the flying doctor service is primarily for people of the Outback, we need to bear in mind that flying doctor territory is just one hour's drive from most capital cities in Australia. As we heard earlier this morning, it now provides an ever-increasing number of tourists visiting Australia's remote locations with a service. I will touch briefly on the establishment of the service. No one single factor or event gave rise to the Australian Aerial Medical Service. Rev. Flynn tirelessly lobbied churches, businesses and governments in the early years not only to convince them of the necessity to establish this service but to fund it—funds always being a difficulty. Alice Springs base was built with the assistance of funds raised by South Australian women's organisations such as the Country Women's Association. Apex clubs also raised £600 to provide the pedal radio sets for needy folk in the Outback who had no other way of establishing communication to the flying doctor service.

This morning I want to talk about the first woman who became involved as a doctor in the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Dr Jean White, who joined the service in 1937. She gained her degree from Melbourne university in 1929 and became part of the service when she answered an advertisement in newspaper advertisements that had been placed in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane for an appointment based at the Croydon District Hospital in Northern Queensland, which also worked in cooperation with the Normanton base, and I will speak more about that later. The advertisement boasted the 'beautiful, mild, dry winter climate' as an inducement to people who might want to become flying doctors, and applicants were asked to telegraph their credentials before posting them. One can only imagine the cost involved in an exercise of that nature, where their credentials might have covered academic periods and their experiences after they had finished their courses.

Jean's application competed against many others from men, who took up the majority of positions for doctors' placements in universities. It enabled her to secure an initial appointment for one year with a salary of £600 and, in what might be seen as an enlightened move, with an additional £300 made available for an approved course of postgraduate study. She was obviously an exceptional woman and had never been in a plane before her appointment. She had come from never having been in a plane to, in one year alone, travelling 28 467 miles in one aircraft, without counting the dozens of trips made in others. Apparently she never flew in a plane on her own and, although I have researched this widely over the last few days, I have not been able to establish whether she had a licence of her own. She always said she found it better not to fly as she was often required to tend to a critically ill patient while in the air. We can all recognise the need for having a pilot as well as a doctor.

Speaking of her life at that time in Queensland she said that, although she lived in cattle country, she only found goat's milk available to drink, which fortunately she found to be really good. Understandably, in the area at that time

there were great hardships and, although there were a lot of cattle, very little sheep meat was available and, therefore, goats became part of the menu. Jean noted wryly at one stage that, thankfully, people managed to acquire a taste for it in time.

The Croydon area had thrived on the goldrushes of the 1870s, and, although when Dr Jean came to the place it was a shadow of its former self, she was kept busy with radio and telephone consults—and the member for Torrens touched on the chart which was numbered and which became a huge help to the people of the Outback. She also worked in the hospital, and flew out to the outlying camps, homesteads and missions. Interestingly, the Queensland government at this time was busy trying to set up a rival medical air service. The funds which were raised by Rev. Flynn helped to put together the Normanton base, part of where Dr Jean operated.

Jean was involved in a forced landing during her time in the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Wright or the member for Torrens wishes to have a conversation with the member for Unley, they should go and sit with him.

Ms BEDFORD: It was made more famous and dramatic by an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* which described Dr Jean (and the female members of the parliament might find this rather cute) as 'a young, golden haired, vivacious woman'. Surely none of the other doctors managed a description of that variety!

The first aircraft she used was the Victory, and it was later replaced by a Fox Moth, described by Hudson Fysh, who was founder of Qantas, as 'a smaller, cheaper, easier aircraft to get in and out of bad landing grounds; more reliable yet single engine'. This plane was based at Normanton, and Dr Jean began her work with Qantas pilot Douglas Tennant. The event happened on 27 January 1939, and it is important for members to realise the sort of pioneering that was still occurring at the beginning of the war. Australia is a vast country—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for West Torrens will have his opportunity.

Ms BEDFORD:—and delivering medical expertise in such far flung areas was really difficult. Dr Jean and pilot Doug took off one morning to Mitchell River Station and other outlying settlements on Cape Yorke Peninsula. Although the weather was clear when they started, they ran into a cyclonic storm. We all know the ferocity of weather in those areas. Visibility was poor and fuel was low, so the pilot was forced to land on the flats near the coast. He warned Dr Jean—who, fortunately, was not tending a patient at the time—to brace herself for a crash landing.

Mr SCALZI: I rise on a point of order, sir. The member has copious notes and I understand she is reading from a book or sections of a book.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. If the honourable member is reading from a book, she will acknowledge it, I am sure. Members know the seriousness of plagiarism.

Ms BEDFORD: I freely admit I have read the chapter on Dr Jean White from *The Flying Doctor Story* by Michael Page, but I am paraphrasing the story of the flight that crashed in the far north country. This is merely to show the house that women have been involved in the pioneering spirit of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. I want to continue with the story.

The landing went well until the aircraft hit a mud patch and somersaulted. The damage to the aircraft was considerable. Luckily, no-one had broken bones. They were forced to remain where they were in that un hospitable and unreachable country for several days. Luckily, they had emergency rations on board. More importantly, they were almost eaten by mosquitoes and close to crocodiles—so laugh if you will, member for Hartley, this was an important event.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Florey reflects on the member for Hartley, who I can see is not the least bit amused.

Ms BEDFORD: Well, he's been reflecting on me, sir.

The SPEAKER: May I tell the member for Florey not to reflect on the chair. It is a dangerous occupation.

Ms BEDFORD: Okay. They were able to hook up a radio receiver, on which they could not transmit but on which they did hear that people were looking for them. Several days later they were eventually rescued, because they had the foresight to be flashing mirrors to enable them to be found in that terrain covered in shrubbery.

Importantly, the leader of the party was one of Qantas's founders, Fergus McMaster, for the association with Qantas in the early days of its establishment is parallel to the Royal Flying Doctor Service; and one of Qantas's best known pilots Eric Donaldson, who was also involved with the RFDS.

The other person, about whom I want to speak briefly, is Sister Myra Blanch. The idea of a flying sister being involved with the Royal Flying Doctor Service was conceived in the early 1930s, but it took some 15 years until she was appointed and attached to the Broken Hill office. She was a tall, strong woman and had the nickname of Big Jim. Again we see women being—

Time expired.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): I support the motion.

Members interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I am offended by the remarks of members opposite who made an art of—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will not respond to interjections: they are out of order.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you, sir. I congratulate the honourable member for her motion that this house congratulate the Royal Flying Doctor Service on achieving 75 years of service and providing a vital lifeline support to rural and Outback Australia. It shows the commitment this government has to Outback and rural communities. Given that the number of members opposite representing rural areas is declining, it befalls the Labor Party to fly the flag for rural communities. More Independents are being elected by rural communities, because they have lost faith in the city-centric Liberal Party members, who have forgotten their bush roots and abandoned those communities that they once served so well. Indeed, Sir Thomas Playford would look down disapprovingly on members opposite for the way in which they have abandoned rural communities. But we on this side of the house have a firm commitment to those communities.

The RFDS operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year—unlike the Liberal Party. It services Australia from 320 bases around Australia, covering an area the size of Western Europe. The service provides reliable medical, emergency and health care services to all people living, working and travelling outside the metropolitan area. That is important not only for those communities who reside outside metropolitan Adelaide but also for the people who visit our great country

and travel to Outback Australia. We might not realise this, but Outback Australia is romanticised by Europeans and people from other countries as being the last frontier and the last great wilderness. It is harsh, unforgiving, but very beautiful.

Ms Bedford interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, like the member for Florey. The way in which it was set up by Reverend John Flynn, a Presbyterian minister, is nostalgic. It shows how the dedication of volunteers can make a difference to people's lives. The service was the first comprehensive aero-medical organisation in the world, and remains unique for the range of services that it provides to regional Outback areas of Australia.

On 15 May 1928, the Australian Aerial Medical Service (as it was then known) made its first life saving flight. The member for Hartley might not know this, so he should listen. In 1942, the organisation was renamed the Flying Doctor Service. In 1995, the organisation became the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia.

The RFDS has a web site which details its history. There are some very funny stories about the way in which it first provided medical advice. They numbered tablets on a chart within a box.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Well, I will speak about it as well. Doctors speaking from anywhere—because they first utilised radios, even from aircraft—could ask, by number, where the pain was being felt and suggest, by number, what tablets to give. For example, say you had a pain in the chest, they would suggest a number of the tablet to take. Apparently, many tall stories grew up around the service but this one is typical. A station manager was told to give his wife a No. 9 tablet. Later he told the doctor, 'We had run out of the No. 9 tablets but we gave her one No. 5 and one No. 4, and she came good right away.' The RFDS is a great service.

The member for Hartley shakes his head in disgust. I think the RFDS does a wonderful job. I am shocked that he does not approve of the RFDS and the service it provides. I think that the member for Hartley should visit outback and regional areas to see the service it provides—

Mr SCALZI: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I fully support the Royal Flying Doctor, and I think the honourable member is misrepresenting me and should withdraw his comment.

The SPEAKER: Is the member for Hartley offended by some remark that the member for West Torrens has made?

Mr SCALZI: Mr Speaker, I am offended because I fully support the Royal Flying Doctor and he is misrepresenting—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hartley needs to specify what it is that the member for Torrens has said that he finds offensive.

Mr SCALZI: The honourable member said that I was shaking my head, and therefore I was not supporting the Royal Flying Doctor.

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

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am surprised that the member for Hartley only supports one Royal Flying Doctor.

The SPEAKER: The member for West Torrens will focus on the subject matter before the chair, not on the non-verbal communications or non-communications of members in the chamber.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Yet again, sir, you have set me on the right course, and I shall follow your ruling as I always do.

The SPEAKER: Let me reassure the member for West Torrens that I do not need reassurance.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I realise, sir, that I am in your capable hands. It is easy for people who live in metropolitan Adelaide to take health services for granted. I have noticed the Minister for Health and the former government struggling to provide health services. We complain readily when we have to wait maybe half an hour or an hour, or sometimes even wait months for elective surgery. We take those things for granted and we complain readily, but imagine how people in rural and remote communities feel about medical services and what they have to put up with. If it were not for the RFDS, I am not sure how the government would provide affordable and good prompt service to the communities. I heard the member for Stuart say that we should provide aeroplanes for the RFDS. That may well be a very good idea, but I remind the member for Stuart that he was in government for eight long years and the RFDS was not provided with aircraft by the former Liberal government. Maybe that might explain why so many of our Independent members of parliament represent rural and regional areas in this place rather than the Liberal Party.

I fully commend the motion. In conclusion, I congratulate the member for Giles on her motion and I commend the RFDS, which now has offices based in my electorate at Mile End, and they are welcome—

Ms Ciccarello interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: They moved from Norwood. They got smart and moved to the western suburbs and closer to the airport. We on this side of the house—as I am sure do members opposite—fully support the RFDS and we will do everything we can to support it in the future. I am stunned that more members of the opposition are not speaking to this motion.

Motion carried.

SALISBURY COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE BRIGADE

Ms RANKINE (Wright): I move:

That this house congratulates the Salisbury Country Fire Service Brigade on 60 years of outstanding voluntary service to the people of the northern suburbs.

I have great pleasure in moving this motion. I had the pleasure of attending the 60th anniversary celebrations at Salisbury on 25 May. I am sure that you, Mr Speaker, and other members of this house would agree that 60 years of continuing operation is truly a remarkable achievement for any organisation. It is particularly remarkable for an organisation such as this when you consider the enormous individual commitment required from each and every person involved, the many hours of training that these people have to put in—all voluntary—and the many hours they spend attending emergency situations.

It also needs to be recognised that it is not only the members who commit to an organisation such as this but also their families. Their families have functions put on hold, weekends put on hold, and in many instances have seen their loved ones go interstate to help in emergency situations. For 60 years, the Salisbury CFS, the members and their families, have been making an outstanding contribution. The Salisbury CFS is an organisation greatly respected by other emergency services and community organisations. That was indicated very strongly by the number of the people who attended this particular celebration at the old institute, which was packed with people. Of course, the Salisbury council was very ably

represented by the Mayor, Tony Zappia, and a number of councillors.

The Chief Officer of the CFS attended, as did other representatives from CFS units. The South Australian Volunteer Fire Brigade Association, represented by their President, Cam Stafford, the CES, the police and a whole range of business people also attended. It was a truly magnificent function. For the past 60 years, the Salisbury CFS has been protecting and saving lives and property. As I said, they have been supporting other organisations in their important work and they have been encouraging and involving young people in our community. The Salisbury CFS is greatly respected and a much loved organisation within that community. I have to say that it was one of the things that struck a very welcoming cord with me when I moved from the country and came to Salisbury in early 1986 to work for the newly elected member for Briggs as he was then—we call him 'Premier' now.

One of the things that struck a cord with me was the CFS siren. Having lived, as I said, for the past 13½ years in the country, I was used to sirens. Every day at midday in Peterborough, the power station siren was sounded. Therefore, for someone who was adjusting to the city way of life, I can say that the siren was one of those very comforting things. What I did not know about the siren and what I think is fascinating is that it was an old air raid siren from a munitions factory that was established as part of the war effort in the 1940s. While pagers are now used to summon our firefighters, the siren is still sounded for major emergencies and on Remembrance Day each year. In 1943, after a large fire at the munitions factory, a group of local residents, including Allan Dudley King, formed a township brigade to help complement the brigade operating at the munitions factory.

Dudley King passed away not so long ago and I know that he is greatly missed by that brigade. The district council placed a levy of sixpence on landlords to assist in the provision of equipment. I know members will think that has a fairly familiar ring to it but, rather than the high-tech communications network, specialised equipment and fire trucks that we have today, their sixpenny levy bought them some knapsacks. It was not until 1952 that the brigade got its first fire appliance, a converted four-wheel wartime Blitz buggy, which was kept next to the driver's house and again funded out of another levy—threepence in the pound on ratepayers. I can remember my old dad owning a Blitz truck. He used it for carting wood and thought that you could not go past them. He could not have been far wrong in his assessment, because the Salisbury Blitz truck was not pensioned off until 1983.

I think that it is appropriate to pay tribute to those whose commitment, dedication and damn hard work saw the establishment of this brigade and have seen it go from a small group of volunteers who fought fires with knapsacks on their backs to the highly skilled, highly trained organisation and well-equipped, professional organisation it is today. The Salisbury CFS has been extremely fortunate in the strong leadership it has attracted and developed. Many people have contributed over many years—far too many to name, but I think it is appropriate to make special mention of Allan (Dudley) King and also Frank Dunn.

The brigade has one of the highest call-out rates in the state and responds to fires, road accidents and floods, and is involved in search and rescue, hazard reduction and much more. Over the years, the Salisbury brigade has experienced

some of the worst tragedies imaginable, including the very recent Ghan/bus crash and the B-double petrol tanker rollover on the Salisbury Highway-Port Wakefield Road intersection, not to mention its involvement in Ash Wednesday. It is indicative of the quality of the people there that, on the evening of the Ghan/bus crash when I went to the CFS to see the people after I thought they had finished on site, they were caring for and supporting the young people who had attended probably their first experience of a major tragedy like this, and the care they were extending to them was amazing. I was there just to lend support, and the lieutenant came to me, put his arm around me and asked whether I was all right. That was after he had spent hours on site.

There have been some lighter moments at the Salisbury CFS, such as the time they had to rescue three people locked in their own toilet; and former group captain Frank Dunn will never forget the time he was run over by his lieutenant.

I had the honour on that particular occasion to present national medals to a number of the brigade members. Val Conniff received the national medal. Val was one of the first female firefighters to join the Salisbury CFS—and I am proud to say that the number of women has increased substantially. A lot of women are involved in the Salisbury CFS, both actively and as auxiliary members. Robert Eime also received his national medal. I was given a list of stories to read during the presentation and I will not go through all of them but I think it is worth recording that, while Robert was deployed with the Victorians during the bushfires, he managed to bog the Victorian appliance on the first day and puncture a tyre on the second day, so his colleagues were really paying him out!

Geoff Brown received his first clasp on the national medal, and Ray Cutting received his first clasp. Ray has been in the brigade for many years and is much loved. He was fondly known as Uncle Arthur—until recently. When attending a call, he rushed to the station, quickly changed into his turn-out gear, grabbed his trusty helmet and radio and jumped into the appliance cabin trying to listen to the radio. He wondered why the driver was giving him a funny look and a broad smile. It was then he realised he was trying to listen to his shoe! Since then, he has been called Agent 86. He had left his radio in the station. Neville Jago received his first and second clasps, and Ron Pullen received his second clasp. I have had some experiences of my own with Ron and, certainly—

Ms Bedford: Surely not!

Ms RANKINE: I will clarify that. The recreation park was on fire on a day in one December, and I received a phone call from the captain of the Salisbury CFS to let me know. I happened to have my CFS gear in the boot of my car. I was at my accountant's office doing my tax return. I threw my receipts at him and said, 'I have to go: my electorate is on fire.' So, I hopped in the car and raced up the Golden Way. A police officer would not let me through the line, so the command vehicle came down with Ron driving it, channelled me around to another road and I had to change into my CFS gear on the side of the road—which was an interesting experience. Ron then—

Ms Bedford interjecting:

Ms RANKINE: Well, I put my trousers on and dropped my skirt, but I forgot to take off my pantihose, so I was absolutely terrified that something would happen so that I would end up in hospital and they would strip me off and find that this silly woman had a pair of pantihose on under her CFS outfit. Anyway, as I was worrying about this, Ron drove

around the top of the stormwater retention dam which was built for a one in 100-year flood, and I think we had three inches of clearance on each side of the vehicle. The captain was sitting in the front seat and he screamed very loudly at Ron so that we nearly went down a great ditch and over the side of the dam. He then had to reverse along the top of the dam. So, I was sitting there praying and thinking, 'I am going to end up in hospital. I haven't seen the flames yet, but I will be mortally wounded in one way or another.'

The Salisbury CFS has shown real commitment to its community in a number of ways: it not only attends emergency situations but it also carries out support roles in a range of areas. They attend the trots on a regular basis, guiding parkers; they help with Christmas functions; and they help at the Christmas pageant. They support a range of organisations in their endeavours. They have strongly supported my annual community fire safety day. As we know from the devastating fires in Canberra, it does not matter whether or not you live in a metropolitan area: fire is a constant threat. I have spent a number of years trying to build a level of awareness in my community about the need for vigilance and sensible approaches that householders in metropolitan Adelaide can take to ensure their safety, should a fire hit. The Salisbury CFS has been a great supporter of that fire safety day, always coming along with a truck and a strong contingent of officers in uniform. They pass out information, engage young children and generally help to educate the community.

I also mention briefly the involvement of young people in the Salisbury CFS. Many volunteer organisations find it difficult to engage and keep young people. That is not the case at Salisbury. They have put in place a number of things to ensure that they involve young people. They encourage, care for and support these young people: they provide them with guidance and help develop their skills: they help build self-esteem and self-worth. The young people learn that they are really making a difference in their community and, most of all and most importantly for young people, have an enormous amount of fun.

I am proud to be a member of the Salisbury CFS and I know the Premier is proud of his involvement and of the membership of the Salisbury CFS. Each and every one of its members has every right to be proud of their commitment to, involvement in and care that they show their community, and have shown for over 60 years.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): As shadow minister, on behalf of the opposition I am pleased to support this important motion. Sixty years is a long time for any brigade, agency or, indeed, any organisation to operate. It is exciting to see the commitment and the continuity of volunteer family after volunteer family involved in supporting the protection of people and property in the Salisbury area for that 60-year period. In fact, Mr Speaker, as you well know, in electorates such as yours brigades are celebrating as many as 75 years' involvement of the CFS.

Salisbury is an interesting brigade and is, in fact, one of the very busy brigades because there has been so much growth in that area. Sixty years ago, Salisbury was a vibrant agricultural area, with very little housing but a lot of wheat, as it was rich, fertile country. Many of the fires back then would have been as a result of burn-offs getting out of control, when they were burning stubble and scrub. So, 60 years ago, it would have involved traditional bushfire management.

We have seen so much growth in the northern suburbs, particularly over the last 20 years, that the Salisbury CFS is required to do a lot of structural fire work, as well as, sadly, assisting at road crash incidents. Therefore, volunteer training, the amount of time they put in and the number of volunteers they need has grown and not decreased over that period. From my recollection, when I had the privilege of being minister, and now as shadow minister, supporting and assisting where we can with all emergency services (in this case, the Country Fire Service), I know that Salisbury has continued to do an outstanding job.

I also acknowledge the member for Wright in moving this motion because, on numerous occasions, she has talked to me about her experiences as a volunteer supporting Salisbury CFS. One day, I look forward to perhaps being in a strike team with the member for Wright so that, if there is a fire where brigades have to go away, we could go on a bipartisan basis and support a strike team from the Salisbury brigade. It would probably do us good as members of parliament if those of us who are volunteers did more direct work now and again with other volunteers.

Challenges face not only the Salisbury CFS but all Country Fire Service brigades in the future—not least because it is getting harder for many people to find the time to be volunteers, and this is something that parliament will have to continue to address in the future. I know that, after hours—that is, evenings and weekends—most of the brigades in these peri-urban areas have plenty of volunteers who are available to attend incidents. However, during the day it is becoming more difficult. I therefore want to put on the record our appreciation of those who are, in one way or another, able to manage their days so that they can also be available during the main working part of the day.

In my brigade at Mount Compass, we are about to celebrate a special birthday. I also note that Currency Creek had its special anniversary only couple of Saturday evenings ago. Right across the state, we will see more and more brigades celebrating either a 50th birthday or, as I said earlier in my remarks, anything up to a 75th anniversary as an active brigade. That is an enormous amount of time, knowing that South Australia became a colony only in 1836 yet, in 2003, we have brigades which have been active for 75 years—a long time.

As shadow minister for emergency services, on behalf of the opposition I am very pleased to support this motion. Almost on a daily basis, I wonder where we would be without these magnificent volunteers and their families, such as those of the Salisbury Country Fire Service Brigade, to protect life and property in our state. I congratulate them and wish them well for the future.

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): I rise to support the motion of the member for Wright, particularly because the Salisbury CFS and the Tea Tree Gully CFS work actively together and a lot of their areas share a common boundary. Whilst I am not a member of the Tea Tree Gully CFS, because it is not within the electorate of Florey, I have a good relationship with the many people in that organisation and, of course, some of the residents of Florey are involved in the unit.

The spirit, goodwill and achievement of the CFS volunteers stand out across the state. They provide their local community with an at-call service, with little or no priority or thought for their own circumstances or convenience. In particular, I think of Ash Wednesday in 1983, when I, along with many thousands of other Adelaide citizens, was in my

home with my airconditioner on watching the smoke haze engulf the city. As the story unfolded on television that day (I was nursing my small baby), I could not believe the horror of what was happening and the fact that so many people were able to drop what they were doing to join the incredible effort to try to turn back the horror that would engulf the city. We all know how close we came to total devastation that day, with the loss of life and possessions being enormous. I pay a particular tribute to those people who were involved that day.

Now we have over 400 locations from which brigades operate, and this involves a significant group of people who are well-trained and prepared and who have extensive capabilities. They are willing to volunteer to protect our property, land and communities, and they provide a great sense of security and goodwill for us all. I do not know how we would go about replacing such a force who, obviously, could not be paid.

The CFS recognises that the provision of services to country and remote areas is a particular challenge, given the large size of our state. They have six regional offices, and they focus efforts around Adelaide, but they are accessible to country South Australians.

The web site of the CFS provides its history and shows us that it grew from days when farming families organised themselves into small groups to confront wildfires on their properties that ravaged their stock and destroyed their livelihoods and homes. From the old times of the bushfire brigades, the CFS now has state-of-the-art technology and has communications and emergency service equipment to ensure that its work is handled in a very efficient manner.

Our volunteers are strong and committed, resourceful and progressive, and they do our community proud. Some 17 000 people volunteer their time, and they train and serve in a wide variety of emergency situations. Their backgrounds are very diverse, and those men and women learn new skills and form a great camaraderie with their mates on the various units and bases. As I said, they come from a wide background—professionals, tradespeople, working people and people from all walks of life. You may not realise, but the person next to you on the bus or at the local shopping centre may be a CFS person who has to risk his or her life when an emergency strikes, and that can happen at any time of the day or night.

In Tea Tree Gully, I have a good relationship with the unit. We have between 35 and 40 people, depending on who is available, and they are captained by Greg Mason. They attended over 200 jobs in our community last year, including 60 grass fires and 22 road crashes. We know that that is perhaps at the most dramatic end of the duties performed by the CFS. This example shows the breadth of the role of the CFS brigades. It also illustrates that members are exposed to a wide variety of incidents, and that is why their training has become so very important. It is not widely known that less than 20 per cent of all incidents attended by the CFS in any year involve grass or bushfires.

By the very nature of their operational activities, the CFS brigades have developed skills and expertise in other areas, and they have been provided with specialist equipment and training. I have been on hand to see several of those pieces of equipment commissioned and when one of the refurbished vehicles was unveiled at the Tea Tree Gully works depot, a day of great excitement for a lot of the members who themselves had worked to save the vehicle from mothball status and recommission it for further service. Besides bush and grass fires, they also look at structural fires, storm

damage and floods, motor vehicle accidents, chemical spills and industrial accidents. I point out here that shortly after the election in 1997 there was a big rain storm. I do not know whether you remember it, sir, but there was a flood at the ford near Pauls Drive at Valley View, which was right on the corner of the boundary of the electorate of Florey. I went down there that morning and there they were—10 or 15 men doing their best to clear the blockages in the creek so that the stormwater could escape and the road could be cleared, because it was under water at the time. It was an honour to be able to go up to them and say thank you for the work they were doing.

The other sorts of expertise the members must have include radio communications and operations, not only at the fire station but also at the call-out spot, because it is important that communication in those dangerous situations is ensured and maintained at a high level. Many people may think that map reading is very easily done, but in the terrain they have to traverse it is important that they know the exact coordinates of where they are going and that they make sure the units arrive at the right spots. Controlled burn-offs and fire hazard reduction have played a huge part in protecting South Australia from bushfires. We all know that last year we faced what could have been a calamitous situation, but we were prepared and lucky. Pumping water and being able to supply fire fighters with water is very important, as is rostering of relief crews in major developments.

There are also operations planning and field group and brigade administration, along with the logistics involved in keeping a CFS unit on the road moving through a wildfire situation, which could last for many days on end. That sort of training is invaluable. They need to be able to feed themselves and provide refreshments and meals so, again, logistics come into that. They must maintain equipment and vehicles, attend weekly training sessions at the stations, gain skills and get that sense of being able to rely on the man or woman working alongside, knowing they are equally well trained and able to rise to the occasion.

As with everything, fundraising programs are involved. Everyone in the CFS units is involved in raising funds. While we pride ourselves on our ingenuity in raising money, I am sure that every member of the house could learn a lot from the CFS—which, mind you, is a much easier thing to raise money for, but you still need to be innovative these days to be able to get the funds you need to keep things happening. They are also involved in parades in our community, and our local CFS has been involved in the Tea Tree Gully Christmas Pageant every year that I can remember. They are also involved in school classroom presentations, where they give out the Fire Guard kits at schools wherever they can. That is an important angle we need to focus on, because it is that initial exposure to the CFS and what it does that makes our future fire fighters come forward and be involved. I cannot see a day when we will not need the CFS.

The volunteers maintain their competencies, as we have said, and they need to do this all year round. So, while we are enjoying our summer break or rugged up on a winter's night, the CFS is out there training. The volunteers have a high level of experience in fighting, unfortunately, grass fires in our area. We have had huge problems at Anstey's Hill and also in the Angove Scrub area, which is one of the last pristine metro areas of native vegetation, not a stone's throw from the North-East Road, just before Tea Tree Gully. So, we have been very lucky that our CFS volunteers have been on the spot to save those areas. The cadet program has been running

for younger people between 11 and 15 years of age. This is following on from the school program and encourages them to be involved in what goes on.

I know there are training sessions at Brukunga. I have not been able to go up there myself, but I think that is something that the members for Wright and Mawson were talking about, and I think many members should go up on the next field day to look at what goes on there. There are also training centres at Willunga and Naracoorte in the South-East. I know that wherever possible the CFS likes to train out of hours to make as little disruption as possible to the volunteers' working life. The companies and professions for which they work are also very good to let their members go at such short notice and to keep them under fire-ready status; that is very important. Our volunteers at Tea Tree Gully train at the Hancock Road unit headquarters, and I commend them all for their work in the area.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): The northern suburbs are part of Adelaide that are close to my heart. We in the western suburbs have a close relationship with the northern suburbs. We do not have the same type of fires as they have in the northern suburbs—we do not have large open spaces susceptible to grassland fires—but it is important to recognise the service of volunteers, given that my electorate is often prone to flooding and that we live within the flight path of an airport. I like to think that the community and its volunteers rush to the aid of their neighbours. In the northern suburbs the Salisbury Country Fire Service Brigade has been doing that for 60 years, and they deserve to be commended for coming to the aid of their neighbours.

Community service is built on helping neighbours and friends; it is something we should reward and congratulate and it is something that this parliament should take more time doing. The volunteer organisations make the government's job so much easier and they do it quietly. They do not seek accolades or publicity or to play politics: they just go about their business and their everyday jobs trying to make their suburbs and neighbourhoods safe. They are happy to go about and help their neighbours—and what do they ask for in return? Absolutely nothing.

The member for Wright has a close involvement in the Salisbury CFS, as also has our Premier, who is a life member of that organisation. I understand that he is renowned for his firefighting techniques and methods. Country Fire Service Officer Rann is excellent at putting out fires, whether they be grass or political.

Mr Brindal: I've certainly heard he's a good hose man.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Well, the member for Unley is someone who would know; he is an expert on hose techniques. I understand that he volunteers for the Country Fire Service. Perhaps he gives back to the community of Echuca whom he has served so well—and perhaps he will move a motion before the house to congratulate the Country Fire Service in Echuca, Victoria.

Mr Brindal: They've stopped putting brass fittings on the end of the hose, so I've gone off them.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for Unley is a brass man. We congratulate our volunteers far too infrequently for what they do. Recently I spoke at an award ceremony for the South Australian Ambulance Service. In spite of my lowly position in the government, they were pleased to have someone give them the recognition they deserve. They were not fussed about who was involved; they were even happy to see me. I talked about the service that they provide for our

community and the relief that is felt when they arrive. When I was a young lad—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for Hartley refers to where the Premier lives. Again, it disappoints me.

Mr Scalzi: Why?

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I am disappointed at the personal attacks on our Premier by members opposite. I am stunned that members opposite cannot focus on the policies or initiatives that this government is putting forward; instead, they play the man.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: They can't even put their political hatred of our Premier behind them and congratulate an organisation—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for West Torrens will focus on the motion, not on the inadequacies of the opposition.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, sir. I recall that every summer holidays I would live at Virginia with my god-father—

Mr Caica interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, I was. My father was a farmer before he migrated to Australia. He enjoyed doing a bit of farming on our holidays. I remember a very bad grass fire that we were fighting, and when the CFS came along we experienced an enormous sense of relief. Rural communities rely on volunteers. They are called out at very awkward hours. These people have jobs, they run businesses, they have employees, or they are farmers, but they drop everything to go out and fight fires. Our MFS officers work all hours of the night—

Mr Caica: And parliamentarians.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS:—yes, and parliamentarians—to go out and put out fires. There is an enormous sense of relief for families when they hear the trucks turn up; they feel a sense that the situation is in hand and that everything will be okay. I hope we never have to use the CFS again, but unfortunately we will. Our CFS has been called to the aid of our interstate neighbours, such as New South Wales, to fight bushfires in that state. They make no complaint.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for Wright tells me—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I can think of a few things to say to you. Those volunteers dropped everything to go to New South Wales to fight bushfires. The difference is that they are not fighting for their neighbours or their local community, but they still give up their time and risk serious injury (even their life) to fight fires for their fellow Australians.

Ms Rankine: In unfamiliar terrain.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, in unfamiliar terrain; and they go readily. In true Australian spirit they go to help a mate in need. I understand that the New South Wales Premier, the government and the community of New South Wales were very thankful for the assistance—

Ms Rankine: The Premier thanked the Salisbury brigade personally.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for Wright informs me that Premier Bob Carr personally came out and thanked the Salisbury CFS for their efforts in New South Wales. That is a great honour. To have a community leader congratulate local volunteer groups is a huge honour.

Ms Thompson interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Indeed, an interstate community leader. I understand from going out to my local communities the importance that volunteers place in recognition. They do not ask for pay or for recognition in terms of fame or fortune, but what they do ask us for is support, and I think every member of this house is ready to give that support.

Ms Thompson: And not get in their way.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Indeed. I am pleased the member for Reynell believes that government should get out of the way of volunteer organisations—that they should stay out of the way of the business community and volunteers. I agree with the honourable member, and I am glad that she has come around to my way of thinking when it comes to these organisations.

I would be interested to see what would happen if volunteer organisations ceased to exist tomorrow. What would happen to the spending promises of members opposite, because they want to spend, spend, spend? I wonder what would happen if we did not have our volunteers, who provide their services for free.

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I ask you to rule on relevance. The motion before the house is quite specific: it is a congratulatory motion, and it does not deal with policy of either the current government or the opposition. So, I ask you to consider whether the member is straying from the substance of the debate.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have noted that the member does not seem to be sticking to the direction of the debate according to the terms spelt out by the member for Wright in her motion. I ask the member for West Torrens to focus on the material contained in the motion.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I apologise to the house for straying from the debate. I assure you, Mr Speaker, that it will not happen again.

The SPEAKER: I will not hold the honourable member to that assurance, because I am sure it will.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I am a man of my word. The Salisbury CFS has a proud reputation. I am proud to speak to this motion. I am proud of the member for Wright for moving this motion. Indeed, I believe the Salisbury CFS is proud of her. The Salisbury CFS deserves the recognition of this parliament, and I hope all members, no matter what political persuasions they might be—be they Green, Australian Labor Party, Liberal Party, National Party or Independent—support the Salisbury CFS and the good work it does. Indeed, I hope the member for Unley supports the Salisbury CFS, as I am sure he will. I am sure he will write it a congratulatory letter. I commend the motion to the house.

Time expired.

Mr CAICA (Colton): As my friend opposite the member for Hartley says, I speak from experience. I have had many dealings with not just the Salisbury CFS but a host of CFS brigades over many years—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAICA: Indeed—during my 20 years as a firefighter with the Metropolitan Fire Service. It is safe to say that there have been occasions when the working relationship between the CFS and the MFS has not been as it should. I am very pleased now that we have a minister, the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon. Patrick Conlon, who has made sure during his tenure that that working relationship is based on genuineness. I am pleased to see the CFS and the MFS coming together, as should always be the case, to make sure that the primary responsibility of protecting life and property

from the ravages of fire is their only focus. I am pleased, too, that the minister has been able to achieve that, and that speaks great volumes for his ability as a minister in dealing with these aspects of his portfolio.

The Salisbury CFS is a very good brigade and has, as the motion says, has given more than 60 years of outstanding service to the community that it serves. Indeed, it continues to do a brilliant job and reflects the high standard of fire-fighting that exists within the CFS across the board. I know many members in this house have CFS brigades in their electorates, and they would endorse those comments.

I know that many of my colleagues were also eager to speak to the next motion on the *Notice Paper* which dealt with volunteers. In this instance we are talking about the CFS, which is a volunteer organisation, and I am disappointed, as those members would have been eager to speak to that motion as well.

What has been disappointing this morning is the attitude of the opposition. You need only to look through the *Notice Paper* in the area of private members' business to see that the opposition has had the majority of private members' business over that period. We on this side of the chamber have been generous and genuine in allowing them to have their moments in the sun with respect to advancing their private members' business. I found it appalling that people tried to short-circuit the debates that have occurred this morning on important matters such as the flying doctor service and the CFS. That is shameful. With those final words, I commend the motion to the house.

Motion carried.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

ASSENT TO BILLS

Her Excellency the Governor, by message, assented to the following bills:

Nurses (Nurses Board Vacancies) Amendment,
Statutes Amendment (Notification of Superannuation Entitlements).

DOG CONTROL

A petition signed by 2 035 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to amend current legislation to allow dogs, under effective control, to sit with their owners in all outdoor dining areas, was presented by Dr McFetridge.

Petition received.

SHINE

A petition signed by 187 electors of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to immediately withdraw the trial of the Sexual Health and Relationship Education Program developed by SHine from all 14 participating schools pending professional assessment and endorsement, was presented by the Hon. D.C. Kotz.

Petition received.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable debate to occur on Private Members Business: Bills/Committee/Regulations: Other Motions, Notices of Motion No. 11, set down for today, at the

conclusion of government business, in view of the importance of this issue to South Australian children, parents and school communities, especially since the pilot sex education program has already commenced and been implemented in schools.

Ms Breuer interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Giles will come to order. The nature of the motion is quite simply that the member is giving notice that standing orders be suspended to enable debate of the motion, which is on the *Notice Paper* already.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! It had occurred to the Speaker that the house may believe the chair needs assistance in the matter, but let me reassure the house that, while I welcome assistance, on this occasion I believe I will not need it. The latter part of the motion is not in order. However, I accept the motion in the former part—it is only a matter of deleting the last few words the member mentioned.

The house divided on the motion:

AYES (21)

Brokenshire, R. L.	Brown, D. C.
Buckby, M. R.	Chapman, V. A. (teller)
Evans, I. F.	Goldsworthy, R. M.
Gunn, G. M.	Hall, J. L.
Hamilton-Smith, M. L. J.	Hanna, K.
Kerin, R. G.	Kotz, D. C.
Matthew, W. A.	Maywald, K. A.
McFetridge, D.	Meier, E. J.
Penfold, E. M.	Redmond, I. M.
Scalzi, G.	Venning, I. H.
Williams, M. R.	

NOES (23)

Bedford, F. E.	Breuer, L. R.
Caica, P.	Ciccarello, V.
Conlon, P. F. (teller)	Foley, K. O.
Geraghty, R. K.	Hill, J. D.
Key, S. W.	Koutsantonis, T.
Lomax-Smith, J. D.	McEwen, R. J.
O'Brien, M. F.	Rankine, J. M.
Rann, M. D.	Rau, J. R.
Snelling, J. J.	Stevens, L.
Such, R. B.	Thompson, M. G.
Weatherill, J. W.	White, P. L.
Wright, M. J.	

Majority of 2 for the noes.

Motion thus negated.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The SPEAKER: I direct that the written answers to the following questions on the *Notice Paper*, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos 165 and 179.

POLICE, RECRUITMENT

In reply to **Hon. G.M. GUNN** (26 May).

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The current recruitment strategy model provides for cadet intakes to maintain the approved establishment numbers.

Recruits are normally taken into training 28 weeks ahead of when they are posted as probationary constables into operational areas.

SAPOL's recruitment strategy is reviewed regularly and the number of recruits varied depending on predicted workforce levels.

Budgeting for attrition is the primary variable within the recruitment strategy with other variables such as movement in active numbers, level of re-entrants and staffing for new initiatives all impacting

on the level of recruits required. For the 2002-03 financial year, 137 officers were recruited.

The difficulty in filling vacancies, particularly in country areas is not unique to SAPOL but an issue experienced by most other Australian police jurisdictions and other government agencies providing services to rural and remote areas.

Filling vacant positions involves a number of stages including advertising the position, merit based selection and provision for review and appeal proceedings. SAPOL processes require the selection process to be conducted expeditiously and ethically. For country postings, there can additionally be some time required in arranging the transfer, given that it may involve backfill arrangements, logistical factors and consideration of any special family needs of the officer(s) concerned.

SAPOL is continually working to attract suitable applicants with the necessary skills to fill country locations.

TELEPHONES, EMERGENCY

In reply to **Mrs REDMOND** (17 February).

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: There are 80 help phones located east of the Crafers interchange along the South Eastern Freeway. The phones were installed when the freeway was first constructed, and Telstra initially maintained the equipment.

I have been advised that Telstra has had difficulty maintaining the phones. Due to the age of the equipment, spare parts are no longer manufactured and are not readily available. Transport SA has recently taken over the maintenance of the phones, with Telstra remaining responsible for maintaining the phone lines.

One of the difficulties in achieving a continuous service is the high level of vandalism and theft. Although all damaged equipment was repaired by the end of January 2003, Transport SA is aware that three phones are currently out of service (two were stolen, and one was written-off in a motor vehicle crash). Transport SA will replace the three phones by the end of June 2003.

TOURISM PLAN

In reply to **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH** (28 May).

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: The National Tourism Crisis Response Plan is a joint initiative of federal/state/territory tourism ministers and was developed in 2002 with the input of the Australian Tourist Commission and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources and agreed to at the Tourism Ministers' council meeting in September 2002 in Auckland.

The plan establishes a framework to ensure national tourism crises are managed in a coherent whole-of-government way to minimise potential negative economic impacts. The plan includes mechanisms to communicate accurately and timely information to various groups, including state/territory and commonwealth governments and tourism organisations; the Australian and international tourism industry; and the domestic and international travelling public. It also seeks to ensure coordinated policy responses and remedies across governments and coordinate and disseminate information relating to impacts of crises on the tourism industry.

The plan was activated during the lead-up to the war in Iraq and has continued throughout the SARS crisis.

A secure website has been established as part of the strategy and includes a copy of the plan, speaking points, impact statements and relevant post crisis information. The site serves as a secure point of communication between the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, the Australian Tourist Commission and state and territory tourism organisations.

COFFIN BAY NATIONAL PARK PONIES

In reply to **Mrs PENFOLD** (31 March).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The matter went to Cabinet in January.

RIVER MURRAY

In reply to **Mr BRINDAL** (27 May).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries has provided the following information:

Irrigators on the Lower Murray, particularly those drawing water from Lakes Alexandrina and Albert, have experienced high water salinities in recent times. Without substantial inflows into the Murray-Darling catchment area to allow flow of water over the barrages, and hence flushing of salt from the system, this situation

will persist. Under these circumstances salinity may rise to levels that could adversely affect crops and livestock.

Over coming months the Department of Primary Industries and Resources South Australia (PIRSA) will be conducting an extensive communication and education program in conjunction with the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation and industry partners. The objectives are to enable irrigators to evaluate the risk of reduced water availability and increased salinity to their enterprises and to implement appropriate management strategies to deal with those risks. This information will be presented at seminars and will also be available in publications and on the internet.

NATIONAL PARKS

In reply to **Mr BROKENSHIRE** (27 May).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: On 23 May 2003 the Premier announced a \$10M increase in the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) Budget over the next four years to increase the capacity of DEH to plan and implement fire management in parks across the State.

Action

The following strategies will be put in place to increase the capacity of DEH to implement fuel reduction and fire management programs.

- DEH will recruit key staff to improve the agency's capacity to plan and implement sustainable fire management programs.
- Strong partnerships will be developed with the Country Fire Service and local communities in the planning and development of fire management programs
- There will be a focus on the preparation of fire management plans and development of strong linkages with the district bushfire planning process.
- The planning process will identify strategic areas for fuel reduction strategies and upgrading of the firetrail network in Parks and Reserves throughout the State.
- The capacity to implement on ground prevention, protection and suppression works will be increased in strategic locations.
- Coordination of research and monitoring will be improved through recruitment of specialist staff, use of information learned through recent fires in the eastern states and Canberra and input into the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre.
- Training and equipping of staff will be enhanced to improve the capacity within DEH to safely deliver on-ground fuel reduction programs and effectively suppress wildfires.
- Continuation of region's and district's local fire prevention and management programs, these programs include the removal of woody weeds such as olives, slashing, and any other works identified through the District bushfire prevention planning process.
- Fire suppression will also continue to be funded through the DEH Risk Management Fund.
- DEH fire management will be implemented in close consultation with the CFS to ensure that the staff and volunteers within CFS are able to assist in the planning and implementation of on-ground activities and share in the knowledge developed through a proactive fuel reduction program.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Davenport might like to acknowledge the chair and go to the gallery to conclude his conversation. The Premier has the call.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, sir. Today, cabinet reached its final decisions on the 72 recommendations contained in the Economic Development Board's report, 'A Framework for the Economic Development of South Australia'. As members are aware, the EDB's framework report was debated at the Economic Growth Summit held in this chamber between 10 and 12 April. At the summit, 280 South Australians from business, community, education institutions, the universities, trade unions, local government, environmental and indigenous organisations, together with all sides of politics (I think it is important to stress that) met

to consider South Australia's future. They asked themselves the question: where does South Australia want to be in 2013, and what do we need to do working together and as individuals to get there?

The summit gave its support to the EDB's economic framework for consideration by government and, in my view, substantially enhanced the already excellent work done by the EDB. Today, I am pleased to report to parliament that the government has provided overwhelming endorsement to the Economic Development Board's recommendations. The EDB initially presented 72 recommendations to government. Its Chairman, Robert Champion de Crespigny, advised the government that, on further consideration, it was not necessary to support one recommendation, namely, recommendation 46, that all funds for promotion of exports be provided through the soon to be established export council.

Of the remaining 71 recommendations put forward by the EDB for government consideration, cabinet today has decided to adopt 70. I am advised that this is an acceptance rate of over 98 per cent. Previously, I had predicted about an 85 per cent acceptance rate.

Although it is not possible in this statement to list all the recommendations adopted by government, today's landmark decision means, for example, that there will be a major streamlining of government approvals for public projects, while retaining rigorous standards of accountability and transparency. For example, the level of expenditure requiring cabinet approval for a project of public work will be increased to \$10 million. Similarly, the government will introduce legislation to lift from \$4 million to \$10 million the limit at which a public work must be referred to the Public Works Standing Committee. Whilst this will lead to beneficial streamlining, the need for transparency will be met by ensuring that the Public Works Standing Committee will have the information and the ability to inquire into any public work it deems should be studied, regardless of dollar value, as well as providing other protections.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Members opposite do not seem to realise that the Leader of the Opposition and others were part of the summit's deliberations and recommendations.

Strong targets will be set under the previously adopted state population policy of achieving a share of the national migration intake equal to our population share of 7.8 per cent over the next 10 years. The government will have a much more strategic approach to capital works by ensuring that Treasury and other agencies work closely with the soon to be established office of infrastructure to ensure that the business cases for worthwhile capital projects are considered properly and that various options for funding are canvassed effectively.

The Higher Education Council, announced in response to an earlier Economic Development Board report, will adopt a stronger focus on alignment of university effort to our economic development needs and will help the higher education sector to realise more of its potential to contribute to the economic development of the state. Two business leaders and one community leader will be added to the membership of the Higher Education Council.

The EDB has stated that we must be willing to be flexible at times to achieve the major infrastructure projects needed to contribute to our economic future, and the government agrees. Whilst the government remains committed to achieving on average zero net borrowing as a primary fiscal

target, the Treasurer and I wish to make it clear that it will not allow the achievement of this target to restrict the proper use of a range of financial methods to fund projects that provide demonstrable benefit to all South Australians.

Today's decisions need to be seen in the light of actions already taken by the government to advance implementation of the Economic Development Board's framework, including:

- developing a state strategic plan;
- developing a comprehensive state population policy;
- reviewing government statutory authorities, advisory bodies, committees and boards, with a view to eliminating as many as possible;
- appointing the member for Elder as Minister for Infrastructure to be supported by a new office of infrastructure;
- establishing a Venture Capital Fund;
- slashing industry assistance provided through the Industries Investment and Attraction Fund; and
- continuing efforts to make Adelaide the centre for a rationalised Australian naval defence industry, to name just a few.

I am amazed that members opposite somehow are disagreeing with what I have said, given that these were the unanimous views of the report, and we had a summit in this place to consider it.

Let us remember what this is all about. South Australia's future is in exports, and I am backing the Economic Development Board's target of a near tripling in the value of our exports by 2013 to \$25 billion, because that will mean more jobs and higher prosperity. It will mean that our state will be a destination again, rather than a beloved town that young people need to leave to find work elsewhere. We are going for growth and for \$25 billion in exports. The EDB recommendation not adopted by government—as you know, I said we were adopting 70 of the 71—is recommendation 24, which proposed that the government change its policy of no forced redundancies in forthcoming enterprise bargaining rounds with the public sector unions. I made a commitment to no forced redundancies prior to election, and the government will honour that promise.

Having determined its position on the EDB recommendations, we must now move into a vigorous implementation phase. While implementation is well under way on many of the recommendations, such as the venture capital fund and other things I have mentioned, the next phase will be one in which the focus is on getting more things done. The Economic Development Committee of cabinet will be advising on how best to implement these measures. The Chief Executive of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Warren McCann, will be responsible for ensuring implementation and proper coordination across government agencies. The EDB will monitor progress and report to me as Minister for Economic Development. I believe that having this independent line of advice is an important discipline and a goad to action.

Like all South Australians, I have been pleased by good news on our economic performance and by the levels of confidence amongst business and the community. The labour force figures for June show a record 720 400 people in jobs in our state. They show one of the lowest recorded unemployment rates, alongside a rising work force participation rate. They show that since Labor came to power an extra 34 900 jobs have been created, compared with an actual loss of 6 200 full-time jobs in the eight years between December 1993 and December 2001. I am pleased but not complacent. This is the

time to lay the foundations, not for some good economic numbers here and there, month by month, now and again, but to build the momentum for sustained growth and a more prosperous future. We must continue to work to build the economic foundations of a stronger South Australia. I want to place on record today my thanks to the Economic Development Board and its Chairman, Robert Champion de Crespigny, for their work in developing the framework for the economic development of South Australia. It is now the task and challenge for each of us on all sides of politics to make sure that it happens.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Infrastructure): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I rise to provide the house with information regarding the government's response to the Emergency Services Review. First, I would like especially to thank those who have played such an important role in assisting the government to prepare its response: emergency services personnel, both volunteers and full-timers, who provided many thoughtful and constructive comments, the volunteer organisations representing the emergency services and the unions. The success of the reforms proposed by government will depend largely of the readiness of staff and volunteers from all emergency services to work together for the common good. The submissions I have received clearly indicate that our fire fighters and rescue workers are keen to be involved in bringing about improvements, and are very willing to work together.

There is wide agreement that there is much to be gained from sharing resources, minimising duplication and improving the use of resources. It is not the government's intention to inflict change on the emergency services, except for the benefit of the participants and to achieve the government's primary goal of further enhancement of community safety. I will ensure that the implementation task force and the emergency services clearly understand the expectations of both this government and the community. I am not of the view that everybody will be completely satisfied with either the process or the outcomes of the review, but I do believe that most clear thinking people with the good of the community at heart will be pleased with the final outcomes from the establishment of the commission.

This government has always believed that volunteers play a critical role in the effective provision of emergency services throughout the state. Through this review, we will maintain the critical role of volunteers and ensure that they, together with their paid colleagues, are fully involved in the implementation of the new commission structure and the ongoing management of emergency services.

The government has already taken the first steps towards establishing the Fire and Emergency Services Commission with the appointment of Mr Vince Monterola to lead the implementation task force. Were it not out of order to refer to someone in the gallery, I would acknowledge Vince, but of course that is out of order. I am confident that Mr Monterola will provide the leadership, objectivity and passion for the provision of emergency services that will enable the Fire and Emergency Services Commission to be established for the benefit of the entire community in our state.

Lastly, I would like to apologise to the house because I previously stated that I would report to the house in June. The reason for this response being later than I had promised is that some people (including the Volunteer Fire Brigade Association on behalf of its members, the member for Bragg and the member for Mawson) asked me to extend the length of time available for people to make submissions, and I agreed. I am hopeful that this spirit of cooperation will continue throughout the implementation process and into the future of emergency services in this state. I now table the government's response.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Emergency Services (Hon. P.F. Conlon)—

Government Response to the Emergency Services Review—July 2003

By the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education (Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith)—

University of South Australia—Report 2002.

PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): As presiding member of the committee, I bring up the report of the committee for the Second Session.

Report received and adopted.

QUESTION TIME

DONATIONS, POLITICAL

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister for Gambling. Following the minister's investigation of the Bolkus raffle-gate affair, will the minister now tell the house—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN:—which of the three versions put forward at various times by Senator Bolkus is correct? Senator Bolkus has publicly stated three versions of events: (a) the \$9 800 worth of tickets were for a major raffle conducted in accordance with the law under a licence available to the party, which was held by part of the party; (b) the \$9 800 worth of tickets were for a raffle not requiring a licence; or (c) the \$9 800 worth of tickets were actually for two minor raffles which did not require a licence.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! This is a serious question, the answer to which could result in criminal charges. Members need to treat it seriously.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Gambling): I thank the honourable member for his question, but it does rather proceed on a misapprehension. No investigation has been commenced by me into this matter or any other matter. What I have done, and what honourable members should do: if they have any information that comes into their possession that tends to suggest that a raffle law has been breached, or any other law for that matter, they should provide that material to the relevant authorities. Those authorities make choices about what they do with the information. They have a number of choices in their keeping.

They can decide that further investigations need to be carried out or to refer the matter to the police. They could decide that these are a bunch of baseless allegations, organised by an opposition that is seeking to prop up their federal colleagues in some scandal they are raising in the federal parliament. They could arrive at that conclusion—God forbid—that this is a political stitch-up to besmirch the good name of a federal senator in the federal parliament. That is a possibility. They could arrive at that conclusion.

However, if they take that matter seriously, if there is something that troubles the relevant authority, they will take the matter further. They will not be asking me for my opinion about what to do, and neither should they. This matter will be handled independently by the proper authorities in the proper way.

HEALTH REVIEW

Mr CAICA (Colton): What steps has the Minister for Health taken since the release of the government's initial response to the recommendations of the Generational Health Review on 19 June 2003 to implement new governance arrangements for our health units?

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): Following the release of the report by the Generational Health Review and the government's initial response, the process of implementation is under way. I appreciate the shadow minister's silent support for the reform process. In spite of the fact that this is the most far-reaching reform of the health system for 30 years, since the estimates hearing the shadow minister has not asked me one question about it.

Our first steps forward include change to the government structures of the health system. These changes, together with the shift to population-based funding and better clinical and service planning, will develop an integrated health system.

I have written to all hospital boards in the metropolitan area, outlining the process of a reform, and I am delighted by the positive feedback I have received to the government's plans. The Department of Human Services is establishing implementation task groups for the Central Northern region, the Southern region and for the Women's and Children's and Youth Statewide Health Service. The terms of reference for the implementation of task groups, together with draft template constitutions for the new organisations, are now being prepared.

I have also written to all country board members, outlining the government's intention to work with them towards cooperative reform. These reforms will be designed to deliver better systems of care, easier links with city-based specialty services, more integrated rural work force recruitment and retention strategies, and improved local primary health care services.

While the shadow minister has been spreading concern in the country and was reported in the *Victor Harbor Times* on 26 June to be questioning the future of country hospital boards, there will be no forced removal of local boards in country South Australia. I would like to put on the record a letter to the editor, written by Mr Allen Bennett, Chairman of the Regional Riverland Health Service, in relation to the matter of country boards. The letter was published in the *Loxton News*, as well as the *River News* at Waikerie and the *Murray Pioneer* at Renmark. He said:

As current Chairman of the Riverland Health Authority, it is disturbing to hear quoted upon radio that Mr Brown allegedly

remarked that State Government may strip 'powers' from the country based health boards, and hand these to regional health authorities.

He goes on:

Due to the Generational Health Review, lauded by most independent observers as a vital and essential step towards health reforms, the State Government is encouraging local health unit boards to work with regional boards in determining the most appropriate role and responsibilities for their communities.

These rural communities could well see outcomes that will permit all groups or individuals interested in health matters having input into government decisions.

Further, he says:

In contact with the Minister, Ms Lea Stevens, it has been apparent to me, at least, that she is genuinely intent upon strengthening the local hospital board base, rather than erode them.

I am pleased with the response to the review and our first steps forward. There is much work to be done, but the government will be working with communities across South Australia. I will keep the parliament informed as the new reforms unfold.

DONATIONS, POLITICAL

Mr BROKENSHERE (Mawson): Will the Minister for Gambling advise the house what new information was brought to his attention that warranted an investigation into what has now been coined the 'Bolkus Rafflegate Affair'?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson has the call.

Mr BROKENSHERE: On 25 June, the opposition called for the minister to investigate allegations of the receipt of donations disguised as raffle ticket sales during the Hindmarsh election campaign. At that time the minister refused our request on the ground that no information had been drawn to his attention that would warrant an investigation. I am now advised that the minister has formally requested the State Taxation Commissioner to investigate the matter.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Gambling): I thank the honourable member for his question, but I ask him to listen carefully to the answer because it is similar to the answer I have given previously. At the time when I answered the previous question, no information had been brought to my attention. The only information that existed was a debate that was occurring in the popular press and, indeed, in the federal parliament. In fact, the shadow treasurer had a bit of a dip in the other house. He made some comments besmirching the good names of a number of other people. A range of material began to emerge in the public sphere. I believe it was proper—as it was proper for any member or, indeed, any citizen—to gather that material and put it in the hands of the relevant authority. That is what I have done. If the relevant authority believes there is a proper need for an investigation or a referral to a relevant prosecuting agency, they will take those steps.

DUST STORMS

Ms BREUER (Giles): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. What was the impact across the state's agricultural lands of recent dust storms?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): Members will recall that last Friday there was a significant dust storm across Adelaide. I certainly was

aware of it because I was landing in a light plane at Adelaide Airport at the time.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: And the Premier was with me; he did a good job making sure the plane landed. During 2002 and 2003, South Australia experienced a number of significant dust storms, partly due to the drought. The worst hit areas have been the Murraylands, Mid North and Eyre Peninsula where tens of thousands of tonnes of valuable topsoil has been stripped from the paddocks. Last Friday's wind event was particularly severe in the northern Yorke Peninsula area between Kulpara and Port Broughton. Until now, this area has not received good rains and the topsoil in paddocks has been loosened in preparation for cropping.

Members will also recall there were severe winds which affected the north-west Murray Plains between Sedan and Murray Bridge on 6 June. Unofficial reports measured wind speeds on that occasion of up to 120 km/h over an 18-hour period at Cambrai and, according to local opinion, this caused the worst soil erosion in the district since 1944. The winds were so strong that the farm fences appeared as walls of sand. During the dust storm, large areas of land prepared for cropping lost an average of several millimetres of soil. I find it staggering that this is equivalent to the loss of maybe 50 tonnes of soil per hectare—50 tonnes of topsoil per hectare was lost.

The very worst affected areas on that 6 June event had the top soil stripped to the depth of cultivation, and that amounts to a rate of soil loss of several hundred tonnes per hectare. This can cause a permanent loss of productive capacity on the land where the top soil is already shallow. In some cases, crop seed was removed with the top soil and newly emerged seedlings were cut off by sandblasting. As a result, some crops have had to be re-sown at considerable additional cost to the land-holders. Serious damage was also done to many fences and other farm infrastructure.

Main roads between Murray Bridge—of which, Mr Speaker, I am sure you are aware—Mannum and Sedan were temporarily closed, and the townships of Cambrai and Sedan had to undertake a major series of clean-ups. The scale and cost of the clean-up and repairs for individual land-holders, local governments and other authorities has been considerable. Financial support has been provided to the Murray Mallee sustainable farming project through the drought assistance program to help them improve farming systems and reduce wind erosion risk. This past year of drought and wind erosion has been devastating for farmers and their communities. The government will continue to work with the farmers to improve farming practices, better prepare for drought and minimise the loss of valuable top soil.

DONATIONS, POLITICAL

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): My question is again to the Minister for Gambling. Will the minister assure the house that all ALP raffle records will be made available to the state taxation commissioner to allow him to thoroughly investigate the raffle affair?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): Mr Speaker, as the Treasurer, Revenue SA is my responsibility, and the state taxation commissioner, as head of Revenue SA, reports to me as Treasurer. I have utmost confidence and faith that the Commissioner for Taxation will inquire into any matter that he deems appropriate. In relation to the matter to which members opposite refer in relation to Senator Bolkus, if they

are matters of concern to the taxation commissioner, then I expect and would have complete faith that he will follow up those issues completely. If the Commissioner for Taxation requires the receipts and details of anyone's raffles, be they the Liberal Party, the Labor Party or the Port Districts Football Club, they will come forward.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Exactly; one can only remember the way in which the member for Bragg participated in a very sneaky way of dealing with donations in the 1990s, but that is for another day. I have complete confidence in the taxation commissioner and Revenue SA to take whatever action they deem appropriate.

MINISTER, ALLEGED

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): My question is to the leader of government business. Minister, are you concerned that people might be creating the impression that they are government ministers when they are not?

Mr BRINDAL: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As I understand the question, it contains the words 'they are'. I do not think that this house recognises 'they': it recognises people by their titles or the electorate they represent. Therefore, I do not think the question is in order and I ask you to consider the matter.

The SPEAKER: The question is in order.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Government Enterprises): It is peculiar that the honourable member might be protecting the fellow in question. When he hears who it is, he might not have the same attitude. I do have some concern. Of course, we like our ministers to be sworn in by the Governor in the proper and orderly fashion. I have to say I did have occasion today, because I am one of a very small group of people interested in what the member for Bright has to say (unfortunately, it is my responsibility and I now have to), to look at his web site. Just today I was looking through something that he calls 'electricity facts'. I regret to inform the house that I think a proper title might be 'delusion and denial', but I will deal with that in a moment. It is relevant to the question and the concerns that I have just to say that the web site which I browsed through had a number of 'electricity' facts from the member for Bright.

The first of the facts was the claim that, on the plus side of the ledger for the Liberal Party, one of the great achievements in electricity during its terms of government was the establishment of the Osborne Co-generation Plant (175 megawatts). Members might recall that this was the same deal that cost \$100 million in the privatisation sale of NRG Flinders, only to rebound on us with a further potential liability of \$240 million—the most expensive 175 megawatts in South Australia!

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like you to clarify what area of responsibility this minister has for any shadow minister's behaviour, or web site.

The SPEAKER: Quite simply, the leader of government business in the house has a duty to the cabinet to disclose whether or not there are breaches of the Oaths Act as it relates to officers of the Crown and officers of the parliament. That occurred to me only during the course of the inquiry. It is quaint, I confess, but there is a responsibility in that regard. The minister has the call.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I will come to the major delusion in a second—'denial' is probably a better word—but

to further inform the house of my exploration of this web site, I also found claimed a negative for the previous Labor government, and that is that it was a Labor government which built an interconnector, resulting in South Australia's relying on Victoria for up to 30 per cent of its power and leaving it at the mercy of the actions of the irresponsible Victorian power union. That is our negative. Everyone who knows anything about the electricity industry knows of the enormous contribution of the Victorian interconnector in keeping prices down through the 1990s. It is, in fact, the Victorian interconnector over which Babcock & Brown, with their new wind farm, intend selling power into Victoria, a net benefit for South Australia.

The SPEAKER: Can I tell the minister that, as interesting as that information may be, it is not germane to the substance of the question asked by the member for West Torrens who must, by now, be feeling frustrated that the minister is going to avoid answering his question.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I will then, sir, at your prompting, address the very point that has caused concern to the member for West Torrens. While I was exploring the facts on the web site, I found a link called 'Ministers'. I thought, 'That's rather unusual. Perhaps the member for Bright has taken the cloth recently'—and I know that the standards for the ordination of priests may have gone down in recent years. I went to the link and found this: 'SA government'—link—'Ministers'—link 'Matthew'. I thought that was very peculiar. And there it was: 'The Hon. Wayne Matthew MP', and a photograph of him. It says:

On the floor of the South Australian House of Assembly on 5 March 2002, the Liberal government moved a motion of confidence in itself. This was defeated by one vote, thereby thwarting the democratic will of the South Australian people.

He went on to say:

I expect this situation to be temporary, and reversed by the end of the 2002 calendar year.

I indicate to the member for Bright that 2002 is over. His ministerial career is over. We have brought down our second budget. It is no good sitting in his office, saying, 'I am a minister, I am a minister.' This is denial. I do not think that people should go to a web site and find 'South Australian minister', 'Member of parliament', 'Government', 'The Hon. Wayne Matthew MP'. What I say to the member for Bright is: have another go in a couple of years' time.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker.

Members interjecting:

Mr Koutsantonis: What number?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Mr Speaker, in your role as Speaker, whilst looking at this matter that has come before the house, I ask that you also look at the fact that the member for Croydon still has on the door of his room in parliament 'Attorney-General'.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I apologise to the house; that is an oversight on my part.

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order. In accordance with your ruling yesterday, sir, that we all have a duty towards parliamentary language, the member for West Torrens accused somebody in this house of being a 'squealing little rat'. I contend that that is unparliamentary, sir, and I ask for your ruling.

The SPEAKER: I did not hear the interjection, and I cannot determine whether the honourable member was

referring to another member or to some other person. I am compelled to ask the member for West Torrens whether he made the remark and, if so, whether it was directed at a member of this place.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I admit that I called the member that term. I did that—

The SPEAKER: Which member?

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The deputy leader—based on his precedent—

The SPEAKER: Order! That language is unparliamentary. No further explanation is required.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I withdraw, sir.

The SPEAKER: And apologise—

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: And I apologise, sir.

The SPEAKER: —to the house.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: To the house as a whole, sir.

The SPEAKER: I remind the house that the offence is not so much to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition but to the standing of all honourable members—that any one of us should think of another, here elected by 22 000 fellow South Australians to be their representative, to speak of them in such a demeaning manner. It is for that reason that, for centuries, it has been inappropriate to do so. It destroys the respect which the public can have for this place when such remarks are made. Sinners we may be all; let's resolve to do better.

DONATIONS, POLITICAL

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Will the Minister for Gambling advise the house whether he has engaged private legal counsel to provide him with advice relating to involvement in raffle fundraisers?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Gambling): No.

The SPEAKER: I apologise; I did not hear the minister's answer.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No.

SHEARERS

Mr RAU (Enfield): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What are the key recommendations of the report released today on shearing and shed-hand training?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I thank the member for Enfield for his question. I know that he had a hand in the wording of this question, because I know that he has a deep interest in the primary industry sector. Along with the members for Giles and Schubert, he is keenly interested in the outcome of the review, which I instituted using the services of Mr Andrew Brown, a rural consultant, having heard many of the complaints from the rural sector.

I remind members that considerable concern was expressed about the situation in previous years under the previous government, when there was no certainty in ongoing training funding and when, each year, the industry went cap in hand to the government, begging for funding for this training. The shearing shed-hand, wool-classing training programs have been funded on a year-by-year basis and delivered through schools, TAFE and the private sector. However, continuing complaints revolved around the issue of insufficient trained professional shearers, although novice training courses were

being run, and poor retention within the shearing, wool-classing and shed-hand sector.

It was said there was instability within the sector and, whilst we recognise that this important sector had been undervalued in the past, we thought there was merit in a particular review of the kind I released today. I am pleased to report that the assessment of shearing and shed hand training has been completed and there were very firm recommendations for improving the effectiveness and cost benefits of the money spent over the past years and into the future.

We have recognised that there have been wide ranging requirements for a partnership with the industry, and we are keen to adopt the recommendations. We will set up a single, effective system to train people, because their training is essential to provide the work force for this key area. The TAFE sector will be the sole provider of quality training for shearers and shed hands in the year 2004. We will fund and give the first commitment to fund on an ongoing basis training in this area, and we will institute a system of recruitment and retention programs managed through the TAFE sector to, first, recruit the types of novices who might continue on with a career in this industry but, particularly, give them additional skills away from the workplace related to their career advancement and generic skills in the knowledge that sheep shearers and shed hands cannot survive in the industry merely on their shed business and need to have a suite of other skills in order to survive throughout the calendar year.

In order to develop these ongoing programs we will take advice from the stakeholders in the wool industry—the Farmers Federation, the unions, the wool classers and all those involved in the industry—and aggregate them together into a training advisory committee which will advise with industry representation and oversee the long-term training needs of this very important industry. Particularly, we want to ensure the quality of the training programs and will institute continuous training for those involved in the training system. Most importantly, there will be a commitment to ongoing funding each year. It will not be necessary for the industry to come cap in hand at the beginning of the season. In saying that the new system will begin at the beginning of 2004, I should acknowledge that Ausgrow has played a very important contribution to shearer and wool handling training in South Australia, and we need now to ensure that training arrangements meet the current and future needs of the industry.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I am hoping the drought might break. The shearing industry is of course affected by the all-time low in sheep numbers, but when the industry is hard hit it is a good time to invest in the future and guarantee the ongoing training programs. Currently there are no apprenticeship and trainee schemes under the new apprenticeship scheme in this area, and there is no likelihood there will be in the near future, but clearly the advisory board will have the potential to advise of any opportunities to develop apprenticeship schemes, because that may be the way for the industry in the future.

DONATIONS, POLITICAL

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): As a supplementary question and for further clarification, I ask the Minister for

Gambling: has the minister sought private legal advice related to involvement in raffle fundraisers?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Gambling): No.

YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): My question is to the Minister for Youth. What is the current status of the Youth Parliament program, and what is intended for the program in 2003?

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Youth): I am very pleased to answer this question from the member for Reynell, because it is a question that I would have thought the opposition would ask me. Needless to say, the Youth Parliament program deserves some attention from this house, bearing in mind that there are at least five ex youth ministers in this chamber: the Premier and the member for Fisher are previous youth ministers, the member for Unley, as we know, is the most immediate past youth minister, and the members for Newland and Morialta are previous youth ministers.

All of my predecessors have tried to ensure that we not only continue the Youth Parliament program but that it continues to improve. I have raised some criticisms in the past of the Youth Parliament, as has the member for Reynell, because we need to ensure that this program is made available to as many young people in South Australia as possible and that it is not always the same schools that participate. I am pleased to see that in the last three years at least there has been an improvement in the variety of schools and young people represented in this program.

A lot of work has also been done—and many members of this chamber have been involved in this—to make sure that students from rural and remote areas are represented in the Youth Parliament program. I note that you, Mr Speaker, are also a fan and a supporter of the Youth Parliament, and I think it is important that members continue their support and try to encourage students in their electorates to avail themselves of this opportunity. Participation in this program develops skills and knowledge in the area of civics and raises the profile of what our rights as well as our responsibilities are as South Australians.

Last year, a Youth Parliament style event called the South Australian Youth Legislature Program was initiated by a youth-run organisation called Beyond Participation. This initiative provided 80 young South Australians with the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the parliamentary political process, and 66 of these young people went on to participate in a mock parliamentary session in Parliament House. Again, I would like to acknowledge the members of this place who took the time to mentor and coach the participants in the Youth Parliament, and I hope they will do so again for the next program.

Whilst this program was under way, I asked the Office for Youth to conduct research into Youth Parliament style programs across Australia and internationally to look at best practice. I want to ensure that we have a successful Youth Parliament program, one which is dynamic and relevant to young people and which will attract them not only into the program but to participate.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Yes. That is something which the previous minister (the member for Unley) was keen to do. I am also keen for young people to run the program as well as participate. I have asked for a number of principles to be

looked at, including: social inclusion; youth empowerment; the inclusion of young people from all social, religious, political, economic, geographic and cultural backgrounds; a strengths-based approach that builds on young people's skills; participation by young people in all levels of planning and decision-making and the implementation of the program; and the issue which I raised earlier of mentoring and support for young people who participate in the program.

At my request, the Office for Youth has incorporated these principles into a public tender brief for the management of this year's Youth Parliament program. As a result of this tender process, I am pleased to report that the YMCA of South Australia has been awarded a contract to implement a Youth Parliament style program for 2003. This program will focus on providing young people with dynamic opportunities to advise, inform and influence government, politicians and other decision makers. Again, I place on the record my thanks to you, Mr Speaker, for your interest and support in making sure that we have best practice and a successful Youth Parliament.

It is also important to note that the YMCA youth parliament program will be managed and designed by young people, many of whom have participated in previous programs. I am looking forward to another youth parliament program. I hope that other members will assist me in this, because for a lot of young people coming into parliament is like going through a dadaistic experience. I know for some of us who came in here, we thought, 'Dada land.' I am hoping that, with your help, we can make sure that young people do not have this problem.

PORT ADELAIDE REDEVELOPMENT

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier confirm that lawyers Piper Alderman have this month been awarded a contract worth \$34 600 to undertake an investigation into the misdirection of bid documents for the Port Adelaide waterfront development, and why is a further investigation necessary when the government said the issue had been fully investigated last year? In August 2002, the Auditor-General completed a final report into the misdirection of bid documents relating to the Port Adelaide waterfront redevelopment. Details of a contract on the government's tenders and contracts web site show that Piper Alderman lawyers have this month been awarded a contract worth \$34 600 to 'provide legal advice, support and assist in the facilitation of the Auditor-General's inquiry into the unanticipated disclosure of certain documents to one of the short-listed bidders in relation to the Port Adelaide waterfront redevelopment'. The term of the contract is between July 2003 and August 2003.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I am amazed that the Leader of the Opposition has the gall to ask me a question after last night's infamy in this parliament, when your side of politics voted for your party and not for your state.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Premier is reflecting on the vote in another chamber. To do so is clearly against standing orders.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is. The Premier will not reflect on the proceedings in another chamber.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, sir. At times I have defended members opposite as saying, 'Okay. There's a lack of clarity. It is more an impressionism school of politics.' However, in recent days I have been reminded of what can only be described as the dadaism school of politics, in which

we see grotesque distortions of issues. I am more than happy to get a report on this issue, which is already on our web site. Of course, our web site has real and not fake ministers on it.

STATE ECONOMY

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): My question is directed to the Treasurer. What has been the recent performance of the South Australian economy?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): That is a good question which requires some detailed information to be provided to the house about the current economic strength of our economy. After some 16 or so months of government, I can report that recent economic data indicate that our economy in South Australia continues to perform exceptionally well. Labour market outcomes have been extremely positive, with trend total employment for South Australia growing by 3.9 per cent through the year, exceeding the national average growth of 2.6 per cent—3.9 in South Australia, 2.6 per cent nationally. Consumer spending continues to be very strong, with nominal retail turnover increasing by 5.7 per cent in trend terms through the year to May 2003.

Further advice I have been provided with shows that sales of new motor vehicles increased by 18 per cent in trend terms through the year to May, with sales of new motor vehicles reaching record levels during May, both nationally and in South Australia.

A surge in business investment—an extremely important indicator—has seen real growth in trend terms of 19 per cent through the year to the March quarter 2003. This was driven by a 29 per cent rise in buildings and structures investment, and a 17 per cent increase, importantly, in machinery and equipment investment. I am advised that business investment expectations are remaining strong, with capital expenditure in South Australia anticipated to increase by 21 per cent through 2003-04. Real dwelling investment remains at very high levels, although it has demonstrated signs of declining slightly during the March 2003 quarter. This suggests that we are looking at a gradual return to more normal and sustained levels of housing commencements. There was still a high level of dwelling commencements during the March quarter 2003, while residential building approvals were at high levels during May.

I am advised, again, that export volumes are presently lower than expected primarily due to international factors, such as SARS, the Iraq war, and a continuing slowness and weakness underlying the US economy. Exports are expected to recover with the imminent breaking of the drought, and the hopeful improvement that we may see in the US economy. The government anticipates that, with continued prudent economic and, importantly, financial management of this state, we will be able to maintain solid economic growth for the medium term. This is a good outlook for South Australia. A lot of work still needs to be done and, in part, that has been addressed by the decision of the government to adopt all bar one of the recommendations of the Economic Development Board. I will keep the house advised on an ongoing basis as to the strength of our domestic economy in South Australia.

PORT RIVER CROSSING

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): Will the Minister for Transport advise the house why, nearly three months after the opposition called for the Treasurer's \$20 million Port River

Expressway development to be referred to the Public Works Committee, cabinet has still not signed off on the bridge designs and costings, thus preventing the Public Works Committee from scrutinising the government plans? Yesterday, 16 July, the Public Works Committee was informed that Transport SA witnesses, who were scheduled to be questioned on aspects of the design and costings of the bridges, could not be present because cabinet had yet to approve 'that aspect of the process'.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Transport): I do not think the honourable member has the question technically correct. It is my understanding that the officers were happy to appear. That is the advice they provided. With respect to the first part of the honourable member's question, obviously technical detail is still being appraised. What the officers would want to do would be to appear before the Public Works Committee when that technical detail has been appraised and when cabinet makes its ultimate decision.

Mr BRINDAL: I have a supplementary question. This being questions without notice, did any Labor member make the Minister for Transport aware of the question I was to ask today prior to my asking that question? With your leave, sir, and the concurrence of the house, I would seek briefly to explain, because I view this as a most serious matter.

The SPEAKER: Let us understand that. This is very serious. If the member is alleging that some other member disturbed documents and/or read those documents on his desk that is a serious matter indeed.

Mr BRINDAL: I accept that, sir, and I view it with the greatest seriousness. I bring this matter before the house only because several members in the gallery reported to me that the question (which was on my table), they believe, was read by a member opposite and was discussed, in full view of this house and in full view of them, by a Labor member with the minister. The allegation is that the minister made notes on the yellow folder in front of him. The member concerned has conferred with the minister several times. I agree with you, sir, that is the purpose of my asking this question.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Transport, I am seriously contemplating the implications of the allegation contained in that question. It disturbs me immensely that anyone could do that. However, the minister may choose to set the matter to rest or, indeed, confirm what the member for Unley has alleged. The Minister for Transport.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: This matter has been one of ongoing discussion during the course of the week. The member for Unley asked a question of that nature. This matter has been discussed with me by a number of people during the course of the week.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, sir. After question time and at your convenience, I would like to speak to you in your chambers about serious allegations made to me concerning one of my colleagues.

The SPEAKER: Does the member for Unley name a member of the Labor Party for having revealed the substance of the information he alleges has been revealed?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRINDAL: I would rather do it in the privacy of your chambers but, if you ask me, I allege that the member for Colton read the question; the member for Colton then

communicated the substance of the question to the Minister for Transport immediately during and after the division today.

The SPEAKER: I will see the minister, the member for Colton and the member for Unley in my office at 4 p.m.

GOVERNMENT RADIO NETWORK

Ms RANKINE (Wright): My question is to the Minister for Administrative Services. What are the details of the report that the minister recently received from Mr Jim Hullick concerning the government radio network?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Administrative Services): I bring to the attention of the house an important issue concerning the future of the state's radio network. In January this year, I formed the State Radio System Ministerial Advisory Committee chaired by Jim Hullick. That committee took over from a former committee called the GRN Advisory Committee. The thinking behind the setting up of the State Radio System Advisory Committee was to consider the total radio needs of the state, in particular to ensure that services provided would no longer put at risk the lives of emergency services personnel. Mr Hullick was secretary general of the Local Government Association for 20 years, during which time he conducted two reviews into the first and second Ash Wednesday bushfires. He also helped to develop the state's disaster plan. He seemed like the right person for the job, and the work of the committee has proved he was the right choice.

Indeed, today Mr Hullick released a report which demonstrates that we are well on the way to achieving a complete communications network. Agencies have identified some 6 000 locations where radio communications were critical to their needs, and now we have it down to 60 locations which are not currently covered by the GRN. We do not, and probably never will, have a GRN which works everywhere. However, it is important that we do not confuse GRN black spots with communications black spots. Where the GRN does not work, our emergency services need to rely upon other reliable communications technology. This is the technology we have put in place to connect with the government radio network.

The report states that four key areas need to be considered by the committee now and on an ongoing basis. They include: the questions of coverage and continuity of services to ensure that those systems are available at critical times; the capacity of the system to cope with peak demands; and, finally, contingency plans that deal with the circumstances where the system does not meet those needs from time to time. While the GRN will continue to be a central part of an integrated communications system, it would be costly and a high risk strategy if we were simply to rely upon the GRN. In fact, Mr Hullick suggests that by having an integrated communication system which uses a range of networks, essentially it provides a community safety net: in the event of a disaster we have tried and true backup services.

The communication needs of our emergency services and government agencies will continue to change, and it will be necessary to continue to re-evaluate them. In the past, I have withheld payments to Telstra when it has not complied with the contract, and we will continue to scrutinise the GRN contract as we go. We are achieving greater levels of understanding with Telstra, but one needs to be aware that the GRN by itself will not be the complete solution. The transition to the GRN has not been easy and it is not over yet, but I place on record my congratulations for the particular

efforts of Mr Jim Hullick, his leadership, and the way in which the agencies with which he has worked, especially the emergency services agencies, have been a showpiece in the way in which cross-agency collaboration and cooperation can achieve a good outcome.

FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Social Justice put a case to cabinet for the \$6 million set aside for the referendum on radioactive waste to be transferred to Family and Youth Services to employ more staff to protect children at risk of abuse?

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Social Justice): No.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: My question is again to the same minister. What action is the minister taking to ensure that the up to 90 staff vacancies within Family and Youth Services are filled immediately? It has been reported that Family and Youth Services is understaffed and that children are at serious risk because of the Rann government's cut to FAYS. Yesterday, the minister announced an extra \$1.5 million, which will employ an additional 25 full-time staff. However, government sources have revealed that there are already up to 90 staff vacancies even before the funding was announced yesterday for 25 additional staff.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: As members in this chamber would be aware—and also I covered this in my ministerial statement yesterday—negotiations are continuing between the Public Service Association and Department of Human Services regarding the Family and Youth Services dispute. An offer was made yesterday to the Public Service Association. In addition to the announcement of \$58.6 million in the child protection area through the state budget over four years, an additional \$1.5 million will act as an interim support while we undertake a workload and work level analysis in the Family and Youth Services area. This is one of many initiatives at which we are looking in the Family and Youth Services areas.

The main three areas are the work levels, the number of staff, and the very important work that Family and Youth Services workers undertake both in the professional areas as well as the operational areas. The aim is to get that right. Members will be aware that one of the recommendations of the Layton report was to look at that workload area and ensure that we get it right. That is the process that we are endeavouring to go through. As a sign of good faith to the FAYS workers and also to the Public Service Association (which is representing them), we have made this offer of additional resources of \$1.5 million. I do not recall referring to any numbers in relation to staff in my ministerial statement. I can go back and check that, but I would be very surprised if I did talk about numbers.

I am not entirely sure from where the deputy leader gets the figure of 25, and I am also not sure that that amount of money would equal that number of staff. I think that is his personal view rather than something that I have said. The vacancies are also a very important issue, because there are a number of vacancies in the Family and Youth Services area, and I think I did mention that over the last week in answering questions and in my ministerial statement. This is a very serious issue. The matter of recruitment, particularly in the rural areas, is a problem that we way need to address. However, I should emphasise that this problem has been

around for quite some time. As I understand it, this problem was certainly around during the time of the previous minister. The problem was that the previous government and the previous minister did very little, if anything, to try to address that situation.

I do think that I as minister and this government have distinguished ourselves in trying to address this matter of the work force. I also need to inform members that not only are we looking at the amount of resources, work force and staff we require in the Family and Youth Services area, particularly with regard to child protection, but we are also looking at introducing a more secure workplace for our workers. A major review has been undertaken by this government to look at the security of all our workers in the Public Service, and Family and Youth Services is certainly an area—and I am sure the deputy leader would agree—where measures need to be taken to ensure that not only is the health and safety of the workers protected but that we also have good prevention programs in place which will ensure the security of our staff. A whole lot of measures will be rolled out in the near future concerning the security of Family and Youth Services workers.

The third area which is part of this approach to reform Family and Youth Services is to look at the financial history of Family and Youth Services because, as I have said a number of times in this house, there is a real concern about the way in which its budgets have been put together over at least the last eight years. It is also my intention as the minister responsible for this area to ensure that we have very clear financial guidelines and budgets—and this will also apply to my other portfolio areas. As part of that, we are looking at our responsibility for distributing taxpayers' money to families in need and being responsible for the anti-poverty programs.

I think that should answer the deputy leader's question. It also gives me an opportunity to say how important the Family and Youth Services department is to us and it would be nice to get questions from the opposition that are not as monochromatic.

HEALTH REVIEW

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: In answer to a question today, the Minister for Health stated that I had failed to answer any questions about the Generational Health Review. I have been misrepresented, and quite significantly misrepresented. On 19 June I asked a series of questions of the Minister for Health about the generational review. Those questions cover a number of pages within *Hansard*. The fact that I am still waiting for the answer is another matter.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Sir, this is clearly not a personal explanation: it is a grievance!

The SPEAKER: Can I tell the Deputy Premier that it most definitely is a personal explanation. Clearly, the minister said, as I recall, that she was waiting for questions on the Generational Health Review from the Deputy Leader,

and it struck me as quaint then. Notwithstanding that, the Deputy Leader has a right (any member has the same right), in circumstances where a remark has been made that adversely reflects on his position and performance, to address that. The Deputy Leader has done no more or less than is his right under standing orders.

MURRAY RIVER FISHERY

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): I lay on the table a copy of a ministerial statement relating to the Murray River Fishery made by my colleague in another place.

HEALTH REVIEW

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: During question time today, in answer to a question from the member for Colton, I said the following:

Since the estimates hearing, the shadow minister has not asked me one question about it—

‘it’ being the Generational Health Review. And that is the case.

MEMBER’S REMARKS

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I quote to the house standing order 137:

If any member

4. having used unparliamentary language refuses either to explain its use. . . [will be required] to withdraw it. . . and apologise for its use.

I did that in reference to the Deputy Leader. I apologise to the house for doing so, but I did it because I believed that the word I used at the time was parliamentary. I now realise that it is not, sir, and I am glad for your ruling. I thought it was parliamentary because on Wednesday 8 February 1995, during question time, the then premier (the current Deputy Leader) said:

Listen to him. Look at him: he is like a squealing little rat. He is sitting there like a squealing rat.

The Speaker at the time (Hon. Graham Gunn) called the premier to order and stated:

The chair would suggest to the Premier that those comments, even if they are unparliamentary, are unnecessary, and I would suggest that he rephrase his comments or withdraw them.

The premier at the time did not withdraw or apologise for his remarks, and that is why I thought a precedent had been set. However, I apologise to the house.

MINISTER, ALLEGED

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright): I, too, seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: During question time the member for West Torrens asked a question of the Minister for Infrastructure which implied that the web site that I use in my capacity as the member for Bright was passing me off as a

minister. I wish the record to show that any analysis of that web site will demonstrate that this is not the case. Quite clearly, the web site makes no such suggestion, nor in any way endeavours to pass me off as a minister. Further, the government web site, on the other hand, clearly has two ministers as Attorney-General (Hon. Paul Holloway and Hon. Michael Atkinson).

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bright has now strayed way beyond what standing orders provide for in a personal explanation.

SCHOOLS, PETERBOROUGH

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children’s Services): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: Earlier in the week, the member for Stuart asked me a question with regard to the Peterborough preschool. The information I gave in my answer was correct. However, I can now provide further information.

The project was announced by me in, I believe, December 2002 and was advertised for tender. Unfortunately, the lowest tender exceeded the budget by almost 50 per cent, and my department and minister Weatherill’s department are in the process of developing an option that will rectify that situation. It is unfortunate when such circumstances occur but, from time to time, it does occur in our capital works program that tenders come in well over available budget. But, both agencies are working as quickly as possible to come up with a solution aimed at ensuring that the new preschool is available for the start of the new school year.

SCHOOLS, BOOLEROO CENTRE

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children’s Services): I seek leave to make a second ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: Yesterday, the member for Stuart asked me a question with regard to an ecologically sustainable development grant to Booleroo Centre school.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: It doesn’t matter whether it is ghosts or cattle. Get on with it.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: The grant was allocated to purchase a dam and pumping facility. The allocation was made by the former minister for education and was subject to the completion of a satisfactory environmental site history report. The purchase of the land was subject to a satisfactory environmental site assessment, and it is considered from the report findings and EPA comments that the land is not suitable for the intended curriculum use and the potential liability risk is too high. It is therefore recommended that the proposed purchase of land not proceed.

In summary, the main issues that impacted included the fact that the water was not suitable for aquaculture or drinking. It is currently suitable for irrigation; however, the distance from the school means that the school’s proposal to use polypipe and a windmill to pump the water to the site is not feasible because it will not provide sufficient pressure for irrigation. Advice to my department was that it would cost an additional \$144 000 to provide appropriate pipes to support that irrigation.

There was also an issue to do with water testing and the need for regular water testing as indicated by GHD (the consultants who performed the work). There were also indicated potential issues around easements, where they may need to run below the railway line, and there were difficulties and costs involved with that. There were also indications in the report that the site is prone to flooding and, if that occurs, there would be issues concerning the adjacent golf club. There were issues also about the EPA disaster management plan for the facility, and there are issues around the need for adequate fencing to be erected.

To avoid the school's being disadvantaged with the land purchase not proceeding, it has been established that the \$60 000 that was allocated to the school for that purpose, being held by the school, can be utilised for another project that meets the ecologically sustainable development grant scheme criteria. As yet, the school has not put forward a project. However, if it is able to do so, the money will be used for that purpose.

SPEAKER'S COMMENTS

The SPEAKER: I have three matters that I must disclose briefly to the house. First, by way of observation, honourable members might like to reflect on question time as it is unfolding. Until the last question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the nine questions asked took less than nine minutes to ask and to answer. Altogether, a lesser number of government questions and points of order took up the rest of question time. I think that there is a message in that for all members.

The second matter that I have to tell the house is about the Constitutional Convention. Advertisements will appear in the press over the next two or three weeks leading up to the convention to further publicise information available to members of the general public and students who are interested in what ideas may be discussed to ensure that the general public at large is able to get that information relevant to the deliberations that are occurring on the weekend of 8, 9 and 10 August.

The cost of those advertisements will be met by me. Equally, if there is to be a second and third tranche to deal with those matters which the public, by virtue of their own submissions, indicates are important in its opinion in considerable number, it seems that I will have to meet that cost also from resources available to me, if there is to be any such further tranche.

Finally, on the question of parliamentary privilege, matters relevant to proceedings in this house and undertaken by members in their research to bring issues to the attention of this house will be defended in the courts in this city in the immediate future. Tonight, on behalf of the house, I am taking advice from DMAW Lawyers, briefing junior and senior counsel (Andrew Tokley and Jonathon Wells) who will appear for the house before the court and ensure that the court understands our view of parliamentary privilege, which is ancient and very important.

Any members who have questions about any of those matters may wish to see me, and I will be happy to answer them privately.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

SCHOOLS, SEX EDUCATION

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): You will remember, Mr Speaker, as will other members of the house, that 21 years ago there was debate in this place on sex education in schools. The difference between about 21 years ago and today is that the Hon. David Tonkin's government at that time ensured that that debate occurred. Indeed, there were a number of speakers. The then minister for education (Hon. Harold Allison) and the then shadow minister (Hon. Lynn Arnold, later to be premier of this state) were able to ask their questions and have them answered. However, today we see this government acting in a manner to ensure that the issue of sex education in schools in 2003 is gagged and that debate is unable to occur as a result of the government contriving in private members' time to ensure that there were multiple speakers in relation to very valid but totally uncontentious motions relating to congratulatory recognition of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, the Salisbury CFS, and the volunteer sector and government entering into a partnership.

These were important matters, but there were eight speakers alone on the first motion, taking up the rest of private members' time, when the government had clear notice over a week ago of the importance of this motion being sought to be put before the house.

It is very important, because the history of this matter coming before the house is that about four months ago I, as shadow minister, received from a concerned and experienced teacher a manual which had been provided for the instruction of teachers who had volunteered to undertake training to carry out sex education in a number of pilot schools (then 14, but has now become 15). Having received that document, of course I read it and identified some areas which I imagined would cause concern, but without making any judgment on that matter. I started to make inquiries and called for a briefing from the authors of this document, which has been abbreviated to SHine. This organisation was commissioned by the state government to provide a program for use in public schools in South Australia.

Indeed, I was given a briefing and received information confirming that schools had been invited to volunteer to become part of a trial in this program; that parents in those schools had been given information about the program; that, indeed, their consent was requested for their children to attend; that there had been a full disclosure of information; and that, if they had any further questions in relation to the program, they would be invited to attend a public forum and would receive a briefing.

All that sounded pretty good but, of course, when we asked the very first question in relation to consultation and briefings having taken place, what were we told? We were told that 10 such children in the pilot program for the Port Lincoln school had, indeed, ticked the box to say that they wanted a further briefing. What did SHine say when I asked whether a public meeting or discussion was held? It said, 'No, it was only 10, so we didn't think that that was necessary.' That was the public consultation with parents who will undertake the trial. So, by that stage, that was a matter of concern. A number of press releases were issued and a number of calls were made by the opposition to the government saying, 'There is clearly an issue brewing. There is a

problem in the community, which is seeking to have disclosed publicly what is really going on in relation to this program and the teaching material that has been disclosed'—but not disclosed for publication because, of course, it was to be kept confidential and had to be tabled in this parliament to be distributed for the purposes of consultation.

Leaving all those issues aside and having told the government that there was clearly controversy about the accuracy of the resource material for teachers; about the appropriateness—particularly the age appropriateness—of the sexually explicit nature of the material (and I will not traverse that ground today); and about the extraordinary omission of material, what do we have today? Over a month ago, I asked whether the minister was doing anything and, with no response, we have raised this matter in the house.

Time expired.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services): Following the comments made by the member for member for Bragg, I want to talk to the house about the hypocrisy of the honourable member and the Liberal Party in this matter. The member for Bragg commenced her comments by referring to governments of past eras and to the opportunities for them to use parliament to ask questions and have them answered about sex education in schools. I point out to this house that I have been available every single question time over the last four months, but where have the questions been? The hypocrisy of the member is extraordinary. I have been available every single time. The question that was asked came from the member for Hartley during the estimates committees.

So, not only have I been here for every single question time, but I have been here for a whole day of estimates committees, and not one question—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Bragg will cease interjecting.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE:—from the member for Bragg. This whole debate from the Liberal Party has been quite dada-istic. This whole debate has been an attempt by the Liberal Party to go back to the debates of the 1970s and open up the debate with the controversies of that time. It has fallen short. It has engaged only the same group of people who are naturally from the fundamentalist Christian side of the debate. What it has not engaged is parents of children in our public schools who are actually in the program. Those parents are voting with their feet. This is an opt-in program. For the first time in South Australian history, this is an opt-in program. Usually, parents have the opportunity to have their child opt out. For their children to get into this program, parents have to sign a consent form.

The process is that information nights are held; parents go along; they are shown any lessons their children will partake in; they have the opportunity to ask questions, have them answered and point out anything with which they are not comfortable; and they are then asked to sign a consent form. The fact is that at this time over 95 per cent of parents have signed this consent form, and that is the highest level we have had.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I rise on a point of order, sir. The minister has made a statement to this house which is plainly incorrect, and I ask her to reconsider that; parents cannot ask questions at those meetings.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Gunn): Order! There is no point of order. The minister is responsible for her com-

ments. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wishes to object, there are other processes.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: That was a nice attempt to cut the time down. There is a whole lot of hypocrisy here with members of the Liberal opposition.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The minister has the call.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: On the one hand they say, 'We believe in local management of schools and parental say and decision making—

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy leader is out of order.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE:—but on this issue that is not what the member for Bragg and the opposition believe. The government says it is up to parents to decide whether their children participate in this program, and they are the ones who should have the decision. Sex education is not like maths or English: it is the responsibility of parents. It should be left to parents to make that decision, not to the Liberal Party or the members of the opposition. The program is about giving students the skills and understanding they need about this sensitive issue.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: The honourable member says it is about using sex toys; that is absolutely wrong. A whole lot of misinformation is being spread by the member and other people, and that is not correct.

Time expired.

SPEED LIMIT

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light): I rise in this grievance today to advise the house of the actions of Transport SA in relation to the 50 km/h speed limit in our residential areas. When this regulation came in, the minister advised the house that any changes in speed limits would be with the cooperation of and in consultation with our local councils, and that there would be agreement between the councils and the government as to which roads would be designated 50 km/h and which councils required the 60 km/h speed limit to be retained. I have to bring to the house's attention that in my electorate in Gawler this is not happening.

Only a month ago, on Friday 11 June, 50 km/h signs on the Main North Road at Willaston were relocated without any advice to local people or consultation with the local council; and, lo and behold, the very day those 50 km/h signs were moved, there was a police car on Main North Road at Willaston with a speed gun. One has to question the morals of this fact.

First, the speed limit has been changed after the three month amnesty from prosecution for people who were perhaps doing more than 50 km/h in that area and, the very day it is changed, there is a police car there with a speed gun. You might say that is only one incident where this has happened. There has been more than one incident in Gawler and, in fact, over the last couple of weeks changes have occurred on Redbanks Road, and changes from 60 back to 50 km/h have occurred on the Barossa Valley Way from Cheek Avenue to Murray Street, on Main North Road from Willaston to the Gawler Bypass in Ryde Street and on Adelaide Road from Third Street.

In all of this my office rang up the Gawler council and asked whether they were aware of this and whether they had

been consulted, and the answer was no, they had not been consulted. We now have the very ludicrous situation where the Lyndoch Road or Barossa Valley Way, a main arterial road which goes from Gawler to the Barossa Valley, is now 50 km/h, whereas Carlton Road, which is a residential road that connects Gawler to Cockatoo Valley, is a 60 km/h road. Carlton Road would take far less traffic than the Barossa Valley Way or Lyndoch Road does, yet it has a higher speed limit and there are far more residential properties on it than there are along Lyndoch Road.

The council did not know about it, and I would imagine that they are not happy about it as well. Even Cit, one of the columnists in the local *Bunyip* newspaper says under the heading, 'Moving fast':

It seems Evanston is breeding a particular type of mutant, the walking speed limit sign. I hear that the new 50 km/h sign on Adelaide Road has been moved three times in as many days, starting out near McDonalds before mysteriously moving back towards the Gawler Racecourse and now coming out to rest between the two.

And to top it off a colleague tells me a speed camera was parked on the corner of Adelaide Road at 19th Street last Friday evening, after the sign had been moved back towards the racecourse. A lucrative money spinner to be sure, but perhaps not the most moral ways to raise funds?

The whole point of community consultation that the minister said would be undertaken and gave a guarantee would be undertaken is not occurring. One has to question the revenue raising motives of this government using this 50 km/h speed limit to generate extra funds, when it has been said that consultation would be undertaken with the community and that the community would be advised before these 50 km/h speed limit zones came into place or were changed. That is not happening. It is a failure of this government, and I hope the minister will give directions to the department to change it.

HOSPITALS, QUEEN ELIZABETH

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): I would like to address my grievance to the Auditor-General's report on the process of procurement of a magnetic resonance machine and the activities of the former minister for health, the current Deputy Leader of the Opposition and member for Finnis in the flurry of comment surrounding the procurement. Over the past 12 months the deputy leader and member for Finnis has made a catalogue of claims with respect to the Minister for Health and the process of procurement of a magnetic resonance machine by the North-West Adelaide Health Services. On 9 August 2002 the member for Finnis issued a media release in which he claimed:

The minister knows a lot more than she has so far admitted to the purchase of the MRI.

This was a clear inference that the minister was improperly withholding information. On 9 August 2002—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr O'BRIEN: No, there wasn't. On 9 August 2002 the member for Finnis said on ABC radio:

Clearly, the only head that should roll, if any heads roll, is the minister's head.

In the *Advertiser* dated 10 August 2002 the member for Finnis is quoted as saying:

The minister has made a complete goose of herself.

On 31 August, the member for Finnis suggested that the Auditor-General had not looked at the role of the minister. He is quoted as follows:

Mr Brown said he was concerned the audit investigation had not looked at the role of the minister and her failure to give a clear direction to the department, or the hospital and the extent to which that led to mistakes being made.

The report is comprehensive, and this claim is nonsense. On 23 October 2002 the member for Finnis asked a question which implied that the minister had misled parliament regarding when she first became aware of the purchase. On the same date, the member for Finnis accused the minister of having secret meetings with the doctor at the QEH—another implication of wrongdoing by the minister.

On 14 January 2003, the member for Finnis ran the line on ABC 891 that outpatients should not be referred from QEH to Flinders for a scan. That is the very condition that he imposed in his submission to cabinet dated 9 November 2001 recommending approval to purchase an MRI for the QEH. Mr Brown told Mr Bevan, 'I don't know of that condition.'

I have described the member for Finnis in a previous health debate as a daredevil of disbelief. With respect to this issue, he has clearly fallen off his tightrope and has not been saved by his safety net of half-truths. The minister has been completely exonerated by the Auditor-General's Report. Ironically, the only MP to be criticised in this report is the member for Finnis. Yesterday, the member for Wright asked the Minister for Health:

What explicit action will the minister take to address the recommendations that the governance structures at the North Western Adelaide Health Service be regularised to comply with the South Australian Health Commission Act?

The Minister for Health replied:

This question relates to the criticism made by the Auditor-General of decisions made by the former minister. It is ironic that, after all the accusations made by the member for Finnis over the past year, he is the only politician criticised in this report. The Auditor-General found that arrangements to establish two sub-boards of the North Western Adelaide Health Service to run the Queen Elizabeth and Lyell McEwin Hospitals were 'an unsound administrative arrangement' and 'not consistent with the South Australian Health Commission Act'. This is a strong criticism of the arrangements put in place by the former minister in 2001.

Time expired.

GRAY, Mr B.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): I rise to take this opportunity to offer my condolences to the family and friends of Billy Gray, who died on Monday 30 June, aged 67. Billy was well known throughout the northern and north-eastern suburbs communities particularly by those who had any interest in the sport of soccer, going back to the 1970s. Billy Gray and his family came to Australia from Scotland in 1971 and settled at St Agnes in 1972. Like many people who migrate from other countries, Billy Gray and his wife, Sylvia, wanted a better life for their family and themselves.

Billy Gray brought with him his passion for the game of soccer and his vast experience as both a player and a coach. His contribution to his community was made unselfishly and earned him immense respect from his peers and the hundreds of young people who benefited from his commitment, energy and enthusiasm and his Scottish good humour. Young people also gained improvement in their soccer skills as well as the enjoyment of participating in team sports, because Billy Gray cared.

In 1974 he coached his first team at Tea Tree Gully Soccer Club, which at that time was known as Fairview Park. He went on to coach junior and senior teams across the north and north-east, and he also coached state teams. Billy coached

Salisbury United reserves between 1982 and 1984. In 1985 he coached Elizabeth Downs seniors; in 1987, Modbury seniors; and in 1989, Croydon seniors. During the 1990s he coached Ingle Farm seniors and various Modbury and Modbury Vista junior teams. In fact, his son, Duane, recalls that he sometimes coached two or three teams at once. His other son, Russell, will tell you proudly that his dad never criticised: 'He was always focused on the positive, he was always exhorting people to make themselves a little bit better'. However, there was one exception to the never criticise rule and that related to the referees.

Billy's greatest rewards came from coaching his beloved junior teams. Just prior to his death he was involved in coaching the under 15s Kanga Squad. He loved to pass on his knowledge of the great game of soccer and teach all-comers to be the best they could be. To see players whom he had taught going on to play at a higher level was Billy's reward. The development and achievements of young people in our community through soccer was, in many areas, due to the unselfish commitment that Billy Gray offered generously to youth in our community during his most active life. The huge number of tributes offered at this time are testament to the high regard and esteem in which Billy Gray was held during his lifetime. Billy also had a great love of family, and anyone who knew him would not be surprised to know that he would make time to watch his grandchildren train at their favourite sport, which, of course, is soccer.

Billy Gray's outstanding contribution to the community and the sport of soccer was acknowledged by his peers last Friday night at the Modbury Soccer Club. As a tribute to this inspirational man who touched so many lives (as a coach, a mentor and a friend to everyone at the Modbury Soccer Club), the soccer match played last Friday night was played in honour of this man who will never be forgotten at the club. The Inaugural Billy Gray Memorial Trophy was awarded to the winner of Friday night's game, and this will continue each year on the anniversary of Billy's death. I offer my sincere condolences to Billy's wife, Sylvia; sons, Duane and Russell; daughter, Diana; and all other family members and friends of Billy Gray, a man who will long be remembered with love and respect.

SCAMS

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I rise today to bring to the attention of the house what appears to be a scam, which may be affecting other people, because it has certainly affected two constituents of mine. In late April, these constituents received a letter (and I have changed the name for obvious reasons), which states:

Dear Alan,
Late Payment

We note from our records that no payment has yet been received for the services provided to you by Stacey on 10 April 2003 at 11 p.m. As you were advised at the time you contacted us you were required to forward payment to the above address within 3-5 days. It appears you have failed to meet the terms agreed to for the provision of the services you sought. The following options are now available to you to resolve this matter. You can:

1. Make an immediate payment to X Trading for the outstanding amount of \$30 plus late fee \$25.

Or you could

2. Contact the Administrator at the address below with the details of the payment you may have already forwarded to us. We will need to know the number of any money order, cheque or receipt for deposit, the date the payment was made or sent and the date the money order or cheque was presented. When phoning please have these details with you.

Or you could

3. Do nothing and wait for the court judgment against you in the amount of the outstanding amount plus costs. This matter may be referred for Court action 21 days from the date of this letter should we not receive your payment or the details required as per option 2 above. Please note that a judgment against you will affect your credit rating for 12 years.

I look forward to your earliest reply. Should you have any queries or wish to arrange payments please contact the Administrator at the address or phone number below.

My constituent had absolutely no idea what this was about, but the reference to services provided by Stacey made him feel a little uncomfortable. He rang the number and discovered that this was a sexual chat line. He had the details of the time when he was supposed to have been involved in the provision of these services. He asked what phone number had been used to make the call for these services. He was told that the phone number from which he was ringing was the number, that they were sexual chat services and that the company took great pains to ensure that it was billing appropriately. Alan and his wife found this a little strange, particularly as the spelling of their name in the letter was not as it appears in the telephone book. I have checked the telephone book myself and, indeed, this person's name is spelt correctly in the telephone book and not in accordance with the way it is on the bill.

Following my advice, my constituents sent a registered letter with information about the fact that not one telephone number connected with the house had been involved in a call. They had gone to great trouble to have this verified by Telstra, but Telstra would not provide them with any details in writing at that time. My constituents did write, denying any use of the service, pointing out in the inaccuracies in the billing process, and indicating that they were in contact with my office over the matter. They subsequently got a letter indicating that the matter would be waived, although the company concerned maintained liability.

I want people to be alert to the fact that this is going on, because my constituent was concerned that others—particularly men—who got such a bill might be concerned about the impact on their relationships if anything happened and might not be confident enough to contest the bill as Alan did, with the help of his wife, and might pay the bill. So that would be an easy \$55 secured by somebody in unfortunate circumstances.

My further concern is that at this stage it seems that the department for consumer affairs, the Telephone Information Services Standards Council or the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman do not have the powers to investigate this matter. I am now inquiring as to whether it is a matter for the police. I urge members, if a constituent comes to them with this issue, to tell them not to pay.

Time expired.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Industry, Trade and Regional Development): I bring up the Final Report of the select committee, together with the minutes of proceedings and evidence.

Report received.

The Hon. R.J. McEWEN: I move:

That the report be noted.

I wish first to acknowledge the tremendous work done by both Malcolm Lehman and Dr Fay Jenkins, Dr Jenkins as the research assistant to the committee. She is not only nationally renowned, but internationally renowned. This state is privileged to have her services. Equally, can I say that there is nothing monochromatic about the four members of the committee. They are all very colourful individuals, and members Dean Brown, Mitch Williams, John Rau and Lyn Breuer contributed to one of the best committees I have been involved in in my short term in this parliament. It is a very complex issue. Everybody took complex evidence from different perspectives. We weighed it up, and I think people will find that our final report is a balanced one that addresses the complex issues in a way where we can both put in place the protections people wanted but, equally, we can move forward as a state. We can acknowledge the fact that, unless we continue to adopt advanced technologies, we will not survive in the global marketplace.

The final report contains 16 recommendations. The first of them is simply a recommendation from the interim report that says, in relation to matters of health and the environment, that we have confidence in the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the processes it has in place. We as a state have confidence in the scheme we have put in place nationally. The last of the recommendations says that, in the review of the national legislation and the processes adopted by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, which must occur in September 2005, we wish that office to add other considerations when it is deciding on a commercial release or otherwise of GMs. We wish it to add to its present considerations matters in relation to cost benefit analysis, the costs of identity preservation and secure segregation systems, marketing implications, and any indirect impacts that may occur from commercial licensing.

The other 14 recommendations relate to what we would like to do while moving forward as a state. Those 14 recommendations are around either conditional release or prohibition of GMs. A number of the recommendations are around prohibition of GMs on both Eyre Peninsula and Kangaroo Island—and that prohibition would be for both trials and commercial releases—until such time as those communities decide otherwise. We wish to empower those communities to make those decisions, and they need to go through a complex mechanism to ensure that that decision is both a measured and democratic one. However, until such time as those communities make those decisions, there should be a prohibition.

The rest of the considerations are around the principle of coexistence. The committee deliberated at length on the fact that we should not take away an existing right in introducing a new opportunity. So, the rights of traditional farmers and organic growers must be protected if we should move forward to release GMs. The committee goes on to talk about a GM advisory committee which will make the rules that will need to apply before there will be any conditional releases or any other releases of GM, and those rules will be around identity preservation and secure segregation throughout the whole grower and supply chain.

Permits will be needed for any commercial releases, and no permit will be issued until three conditions are met: first, that coexistence can be guaranteed; secondly, that there is a rigorous cost effective segregation and identity preservation

process in place; and, thirdly, that this must apply to the total supply chain. We are suggesting that permits will also be required for conditional releases—in other words, trials—and they will also need to be approved by the GM advisory committee we are proposing, to be signed off by the minister. Such closed loop trials will need to satisfy the identity preservation and secure segregation conditions, but it should be easier for them to do so. It should be easier to allow trials than obviously commercial releases.

I know that other members of the committee wish to speak on this, so I will not cover all the grounds because I know they will. It has been a fantastic team effort, and I respect the fact that each member, who took slightly different perspectives, would like to explore the recommendations from their own point of view.

In closing, we must move forward in an environment where we do not put at risk our traditional or organic farming systems and we do not put at risk co-existence; equally, we do not send a signal to those people developing genetically modified organisms that we do not want them in this state. We must say to them, 'If you satisfy a set of rigorous conditions that protect other people's rights—and we have suggested the process you need to do that—in those conditions we could see genetically modified organisms within the primary production systems in this state.'

I thank members of the committee for their fantastic work. I offer the final report to the house and I trust that members will read it; and I trust that this will form part of an interesting debate leading up to the introduction of legislation in this house to satisfy the requirements proposed by the select committee.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): It is with great pleasure that I speak to the report that has been compiled by the select committee. I echo the opening remarks of the minister in his high praise for both the staff who helped us with the review and the writing of the report, and other members of the committee. It has been an interesting committee. As all members would know, this is a very perplexing question, and I would like to think that we have handled it in South Australia more appropriately than have our colleagues in other states.

What we have tried to put down in the recommendations of the committee is that, whether or not we move forward, and when we move forward to allow GM crops to be grown in South Australia, it will be based on the outcomes that can be provided rather than time. We have resisted the call for a time-based moratorium or a time-based prohibition. Rather, we have tried to put in place a series of recommendations which allow companies and individuals to address the concerns of other people and other organisations in the community. Once they have addressed those concerns, they will be able to move forward. That is the basis of the recommendations.

Even though this is not confined to the grains industry in South Australia, principally we used examples and took evidence from people involved in the grains industry, and we wanted to avoid the risk of putting down a set of recommendations which would have the players, for instance in the grains industry, go into a holding pattern. That could have occurred if we had put down recommendations setting a specific time because, we believe, there would be calls at the end of that time by groups and individuals for an extension to the time because some questions had not been answered; or if we put down an outcomes-based set of recommendations

to be addressed by the grains industry there could be a risk that could lead to stagnation, as well. We have put down recommendations to allow for general release under certain circumstances but, in the lead-up to the circumstances, we have put down recommendations to allow for conditional release.

I will address the idea of a conditional release so that members understand what is going on. I personally hope this will act as an impetus for the stakeholders in the grains industry to move forward at a rapid pace to try to embrace or set up the ability for GM-based cropping in South Australia. I personally believe that we have no choice but to embrace GM technology into the future. I believe that we have no choice because of the benefits which will accrue from that. If we do not take on board GM technology, we will fall rapidly behind our competitors across the world.

As I said last night in the house in relation to another matter, in Australia in our primary production sectors we rely on exporting the majority of our product because of the small population. We rely on world markets and we have to be world competitive. We cannot afford to fall behind anywhere, particularly in technologies. One of the reasons that the Australian farmer has been so successful over the years is that he has been able to keep up with cutting edge technological developments right across the industry.

We suggested a recommendation which would allow for conditional release. For example, a company which has developed, say, a GM canola could go to a farmer or grower and say, 'If you grow this crop on your property, once you have harvested it, we will undertake to collect the crop and deliver it directly to the end user.' It would keep the product completely isolated from the current shipping and storage system.

Most issues raised with the committee related to cross-contamination within the current storage and handling system. We envisage that, if those factors fell into place, we could have an isolated system of sowing the seed, growing the crop, harvesting the crop and delivering the crop directly to an end user; it would be in complete isolation from the rest of the storage and handling system. We can see no reason why that should not occur. We refer to that as 'a conditional release'.

I believe that having that availability to companies, growers and end users will drive the wider grains industry to be very serious about the job it needs to do before a wider release of GM crops would be allowed in South Australia. We must bear in mind that we have been specific and we have been talking about only protecting the marketing side of crop production, because we have accepted in our interim report that environmental and public health issues are already controlled adequately by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, an intergovernmental organisation.

I commend the report to the house. It is a wordy document; and it was always going to be a wordy document because we received so much input from the public, organisations, individuals and stakeholders, whether they be major or minor players within the grains industry, and members of the community with merely a passing interest in this technology.

I would hate to think how many pages of evidence we received; I am sure the secretary would have that information written down somewhere. We received a volume of information. I express my thanks to Dr Fay Jenkins for condensing the information into what forms the majority of the report and the argument on which we based our recommendations. I commend the report to the house. I know many members will

be interested in reading the report, and I know many members of the community will be interested in doing so in order to come to grips with our recommendations.

Obviously, we have recommended that the government bring forth legislation to put into practice what we are seeking to achieve in South Australia. Obviously, too, there will be a considerable amount of discussion between the release of the report and when legislation appears in this parliament. I hope that is sooner rather than later but, in the meantime, the community and stakeholders involved will add to the debate.

Mr RAU (Enfield): Mr Acting Speaker, might I say I think it is the first time I have had the privilege of speaking when you have been in the chair and it puts me in mind of how things must have been in the chamber before my time.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. G.M. Gunn): I would suggest to the member that he not go down that track or he may have not such a pleasant experience.

Mr RAU: I am grateful, Mr Acting Speaker, for that warning. I would like to speak in support of this report. I was very pleased indeed to be a member of the select committee. I have to say that, from the outset, some of the other members, in particular the member for MacKillop, the member for Mount Gambier, the member for Giles and the member for Finniss, clearly had more background than I in relation to the important issues of agriculture and gene technology. I for one certainly learnt a great deal from my involvement in this process. I also place on record my great appreciation of the efforts of Dr Fay Jenkins. She has already been mentioned, but she really did do a fantastic job in assisting the committee in its work.

It seemed to me, coming at the whole issue of gene technology from a position of pretty well total ignorance, that, first, it was a relief to have universal scientific information to the effect that there was no prospect of this gene technology material causing harm to humans. I must say that that universal scientific advice was something that coloured everything that followed as far as I was concerned. Had the scientific advice been that there were risks to human beings associated with the consumption of these products, obviously I would have taken a different view. I am not a scientist and, in circumstances where their recommendations are unanimous, I accept that it is not for me to disagree with them. The next thing that also became very clear is that the real issue about gene technologies is one of markets. It is about markets and marketing.

Undoubtedly, perceptions vary around the world as to whether different gene technologies result in products which different markets want. For example, I understand that the Japanese and the Europeans have very strong views about gene technology being used in their grains. That, of course, colours their views about whether they will buy product from countries whose grains incorporate gene technology. It is very important that the gene technology debate not inform itself on the basis of prejudice or science fiction, but on the basis of very real and very important market perceptions. I believe that this report does tackle that issue from a realistic perspective. I have to say that, whilst I was more than happy to concur with the final draft of the report, had I been the author of the report perhaps my preference would have been to place a slightly different emphasis on it; that is, emphasise the fact that, until certain standards and certain criteria have been satisfied, there is an effective prohibition in operation.

However, I readily concede that, ultimately, that view is a matter of semantics because the effect of the report and its

recommendations is that that will be what happens. That is, until people establish that they can do things properly, there will be no movement forward, and I think that is very proper. I will not die in the ditch about the word 'prohibition', although I must say that personally I would have preferred to see it occur more often. I am also very pleased to see that Kangaroo Island and Eyre Peninsula will be given a very strong and clear opportunity to differentiate themselves in the market in the future as GM free production zones. I think that is to the good. I am very happy also that, ultimately, the decision about whether those two regions do become GM free regions in perpetuity will be one that will be arrived at in consultation with the local communities, as one would expect and hope in these circumstances.

I say again that I found the whole experience of being involved in the committee extremely informative. I am very grateful to the other members of this chamber who were members of the committee. I have no doubt that, when the committee commenced its deliberations, I would have been the least informed of all of them about these matters; and so I suppose I had the most to learn from the whole process and I believe that I am considerably better informed than I was before.

I will venture a remark about select committees in general. By a member of parliament being involved in a select committee not only do they produce a report which is of value to the parliament, hopefully, the executive arm of government, and to the community but it is also of great benefit to the members who go through a process of education in relation to whatever is the subject of the select committee. I believe that every member on this particular select committee came to it with an open mind and, accordingly, has produced a report, which, in all sincerity, is representative of their best endeavours on the subject. Again, as I said, I thank Dr Jenkins and the other members of the committee who were involved. I commend the report of the committee to the parliament.

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): Obviously I have not read this report yet, but I look forward to reading it: it sounds like a very sensible report. I for one am very afraid of what is happening to this world of ours because of the green gestapo, the eco fascists who are using junk science to increase the fear and anxiety of people who have no understanding of the scientific concepts they are portraying. It is junk science that most of these people portray: they do not rely on real science. I hope that in this report I see some evidence of real science. Yesterday, on the National Press Club telecast on the ABC, Professor Jim Peacock, who is the chief of CSIRO Plant Industry in Canberra, was speaking about GM foods. An interesting fact that Professor Peacock told the audience was that there are 56 million hectares of transgenic crops planted around the world. In his organisation's estimations, 30 billion meals from GM goods have been served over the last six years and not one case of an adverse reaction or allergy, or other unfortunate event, has occurred as a result of eating 30 billion meals made up of GM foods.

The one thing that is bad for the environment is poverty. Poverty is very bad for the environment. Poor people are too busy trying to survive to care about the environment. Three essential things that have delivered the western world into its clean advanced state today are science, reason and capitalism. We have seen science cringing before superstition, science retreating from irrationalism and we see capitalism grovelling

before fascism. The new apocalyptic religion of climate change is another area about which I have some serious concerns. Certainly climatic change is occurring in the world, but is it due to what is happening in developed countries? Is it due to a recent event brought about by humans? I am yet to be convinced that that is the case.

The eco fascists around the world would rather have poor people live by candlelight, cook their food over open fires and live in a state of existence that we can only imagine. The example which I will use to illustrate this is the World Summit on Sustainable Development which was held in South Africa. Greenpeace was there demonstrating against the nuclear power plant at Johannesburg, yet living next to the nuclear power are poor people who use paraffin oil to light their huts and who cook on coal and wood fires. Greenpeace would rather they do that than have access to one of the most safe and economic forms of electricity production in the world, with no emissions and producing tiny amounts of stable waste which is easy to dispose of safely.

I have in my possession a report written for the South Australian government in 1968 entitled 'Nuclear-Powered Agro-Industrial Complexes and Nuclear Desalination'. This was published when the then Dunstan government was looking at building a nuclear power station in South Australia to assist our agro industries and to provide cheap electricity for desalination. How topical that is now. I wonder, if that had gone ahead, what the government's attitude would have been to storing the nuclear waste from that power station.

The other case of which I am aware and that was highlighted at the world summit on sustainable development was that of farmers in a Zulu area called Buthelezi. They all told the same story. Their crops of cotton and corn had been devastated by the boll worm and the corn borer. They used gallons of pesticides to try to contain these insects. This cost a lot of money, poisoned the soil, killed benevolent insects, damaged their health and killed one of their workers. They then tried GM crops using GM seed designed to combat the pests. It changed their lives. The yields doubled or trebled. They did not have to use pesticides, so the soil improved, their health improved and the beneficial insects came back. For the first time, they began to make enough money to improve their standard of living. This was a revelation and a turnaround in their lifestyle.

As South Australians, we cannot shut our eyes to what is going on in the rest of the world. We must recognise that we have an opportunity to produce safe GM products that will be bought by the rest of the world. The rest of the world is not scared of real science: it looks past the junk science and the eco-fascists. This government needs to show courage and go ahead and use the GM technology being developed at Adelaide University and the Waite Research Institute to benefit not only the people of South Australia but all the people of the world.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I rise to speak to the report of the GMO committee—although, not having actually seen it, I cannot comment on it one way or the other. It has become a very emotive debate—a debate more about human concerns and perceptions rather than commonsense and actualities in the scientific place. World market perception is firing these misconceptions, and the debate. It is all about integrity preservation. I agree with what the member for MacKillop said a while ago in relation to companies such as Bayer, Monsanto and others. If they wish to grow these crops, they could control the whole process from go to whoa, as long as

they not only took the whole of the product when it was grown and marketed in-house but also controlled the residues.

I commend the work of the members of the committee in the preparation of this report. Much has been said in recent years on this subject. I have read widely and also have a cousin, Professor Graham Mitchell, who is a world authority on this subject from whom I have sought advice. Community opposition to the use of genetic engineering and other biotechnologies in the production of food crops contrasts starkly with the general support that these technologies receive in human medicine.

Professor Graham Mitchell (who is, as I said, one of Australia's leading bio-scientists), in examining this conundrum, has uncovered some uncomfortable perceptions about modern agriculture and agricultural science. Put simply, he has found that people generally trust medical researchers and health professionals but do not have the same degree of confidence in agricultural professionals.

I am looking at a biotechnology and grain industry magazine called *Feeding Tomorrow's World*, published earlier this year, which features an article on Professor Mitchell. Some of these comments are in that magazine and it is well worth reading, and I commend it to members.

Professor Mitchell stated that, in agriculture, there is a perception, perhaps more so previously than now, that the technology is being cast about by technology cowboys. In medicine, people have a basic understanding of the very strict tests for safety and efficacy when it comes to new pharmaceuticals and treatments. The regulations make the technology in medicine transparent and comforting. The article states:

Professor Mitchell suggests that everyone could learn from the lead taken by pioneer DNA researchers in the early 1970s, when they made a now-famous Asilomar Declaration which imposed strict self-regulation until they better understood what they had discovered.

In February 1985, an elite group of scientists, policy makers and journalists assembled in California to discuss what they knew or did not know about the new... DNA technology (the basis of this genetic engineering), and to draw up guidelines that would let the science proceed without undue risk.

For example, it was agreed not to use any *E. coli* bacterium, which infects the human gut, in experiments unless the organism was crippled so that it could not survive outside the laboratory.

The wider community worries about agriculture's ability to manage the same technology wisely, and that is reasonable comment. Clearly, the community wants to see more long-term ecological research on what does happen rather than on what can happen, and it wants that research done impartially.

Professor Mitchell felt that other issues muddying the debate are: an unclear regulatory environment, from the public's point of view, and the deplorable way that manufacturers handle the food labelling issue. Consumers in developed countries have a choice and power. If you refuse to meet their demands for information, they will not buy what you are selling. That is what we have heard in this debate: market perception. However, this has created a double-edged sword for technologists and food manufacturers.

Too much information has proved equally damaging in some sections of the community, which then takes exception to scientists interfering with their deity's grand design. So, the technology is also conceptually difficult, because most people do not really understand what a gene or DNA is. Scientists have compounded this by using some ridiculous jargon such as 'terminator genes'. What are people supposed to think if you start bandying around terms like that? The reality that faces the proponents of the new technologies, and

the marketers of its products, is that at the end of the day this is not a consumer-led revolution. This next statement is important:

It's not something that consumers, or even many farmers, have asked for. It's been discovered and pushed by technologists, who haven't done anywhere near enough to bring the community into their loop.

I will say that again, because this is an issue I have been chasing for years since I have been in this place:

It is not something that consumers, or even many farmers, have asked for. It's been discovered and pushed by technologists, who haven't done anywhere near enough to bring the community into their loop.

And that relates to consumers and farmers.

So, I say again: is it not time to check on the impartial advice we seek? As I said before to you, sir, and to many other people in this place: since we started outsourcing the Department of Primary Industries, since we started relying on advice that you can only describe as commercial, how do we get advice on complex issues such as this?

I believe it is high time that we looked to our department and authorities such as SARDI who give excellent, impartial advice which is not commercially driven. I think that is the bottom line. All our scientists are saying it: you cannot rely on the corporate companies, which do a lot of testing for business reasons, to give advice to farmers, consumers or, worse, to us as politicians. You have to sort the wheat from the chaff. When you, as a government, employ people to do this research for you, you have some expectation that that advice will be good advice, non-biased advice and not commercially biased advice.

I think there is much to be said about this issue, and I wish it could be desensitised and that we could somehow gain back the respect from the consumers and that they could realise that this technology, as long as it stays within its own species, is not necessarily bad. We hear all these crazy ideas of cross-gene pollination of different species, which I believe is quite wrong and futuristic. We should support cross-pollination and cross-DNA breeding within the species to give our food crops less susceptibility to the weather and the saline conditions we are experiencing, in order for it to be better food commercially, because this has been happening naturally for many years in Australia. We have the ability to do this now instantly by gene technology, and I do not think that that is necessarily a bad thing.

We have come a long way since we started this debate eight to 12 months ago, when it was a very emotive issue. I believe that some of the sting has gone out of this debate, that we are hearing more rational argument and, indeed, that industry has a more rational point of view. I have not yet read this report, but no doubt it will be much discussed over the next few days, particularly at the National Farmers Federation Conference next week. I look forward to reading it.

I cannot stress enough how important this debate is to this parliament and to this state. Above all else, we should not interfere with a process that enables our country to progress; that enables our farmers to grow food more efficiently and more profitably for themselves; that provides better food for our people; and that provides for an export market that benefits all Australians. I certainly support the motion that the report be noted.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the house be extended beyond 5 p.m.

Motion carried.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): In noting this report, I would like to make some comments about the select committee. I have sat on many select committees in my time in this parliament, but this was one of the best in terms of getting to the issues, dealing with the numerous people who presented submissions and, I think, dealing with them very effectively and very fairly.

I want to commend the other members of the select committee and the Minister for Industry, Trade and Regional Development, who chaired it. I thought it valuable that we had members who were, effectively, looking at this issue from a consumer point of view. Some members knew very little about agriculture and certainly very little about the technology involved in genetic modification. However, that was good, because that reflects the broader community.

Other members of the select committee, such as the member for MacKillop, were very familiar with agricultural issues and also with the gene technology that was involved and, therefore, some of the more practical and commercial issues that had to be dealt with. The select committee had an excellent balance from this house, and the Chairman ensured that it focused on the key issues, and the members cooperated with that very willingly.

To sum up the broad situation, we can say now that Australia, as a result of a federal-state agreement and concurrent legislation that has been passed by the Australian parliament and the respective state and territory governments, has a gene technology regulatory system in place that is very effective indeed and, I believe, probably one of the best in the world. Australia also has in place a mandatory food labelling regime.

In fact, I had the privilege of sitting on the Australian-New Zealand Ministerial Food Council. It was not an easy task, and I think that the council sat for 2½ years before it came to a conclusion. I argued very strongly indeed for a very high standard of food labelling. A wide divergence of views was held, and the minister from the ACT, Michael Moore, and I were very much in the minority when we started to argue the position to put in place the highest and strongest regime in terms of labelling food so that, when exporting food from Australia, we would not have to suddenly establish a new regime in terms of segregation of GM crops and non-GM crops: we would be able to use food that had been produced for the Australian market, export it, and it would meet international standards.

In fact, it was interesting that, at the time, *Time* magazine wrote an article about the mandatory food labelling requirements in Australia and described them as the most rigorous and tight in the world. Certainly, I think we led the way. So, we have the right gene technology regulation system, and we have the appropriate mandatory labelling for food products.

One burning issue that came out of those issues that the select committee dealt with was trade and marketing, and the committee decided to focus on that in the final report. We issued an interim report dealing with many of the issues that had been dealt with internationally and at great length, and I think we did that very fairly. However, trade was clearly the burning issue that had to be dealt with in South Australia and in Australia. If you are to meet these high standard regimes for both trade and food production, an effective system of segregation has to be in place right through the crop chain—

from the original seed, the planting, the harvesting and storage to the export or use domestically.

Those are the issues we spent a great deal of time on, and I particularly appreciated the excellent evidence given to the select committee by a range of bodies. I will not mention all of them, but they include the Australian Wheat Board, the Australian Barley Board, AusBulk and numerous others. From the evidence, we understood very clearly the need for this framework, if I can put it that way, that has not yet been established for segregation, for the market expectations internationally and, therefore, for the need for further work to be done, and for that work to be done very quickly indeed. Members of the select committee were concerned about whether we would see an unnecessary delay simply because the various groups involved who bear this responsibility do not get on and do it. We want to see those regimes and an effective system put in place very quickly indeed.

I stress the fact that we are dealing with new technology. Mr Speaker, I will refer to a private conversation I have had with you, and I hope that you do not mind me doing so. You highlighted to me the importance of triticale, what it has done in terms of grain production in South Australia, and how it was a hybrid cross, but my academic years are so far behind me that I do not wish to try to guess exactly that hybrid cross. But, it produced triticale, and the benefit of that to agriculture has been very significant indeed, particularly in some drier areas with lighter soils.

Having a background in agriculture, I know the importance of the whole plant and crop breeding work that has been undertaken. If you look at the gains that have been made in food and crop production around the world you see that it is because of the superb work of the people who have committed lifetimes to achieving new varieties and pushing and testing those varieties to make sure that farmers can constantly improve their production. That is what has been done. The benefit of that to Australia and internationally is just enormous. I do not think we comprehend that. I still recall the Report of Rome, which predicted that in about 1985 the world would run out of food and we would not be able to feed the world. In fact, we are able to produce the food. There are still significant inequalities in the distribution of food in the world, but the world has met that challenge. When I was a university student in 1966, the Report of Rome made these dire predictions, and it is the plant breeders who have been the outstanding people who have achieved that increase in production through improved yields, together with better fertilisation of the crop, etc.

It is very important indeed that through an emotional reaction to genetically modified plants we do not reject ongoing benefits that can be achieved for the benefit of mankind on this earth. As our world's population continues to grow and the expectation and hopefully the distribution systems continue to improve, so we are able to produce additional food to make sure that everyone has adequate food. I can think of no greater disadvantage that you can inflict on anyone in this world than inadequate or inappropriate food on a daily basis. We need to be sure that we can continue to be able to use the benefits of that new technology as it continues to develop. We need to appreciate that there are some new, genetically modified products out there, and I am one who wants to make sure they are very effectively tested before they are released because, in many ways, if any harm is done, it will be very hard to reverse that harm—if it is at all possible. It will be largely impossible, if in fact harm is done.

Whilst understanding those dangers, at the same time we need to be aware that many of these things have been done very successfully now for several hundred years. One only has to go out and look at the wheat museum at Pinnaroo to understand the enormous change in varieties of wheat and the amount of work that has been done in wheat breeding over 100 years or so in South Australia. I urge members to drop in and have a look at the wheat breeding museum at the old railway station at Pinnaroo as part of that. I know, Mr Speaker, you had a huge hand in making sure that it was brought to fruition.

I also say that consumers have a right to know, and therefore it is important that we are able to identify what the crops are which people are now eating or which are about to be put into their food. Therefore, consumers have every right to make that choice. Different consumers have different opinions about genetically modified food, and that is why, if they wish not to eat it, they should be able to pick up a packet or any food product and say, 'This is not genetically modified, so I will either eat it or I will not.' I think we have effectively dealt with those issues: first, the broader issues in the interim report and also, importantly, the trade issues and their potential impact. As members of parliament we need to understand what these trade issues are in terms of the public perception in countries that we are trading into and their perception over issues of genetically modified crops.

Another issue I wish to touch on briefly is exclusion zones. I am of the view that there needs to be an informed debate in certain regions of the state where it is practicable because of geographical suitability to have an exclusion zone. Kangaroo Island, which is part of my own electorate, is one such area which needs to undergo a very serious debate as a community. I am a strong advocate for saying those local communities should have the final say on whether or not there should be an exclusion zone for any genetically modified crop that otherwise might be released in South Australia. Another area is Eyre Peninsula. I know that, because of Spencer Gulf and the way it goes up to Port Augusta, it is feasible to have Eyre Peninsula as another exclusion zone. Also, because it has its own unique grain handling and loading facilities, it would be quite practicable to ensure that genetically modified crops were not using those ports as well. Again, it is the strong view of the select committee that that should be a matter for the people on Eyre Peninsula. It should be left entirely up to the local communities.

Once the legislation is introduced, the responsibility of the minister is to ensure an appropriate consultation process and then an appropriate decision by those local communities. They would need to realise that, once they have accepted genetically modified crops, there will be no turning back. Equally, if they decide to continue an exclusion zone—and the select committee made the strong recommendation that there should be no genetically modified crops in those areas until that process has been gone through—then they have the opportunity to have an exclusion zone but, equally, they have the right to review that decision at any time in the future. They may wish to do that as the technology, research and public awareness of the issues surrounding genetically modified crops continue to change.

So, I certainly support this very strongly. One unique aspect of the select committee was that the findings were unanimous. I do not know whether that point has been made by other speakers; it is certainly recorded in the minutes of the select committee that its findings were unanimous among

all members. You can look at the diversity of background of the people on that select committee and see a practical farmer, someone like me and I guess the chairman who have been directly involved in the agricultural technology area—not that I have ever been involved in plant breeding, but certainly I have had academic training in that broad area—and other representatives, one with legal expertise and, to be fair to the other, one representing very much the point of view of a consumer such as a housewife and someone who understands those sorts of broad issues that the general public would be concerned about.

I certainly endorse the recommendations, and I would urge the government to introduce the legislation very quickly. The faster we have it, the better. I think it gives a very clear direction. It does not cut off the opportunity for genetically modified crops; it does not impose a moratorium and it does not impose a freeze. It provides that there are issues to be dealt with which should be dealt with as quickly as possible, that no genetically modified crops should be commercially released in South Australia and that the trials can continue. Some excellent evidence was presented to the select committee by the Waite Agricultural Research Institute. I think all members of the committee appreciated the pragmatic and realistic way in which that evidence was presented by the Waite Institute. I support the recommendations of the select committee.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): Today, I speak to the Select Committee on Genetically Modified Organisms Final Report, which was released to the House of Assembly this afternoon. I have not had time to read the whole report, but I will comment on a number of the recommendations. This report does not deal in detail with concerns about health and environmental matters. Those matters were the subject of an interim report prepared by this committee of the parliament. I think it is fair to say that the members of the committee had faith in the regulatory mechanisms established at a national level in relation to those concerns. I hope their faith is justified.

The key recommendations in this report which was brought into the parliament today involve the conditional release of genetically modified food crops in South Australia—and I will go into those conditions in some detail. The report also recommends the establishment of GM-free crop zones in South Australia, particularly on Kangaroo Island and Eyre Peninsula. The report implicitly accepts that it would be very difficult for those zones to be set up in other parts of the state unless there is some natural geographic barrier between areas that would have GM crops and those that would not.

The first point that I highlight in relation to GM crop concerns is that there is an emphasis in the report on economic matters and the markets for GM crops. The committee considered that concerns relating to GM foods are more about impressions and opinions rather than science. If perceptions in overseas markets change, there is a willingness on the part of regulators here to modify whatever law we put in place to cope with GM crops. In other words, the premise of the report is that there is no great danger scientifically to humans, the environment or other crops through the introduction of GM crops, but there is a very real concern based on the impact that the introduction of GM crops would have on the markets where we sell our grains, etc.

I sound a note of caution and say that scientific investigation of those concerns is continuing. It is difficult to be categorical and say that, without any doubt, there will never

be any problems along these lines. Let us hope that the committee has got it right based on the evidence that it received.

Regarding the market, the committee considered four main areas of concern. The first area involved the effect on market access for a wide range of commodities and products and the premiums on pricing currently achieved (for example, in relation to barley and wheat) should GM crops be introduced into South Australian agriculture.

Secondly, the committee is concerned to leave South Australia with the widest possible options both now and in the future should there be the coexistence of non-GM and GM crops. Thirdly, there is a concern about supply chain management, segregation and traceability. Obviously, those issues are essential to maintaining the identity and integrity of non-GM crops should there be any introduction at all of GM crops into South Australia.

Fourthly, if scrutiny is going to be applied to supply chain management in respect of segregation and traceability, who will bear the cost of that scrutiny and regulatory process? So, there is a range of valid concerns which arise out of the market concerns identified by the committee.

The essence of any model must be effective segregation and identity preservation. If we do not have those qualities in any regulatory model that we allow to be introduced into South Australia, we will have at the very least disappointing results in the marketplace as we try to sell to those jurisdictions which are reluctant to accept GM crops or GM contaminated foods. The consequence of these concerns is that, according to the select committee, legislation should be introduced to provide a regulatory regime within South Australia. I note a particular comment in the report relating to the maintenance of an identity preservation system. In other words, this relates to the segregation of GM and non-GM crops. The report states:

To maintain parallel production systems for GM and non-GM crops in which there is a zero tolerance for mixing would be technically different and extremely costly.

So, there are significant hurdles to be overcome before we could possibly allow the release of GM crops in South Australia.

I am glad to note that recommendation 3 of the committee is that, before the commercial release of a GM crop can be permitted, three conditions must be met. First, industry must be able to guarantee coexistence to meet market demands for different classes of crops and products (for example GM-free, non-GM and GM). Secondly, this must be done through the establishment of rigorous and cost-effective segregation and IP systems throughout the total production and supply chain which must cover pre-farm, on-farm and post-farm activities, protect from both direct and indirect contamination, include a rigorous paper trail, and cover by-products of GM crops. Thirdly, the segregation and IP systems must be agreed upon by the whole of the production and supply chain.

Although I have not yet consulted with the other members of my party, I suspect that the Greens will firmly endorse those conditions as minimum conditions which must be met before the commercial release of GM crops should be allowed in South Australia. The question arises, if those conditions are imposed, who will say whether or not they are met under any GM crop proposal? In response to this, the select committee recommends that a GM crop advisory committee be set up. Such a committee would involve representatives from the South Australian government and would include representatives of agricultural production and

supply chains and exporters and marketers. In a sense, the key to effective reform will be appropriate membership of that committee. I insist that the committee membership must be broad enough to fully represent all of those who currently have concerns about GM crop implementation in South Australia.

The committee has also recommended a specific GM minister—that is not to say that the minister is GM but is entirely responsible for oversight of GM crop matters. Then comes the crucial area of enforcement. If we get to the point where there is legislation, there is an advisory committee which considers that conditional release should be permitted, and it comes to pass. Three areas are identified by the committee where scrutiny will be essential, that is, in relation to broader security, and that refers to the state border and the border of any GM crop free zone. It refers to monitoring and testing of any GM crops in any part of South Australia, and it refers to control in the sense that the entry and establishment of a GM crop needs to be identified and cleaned up if necessary and, if there is contamination, appropriate prosecution will occur.

This issue of enforcement is obviously an essential part to the overall package if we are going to have GM crops allowed in South Australia. Judging from the critical areas of environmental hazard and the adequacy of inspections, enforcement and prosecutions at the moment in South Australia, there would have to be grave concern that there will ever be sufficient monitoring and enforcement in relation to GM. Perhaps that will occur in the early stages, but I have fears that, as with so many other areas where the government has downgraded its enforcement duties due to cost cutting pressures, in the future not enough funds will be spent on enforcement.

Finally, I turn to the last recommendation made by the select committee, and that was in relation to these market concerns. Recommendation 16 is that as part of the review of the national regulatory scheme for gene technology, which must occur before September 2005, marketing issues should be considered. This should include a cost benefit analysis which would take account of issues such as the benefits and costs to farmers in particular, the costs of segregation and IP systems, the market implications and any indirect impacts. I fully endorse that recommendation as well as I am absolutely confident will the Greens Party. Overall, this is a substantial report. The recommendations are worthy of praise. They set out minimum conditions and onerous hurdles which need to be overcome before any release of GM crops into South Australia should be allowed.

Ms BREUER (Giles): I will speak only very briefly, because many of my colleagues have said what needs to be said today. I also want to commend this report. I was very pleased to be a member of the select committee for the months we served on it. It was an extremely rewarding committee in which to be involved. I went into it with an open mind. I really had no idea how I felt about GM. I had heard so many scare stories, and it seemed to be balanced by a lot of evidence that proved that those stories may not have been true. I went into the whole issue thinking, 'This will be interesting to see.' However, I came out at the end being pleased with the recommendations we came up with. While I do not think that I would grow another head if I were to dare eat GM food, some areas of concern need to be looked at before we could give wholesale approval to this. The

committee has come up with some good recommendations to give us the time to get those issues sorted out.

I was happy to serve with those people on my committee, and I appreciated the individual contributions of each member; for example, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's work as minister of health enabled him to contribute much prior knowledge to the committee. I was also pleased with the chair of the committee who has a background in gene technology given the studies he has done in the past. He was certainly able to contribute. The other person I was pleased to see there was the member for MacKillop with his farming background. On a number of occasions I sat there during evidence from various organisations involving terminology that meant that I honestly did not have a clue as to what they were talking about. However, the member for MacKillop was able to explain to me what some of these terms meant, as he is very much involved in the farming industry. Being a steel town girl, I had a bit of difficulty overcoming some of those hurdles. Those members contributed very well, and it was a good committee.

I also want to pay tribute to Dr Fay Jenkins and the work she did for us. We would not have got through the work otherwise. It was an absolutely horrendous task when we first went into it. I was pleased that we were able to fairly quickly sort out the main issues we needed to look at. We could not take on the whole field. We would have been there for the term of this parliament if we had tried to sort all that out. Dr Jenkins did an excellent job in helping us to put together that information, sort out the wheat from the barley and put us on the right track. Our clerk also did a great job in getting us together, making sure we turned up and keeping track of what was going on.

As I said, it was an excellent committee in which to be involved. It is a pity that every member in this parliament cannot get involved in every select committee that comes up, because the amount of work you get through and the amount of information received through the evidence provided is really invaluable. I am sure that most members do not read every word of every report that comes out of select committees, but this one will attract a lot more attention than others do, because it is an area about which we are all concerned. It does not matter which magazine or newspaper you pick up: there is always some mention of GM crops. It is a real issue in our society today. Again, I commend the report, which I urge everyone to read and see what is in there, and I look forward to the future of this innovation in South Australia.

Motion carried.

MURRAY RIVER IRRIGATORS

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for the River Murray): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I rise to inform the parliament of new initiatives by the government to help River Murray irrigators at this difficult time. Mr Speaker, as you would know, the transfer of water licences, including the transfer of water allocations from one water licence to another, is a transfer of property for the purposes of both the Water Resources Act 1997 and the Stamp Duties Act 1923. Transfers of water licences and water allocations are, therefore, subject to stamp duty. I am announcing today that the government will streamline the water transfer processes and reduce the financial cost of these transfers on water users.

New rules will expedite the determination of applications for the transfer or conversion of water, either holding or taking allocations, during the period of the notice of water restrictions. These rules will not compromise the state in terms of our requirements for salinity management and reporting under the Murray-Darling Basin agreement, nor do they undermine the water allocation and transfer criteria applicable under the River Murray water allocation plan and the Water Resources Act 1997. However, these new rules should enable the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation to determine applications that seek to transfer water for a period of one year to merely top up their water allocation in 10 working days. This should be a very welcome policy initiative to all water users, because as members may know some of these transfers can take a considerable time and, of course, in a period of drought people do not have that amount of time.

The government realises that the River Murray irrigators are doing it tough. I am pleased also to announce that the government will provide relief from stamp duty payable on temporary transfers of River Murray water allocations entered into on or after 1 July 2003 for the period that the water restrictions for this resource remain in place. In order to receive the stamp duty relief, the relevant transfers must be submitted to Revenue SA. Relevant packages of information, including authorisations for water use, the notice of restriction, transfer rules, and details on stamp duty arrangements, are in the process of being distributed to more than 3 000 licensed River Murray water users. I understand that this information will be mailed to these licensees early next week.

NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE FACILITY (PROHIBITION) (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Members will be aware that, as a result of the debate leading to the passage of the Nuclear Waste Storage Facility (Prohibition) Amendment Act 2003, the Nuclear Waste Storage Facility (Prohibition) Act 2000 (the principal act) will, in the absence of further legislation, expire on 19 July 2003. This bill repeals section 15 of the principal act, which provides that the act will expire on 19 July 2003. This amendment will ensure the ongoing operation of the principal act, which prohibits the establishment of any national nuclear waste storage facility for the storage or disposal of nuclear waste in South Australia.

In effect, this bill removes the sunset clause that was placed in the bill in March this year. The effect of that clause, if it were not removed today in this house, would be that the entire bill, not only the amendments moved in March but also the original act passed in 2000, would fall over. It is important that we get this through.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: In fact, that measure from the year 2000 was moved by your colleague the member for Davenport, so he may have a disagreement with you about your comment that it would be a good idea if it fell over. I commend this bill to members and 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

Clause 2: Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Repeal of section 15

Section 15 of the *Nuclear Waste Storage Facility (Prohibition) Act 2000* provides that the Act will expire on 19 July 2003. This clause repeals that section.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I move:

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

The SPEAKER: I have counted the house and, as an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the house is not present, ring the bells.

An absolute majority of the whole number of members being present:

Motion carried.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I rise to speak on this bill relating to radioactive waste, which has been sent to us from the upper house. The minister's second reading speech sets out the purpose of the bill. For those members who were not in the house when the minister made his second reading speech, the purpose of the bill is simply to remove the sunset clause in the 2000 act. Currently, a sunset clause expires on 19 July. The amendment takes out the sunset clause so that the 2000 act continues on. That is the sole purpose of this bill which has been sent to us from another place.

We will not be dividing on this issue, but I do put on record that the opposition does not support the government's notion in relation to the low level repository being prevented in South Australia. We know that if the house supports this bill that will be the reading of the act, but we did move amendments in the other place to the effect of taking it back to the Liberal Party's bill, which banned a medium level waste repository, not a low level waste repository.

I do not intend to put this house through that process, because it has been a long week and I know members wish to go, but I place it on the record so that no-one can misconstrue our position in relation to that exercise. I had planned to give a lengthy contribution in relation to this matter, because it is fair to say this has been a sorry process by the government in relation to the radioactive waste bill.

We went through the charade of its splitting the bill in the upper house. The referendum bill was put into a separate bill so that the upper house could deal with this bill. Debate on the bill was adjourned so that Nick Xenophon, and others, could have meetings with constitutional lawyers. Based on legal advice given by the Liberal Party, he and the other Independents got their constitutional advice, which he refused to give to the Liberal Party—and to this day he has refused to give it to the Liberal Party. If the government had refused to release information to the Hon. Nick Xenophon, I think he might be complaining about it. It is unfortunate that we have gone through the whole debate not having a copy of whatever advice the constitutional lawyers gave that group. That is the way the debate went.

We then had the upper house putting a four-month sunset clause into the act to expire on 19 July because, based on that constitutional advice, the bill was so bad that the common-

wealth could override it and the low level repository could proceed. The Independents and minor parties in the other place took constitutional advice and put in the sunset clause, so the strengthening provisions could be put into the bill. The government went away and, I assume, worked with the Independents and minor parties in the other place to come up with a strategy to strengthen an act that the commonwealth could override. Then the government walked into this chamber and introduced the two bills, the Public Park Bill and the radioactive waste bill. They introduced them here and they were ready to debate them immediately after the estimates committee. We had two days of sitting immediately following the conclusion of those committees. Then the government decided that it was nervous about getting it through this chamber because a cabinet minister was not necessarily committed to the vote on the bill. The bill was left in this chamber—introduced and then debated in the other chamber.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: You know that is not true. You should not say such things.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I do not know that that is not true—I assumed.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: I had a conversation with you. I rang you and told you why we were putting it in the other chamber.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: You withdrew it.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: Okay, you say what you want to say.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I accept the fact that the minister rang me as a courtesy and told me that he was withdrawing it.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: And I told you why. We ran out of time because you guys were filibustering on the Appropriation Bill.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Then what happened is that the upper house dealt with the bills. It is fair to say that the bills got absolutely gutted in the upper house. The Public Park Bill was defeated. Even the leaseholders of the property where the public park was going to go did not support its being there. They were not consulted by the minister. I know the minister claims he left a message on their answering machine, but that is not really consultation. It might be an attempt, but there was no actual consultation on behalf of the minister. The Pobkes totally opposed the bill and, ultimately, threatened to sue the government if the bill was passed.

We then had all the other strengthening provisions, that is, the need for dangerous goods licensing and an EIS, and the other jurisdictional issues where people in other states could be committing an offence in South Australia. All those provisions were then stripped from the bill and what we are left with is simply this clause which dispenses with the sunset clause. So, we will revert to the act which, according to the constitutional advice given to the Hon. Nick Xenophon and others, was badly drafted. We have gone around in this circle for a number of months and have come back to the same act.

When this bill is passed—and it will get passed—we will have the same act which the constitutional lawyers told both the government and all the Independent members in the upper house the commonwealth will have the power to override. Ultimately, what we will have then is an act that is more about making a statement to the commonwealth than preventing the commonwealth from acting in that respect.

I will not detain the house for long, because, as I said, it is the end of week and I know we all want to go. However, I do want to place on the record some comments. First, I want to thank my upper house colleagues, particularly the Hon.

Angus Redford, for his efforts in negotiating this matter over a number of months in difficult circumstances and in what was quite a complex matter. He did an excellent job and I thank him for his efforts. I want to place on the record some comments about the Democrats.

Today, I thought it was unfortunate that the Leader of the Democrats criticised the Leader of the Family First Party (Hon. Andrew Evans). I say this to the Hon. Sandra Kanck: Andrew Evans has a set of values and a set of principles and he will stick to them. What she does not recognise is that Andrew Evans voted with the government last night; he did not vote with the opposition in relation to this bill.

He did vote against the government on the Public Park Bill, but on this bill it was the government's amendment which we are debating now that Andrew Evans supported. The Democrats failed to recognise that Andrew Evans supported the government in relation to this amendment last night.

Mr Hanna interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Yes, he voted both ways, but the Hon. Sandra Kanck does not recognise that in the media. Then we come to the Democrats' position. This issue has been debated for 12 years and we still have the Hon. Sandra Kanck in another place on 8 July telling the council that the repository will deal with waste from a nuclear power station in New South Wales. If, after 12 years of debating this issue, the Leader of the South Australian Democrats does not understand that we are not dealing with radioactive waste from a nuclear power station at Lucas Heights, that is unfortunate. I know that the Hon. Andrew Evans understood that we were not dealing with radioactive waste from a nuclear power station in New South Wales.

I make the point to the Hon. Sandra Kanck that her comments to the Hon. Andrew Evans in the corridor last night after the debate were not called for and I do not think that is what the parliamentary process should involve.

I will not detain the house any longer as I have other commitments. The opposition has put forward its position, that is, we do not walk away from our stance in relation to wanting radioactive waste stored safely. I think one of the reasons why the upper house ultimately defeated the government's bill was a result of so much misinformation and half truths being given that the Independents lost faith in what the government was saying. I think that was the underpinning of the demise of the bill, as well as a lack of integrity in the process.

Others have whispered to me that they thought the bill started to go off the rails when the Hon. Sandra Kanck promised to lie down in front of the trucks. From that point on the government's bill was always in trouble. That is the opposition's position on the bill.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): I am speaking in relation to the Statutes Amendment (Nuclear Waste) Bill. The history of the legislation has just been set out by the member for Davenport, and I will not go through it again. I will mention, though, that the nuclear park bill (as I tend to call it) was defeated last night in the Legislative Council. That was seen as the best weapon in the government's arsenal in terms of preventing a nuclear dump being imposed upon South Australia. However, it was not without difficulty, even if it had passed.

One of the issues which the government never squarely faced up to was how it—the government—would avoid the imposition of a nuclear dump in a less scientifically satisfactory part of South Australia had the park bill been passed. In

any case, we are left with a nuclear waste bill which is similar to that which was introduced by the government some months ago.

It prohibits the dump; it prohibits transport to the dump. The key question is whether it will stand the test of judicial scrutiny, because it is certain that the federal government will proceed to challenge this legislation. Nonetheless, it is worth endorsing this legislation as it goes through this parliament. At the very least, it is a symbolic defiance of the extension of nuclear waste and, in an indirect sense, the nuclear industry into South Australia. That is something which the Greens endorse.

This is not the time to go into the evils of the nuclear industry, but we do know that, although there is some medical benefit to be gained from the production of materials which have radioactive elements, most of what is produced goes to supply the weapons of war in other countries. How topical that is when, at the moment, Iraq is riddled with depleted uranium ammunition. Baghdad will be toxic for a long time to come unless all the radioactive ammunition used by US forces is carefully extracted—and there is no sign of that happening.

We all bear responsibility for it all around the world, and this parliament can play its part by putting this bill forward. As I have indicated, I am not excited about its effectiveness, but it does make a statement that there are terrible and real dangers involved in the nuclear industry, the end result being the proliferation of nuclear weapons. A very substantial section of the South Australian public knows this and is passionately concerned about it, and that is why there is popular support for this bill and is the reason the government is pushing it forward so strongly.

I should say that there are some members of the government and the Labor Party who are passionately opposed to the nuclear industry and the end result of proliferation of nuclear weapons but, over the last six months, what we have seen between the Liberal and Labor parties is, in some sense, a game of politics. There is no doubt that both sides have used this issue to maximise their political points in the community. No-one has really grappled with the basic problem that we have a toxic industry in this nation, and this bill will not diminish the dangers and the consequences of having that industry.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the house be extended beyond 6 p.m.

Motion carried.

Ms BREUER (Giles): I want to speak briefly, because it is the end of our sitting time and we are tired. I want to put on record how sad I feel about what happened last night. Of course, I have been a long-time opponent of this dump and have spoken out about it a lot, both within this place and outside. I felt very sad at what happened last night when members went against their stand in March of supporting this bill. They totally went against their stand then—one member in particular, the Hon. Andrew Evans, went against the promises he made before the election—and against the wishes of 72 per cent of the people of this state who have opposed this dump.

It was brought home to me recently how much opposition there is to the dump in this state when I was sitting at the airport waiting for an aeroplane. A couple of people were

sitting behind me because the chairs backed against each other. It was an old couple, and I heard them talking to some friends from interstate. They said, 'Mr Rann's done a really good job of trying to get rid of this dump,' so, of course, my ears pricked up. I did not say anything to them, but I listened. They said, 'We don't want this dump in this state, but they have done a good job trying to stop it.' Then they said, 'We've even demonstrated against this. We went to protest about it. We have never protested in our lives before.' These were people who were in their seventies. They said, 'We feel strongly about this. We don't want this in our state.' I realised then that people who fought against and opposed this dump really have a case when people in that age group feel so strongly.

Last night, I was privileged to sit in the other place with Sister Michelle Maddigan. She sat for two days and listened to the arguments. She represented the Irati Wanti women—the Kunga Jutas from Coober Pedy. She listened to the arguments and heard every word. She was heart-broken at what was happening, as are the women she represents (the Kunga Jutas from Coober Pedy) who have fought very long and hard to prevent this dump and have become well known all over the world for their fight against it because they feel so strongly.

The other thing that I feel concerned about—although, I am not sure that I should be concerned, considering the actions—is the future of Arcoona Station and how it will survive this controversy. What will be its future when there is a radioactive waste dump in the middle of the property? They have sheep grazing on the property and they will have trucks going through the property regularly. How can we guarantee that there is no contamination on the road through the property? How can we guarantee that the sheep will be all right? How can we guarantee the quality and safety of the meat from those sheep? How can we guarantee that, when I open my fridge door, my lamb chops will not be glowing? I think this is an issue for the future that they will have to consider because the people of South Australia will realise that it is a possibility that they could have this meat on their dinner plates. I think it is an issue that is ongoing and that we will have to consider for a long time. Consumers will want to know that their meat and meat products are safe.

When I was last in Maralinga I was interested to see that, despite the clean-up, there are signs all through the area saying 'Malu Wiya' and 'Hunting Wiya'. They will not let people hunt on those lands because, despite the clean-up that is supposed to have happened, the kangaroos, rabbits, emus and other animals are contaminated. The Aboriginal community, the Anangu people, know that they cannot hunt in that area because of the dangers in the ground.

So, I feel very sad about what has happened. We had an opportunity to do something about this but it has fallen in a heap. I feel sad about our future. I want to finish with the words of the Irati Wanti women, because I think they say better than anyone else how a lot of people will be feeling now. They said:

No more—just leave it now. We've got a lot of spirit in the land. You have taken so much from us. Leave us now. We tired now. We want to live in peace. Please listen this time. Time is getting shorter. The Lord put us here to look after the manta. We're greenie mula (true greenies). We're here to look after the whole earth.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I will not speak for very long. I thank those members who have contributed to this debate. This is another

stage in the saga of the campaign to stop the federal Liberal government putting a radioactive waste dump in our state. This piece of legislation will help in that campaign because it will ensure that we have a law which prohibits the establishment of a radioactive waste dump in this state and that will allow us to take legal action against the commonwealth at some future stage.

I put on the record my thanks to members of my party and the non-Labor members in the other house and, indeed, in this place who have supported the legislation and worked very hard to strengthen it. Members will know that in March this year the government introduced a bill into the other place which was subsequently passed with an amendment which was a sunset clause giving us until 19 July to come back with improvements to the bill to make it stronger. We undertook to do that in good faith.

We consulted with the lawyer who had been employed by the Independent members and, I think, the Democrats in the other place. We took advice from that lawyer and from Crown Law and produced two bills which, if passed, would have significantly strengthened the position of this parliament and given the government more powers to take on the federal government in our dispute with it over this matter.

Unfortunately, and for reasons which are still not clear to me, at least three of the Independents, having requested us to strengthen the bills in the ways that their lawyer had suggested, when it came to the crunch, decided to vote against those strengthened measures. So, in effect, what we have now is the same bill that we had passed back in March; so we have spent four months doing all of these things with no improvement. I think that is very disappointing. I will not criticise the Independents: they all have consciences and they chose to exercise their consciences in the way they did, and it is up to them to live with themselves as a result of those decisions.

I make reference to a couple of other things that were said during the second reading of this bill in this place. Reference was made to the Pobke family (the owners of the pastoral lease on which the proposed radioactive waste dump will be placed by the commonwealth). Their intervention in the debate on this issue is interesting. They circulated yesterday in the parliament a letter indicating that they would take legal action against the state government if it was successful in getting the parks bill through the parliament, and they would seek compensation. I found it extremely strange and somewhat suspicious that they would make that move, in a highly political way, during the debate. I think that indicating their position indicated some partisanship on their behalf.

As I indicated during question time yesterday, to suggest that they would have a case for compensation against the state government was somewhat absurd, because there was no loss that they would suffer. They could still use that land for pastoral purposes. The only real loss that I can see, had we been successful, would have been the compensation that would have been due to them from the federal government for the confiscation of their access to the land on which the dump would have been placed. I do not know how much compensation the federal government is proposing to give to Mr and Mrs Pobke for the alienation of that part of their lease on which the radioactive waste dump will be placed.

However, I believe it is important that the federal government indicates to the public how much that compensation will be. Certainly, the public has a great interest in that matter, because it is the public who owns that land. It is crown land—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Snelling): Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL:—which is being confiscated. If the federal government is successful in getting the dump built there, it is the people of South Australia who will suffer the main loss. The loss suffered by the Pobkes will be a loss confined by the lease arrangements over 60 years.

I know that the member for Bragg and all her colleagues on the front bench are apologists for the federal Liberal government. They are the supporters of Nick Minchin's campaign to have the dump placed in this state. I know how close the member for Bragg is to Senator Minchin and how closely she follows his arguments on this issue. She and her colleagues will have to face the electors in this state at some future time and explain to them why they supported the federal government marching over the best interests of South Australians and imposing that dump in our state.

However, that is up to the conscience of the member for Bragg and her colleagues. I think it is interesting that the Pobkes pursue a legal action against the state, which owns the land, purporting to turn that into a park, yet they would not seek legal action against the commonwealth, which wants want to put a dump there. How hypocritical of those lessees in relation to this issue! So, obviously some political questions need to be asked, but I guess it is up to them and their conscience to work through as well.

In his contribution, the member for Davenport said, in part, that he believed that the Independents lost faith because of misinformation that had been provided to them. In part, I think he is correct that misinformation was provided to the Independents, but it was provided not by this side of the house but by the other side.

The Independents were told a number of things that were clearly not true. They were told that legal action in relation to the measure would cost millions of dollars. That was plainly untrue, and even Senator Minchin this week toned down the rhetoric and said that it would cost up to \$500 000. We think that is an exaggeration as well, but it was certainly untrue to say that it would cost millions of dollars. There is no doubt that that put pressure on at least one of the Independents and caused him concern. It may well have been that misinformation that changed his vote.

However, a whole range of arguments was put to the Independents about the likelihood of our being successful in the courts in relation to the Parks Bill. My advice from Crown Law was that we had a very strong case. Unfortunately, we will not be able to test that now because the bill was unsuccessful. However, a range of issues was put to the Independents that were untrue, in my view, and that may well have had an impact on their decision. As I say, it is up to the conscience of those members who participated in the debate and voted on the bill.

I make the point that this point gives us a legal right to pursue the commonwealth in relation to this dump. It is a limited right and is not as strong an opportunity as we hoped to achieve through the amendments put before the other place—but at least we still have that opportunity. I say to this house and to the public of South Australia: this fight is far from over. The politics of this issue have to work themselves out, and we look forward with great interest particularly to the next federal election, when we will make it very clear to the population of South Australia that the reason that they will have a radioactive waste dump in this state is the conspiracy between the federal Liberal Party and their state Liberal colleagues.

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

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Legislative Council concurred with the resolution of the House of Assembly contained in message No. 124 for the appointment of a joint committee and will be represented on the committee by three members, of whom two shall form the quorum necessary to be present at all sittings of the committee. The members of the joint committee to represent the Legislative Council will be the Hons J.M. Gazzola, R.D. Lawson and N. Xenophon.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I move:

That the members of the House of Assembly to serve on the joint committee on a code of conduct for members of parliament be Ms Chapman, Mr Rau and the Hon. R.B. Such; and that they have power to act on the committee during the recess.

Motion carried.

RIVER MURRAY BILL

The Legislative Council did not insist on its amendments Nos. 1, 16 to 18, 21 and 22 to which the House of Assembly had disagreed. The Legislative Council had, in lieu of its amendments Nos. 19 and 20, to which the House of Assembly had disagreed, made the alternative amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which alternative amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

Legislative Council's alternative amendments to its Amendment No. 19.

Schedule, clause 17, page 64, lines 12 and 13—Leave out subsection (1) and insert:

(1) The Committee is to consist of seven members.

(1a) Four members of the Committee must be members of the House of Assembly appointed by the House of Assembly and three must be members of the Legislative Council appointed by the Legislative Council.

Schedule, clause 17, page 64, line 16—After 'one of its' insert: House of Assembly

Legislative Council's later native amendment to its Amendment No. 20.

Schedule, clause 17, page 65, after line 4—Insert:

(iv) at the end of the second year of operation of the River Murray Act 2002, to inquire into and report on—

- (A) the operation of subsection (5) of section 22 of that Act, insofar as it has applied with respect to any Plan Amendment Report under the Development Act 1993 referred to the Governor under that subsection; and
- (B) the operation of section 24(3) of the Development Act 1993; and

Consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's alternative amendments.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I move:

That the Legislative Council's alternative amendments to its amendments No. 19 and 20 be agreed to.

I thank the processes of the parliament for getting us to this stage. We are now creating a new natural resources committee, which will be a committee of both houses comprising seven members—four from this place and three from the other place—and will inquire into issues other than just the River Murray, and I think that is appropriate. It will be an interesting committee on which to serve, and I hope that there is good competition amongst members to do so. It is a vital committee for our state. We need to have a River Murray committee, and we need to be able to deal with the issues that

confront us in relation to the river, and we need a multi-partisan approach to do so. I think this committee will give us the capacity to develop that multi-partisanship.

In addition, towards the end of this year I will be introducing legislation in relation to natural resource management. I am considering now how that bill can be amended to include the fact that this new committee exists, and I will try to build in a role for the committee in relation to the natural resources management legislation. We will look at the role that this committee now has in relation to the River Murray and see whether we can mirror that in relation to NRM, and I think that will be very useful and very sensible. Having said those few words, I commend these measures to the house.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I support the amendments recommended by the Legislative Council and agree entirely with the minister's position on these amendments. I look forward to this committee being established and carrying out its function, which is so important to the overall health of the River Murray.

Mr HANNA: I am delighted to see that the committee as formulated by the Legislative Council has returned to the form which I originally proposed in this house. It must be that there are many like-minded people in the Legislative Council. Thus, as concisely as possible, I am very pleased to support the motion.

Motion carried.

NATIONAL WINE CENTRE (RESTRUCTURING AND LEASING ARRANGEMENTS) (UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE) BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (SELF-DEFENCE) AMENDMENT BILL

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

No. 1. Page 3—After line 10 insert new clauses as follow:

Amendment of section 15—Self defence

3A. (1) Section 15(1)—after paragraph (b) insert (as a note to paragraph (b)):

¹ See, however, section 15C. If the defendant establishes that he or she is entitled to the benefit of that section, this paragraph will be inapplicable.

(2) Section 15(2)—after paragraph (b) insert (as a note to subsection (2)):

¹ See, however, section 15C. If the defendant establishes that he or she is entitled to the benefit of that section, the defendant will be entitled to a complete defence.

Amendment of section 15A—Defence of property etc

3B.(1) Section 15A(1)—after paragraph (c) insert (as a note to paragraph (c)):

¹ See, however, section 15C. If the defendant establishes that he or she is entitled to the benefit of that section, this paragraph will be inapplicable.

(2) Section 15A(2)—after paragraph (c) insert (as a note to subsection (2)):

¹ See, however, section 15C. If the defendant establishes that he or she is entitled to the benefit of that section, the defendant will be entitled to a complete defence.

No. 2 Page 3, lines 20 to 22 (clause 4)—Leave out subclause (1) and substitute:

(1) This section applies where—

(a) a relevant defence would have been available to the defendant if the defendant's conduct had been (objectively) reasonably proportionate to the threat that the

defendant genuinely believed to exist (the perceived threat); and

(b) the victim was not a police officer acting in the course of his or her duties.

Consideration in committee.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Infrastructure): I move:

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 4 August at 2 p.m.

I will take the opportunity to make the customary comments at the end of the session, offering thanks to those staff who work so tirelessly for our benefit. On this occasion the first staff member I wish to thank is an individual member of the Hansard staff, Mr Kevin Simms—the very popular Mr Kevin Simms. Kevin, a former Leader of Hansard, is soon to leave us after 41 years of service to the parliament. Mr Simms came to Hansard from the Local Court and State Industrial Commission in 1962, during the term of office of Sir Thomas Playford. There is not much that has happened in this state in the past 41 years to which Mr Simms has not been a witness, and he has also been a very accurate recorder of those events. Mr Simms has seen us politicians and leaders in every shape, size and hue, with all our good and bad bits for 41 years, and I have to say that, with that record, he probably deserves more than a humble send-off from me: he probably deserves some sort of medal. I am sure that everyone in the house will wish Kevin all the very best for his future. I am sure he will miss at least some of us, but I am sure he will not miss the very long sittings. I hope we have done something to improve that, but it certainly still is a feature of the job. I know that he will be missed by his colleagues, and that he is held in very high regard. I am sure the entire house wishes Kevin all the very best.

Honourable members: Hear! Hear!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I apologise in advance for any that I miss. I thank the remaining Hansard staff; I thank the Speaker and his staff, the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, the table officers, attendants, committee staff, all the support service staff, the Library staff, catering staff, the cellarmaster, parliamentary counsel, the Finance Manager and staff, the Building Services staff, the government publishers, the caretakers, police security, drivers, electorate officers, ministerial staff—and I know how hard they work—and anyone else I have missed. I mention the whips in particular; they do an extraordinarily difficult job. Again I thank my partner Tania and all the partners of the members here. They put up with a very great deal and they miss a lot.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I will not thank the dog; I am a magnanimous man but there is a limit even to my good wishes and gratitude. It has been a very full, very busy first half of the year. We appreciate very much all that has been done for us in that time and we look forward to resuming again in some eight weeks' time. I apologise if I have missed out anyone else, but I tell you most sincerely that members of parliament appreciate the very long hours involved and the work that is done for us.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I would like to endorse the remarks of the minister in thanking everyone who makes this place a functional place from day to day. We appreciate that, as we go through a parliamentary session—and we have had the budget and estimates committees—it puts considerable strain on parliamentary staff, particularly Hansard, so three cheers for Hansard! I particularly want to thank the Clerks of the house, the clerical staff, the staff of the chamber, the messengers, the staff of both houses of parliament, and the Hansard staff—and I want to mention Kevin Simms in particular shortly. The dining room staff and the kitchen staff continue to provide a superb service. When we have late sittings as we have had this week, they are the ones who continue to work here for long hours. This year I would also like to particularly thank the caretakers, the maintenance staff and the new security staff who are seen around parliament house. I have noticed that there are now security staff at various locations throughout the house on a regular basis, and I think it is reassuring that they are there. I am pleased to see them in the building, making sure in such a friendly way that everything is in order.

I also want to comment on the tradesmen who have been working on renovations in the building. Members, particularly those on the lower floor who use the back lifts, would be aware that tradesmen have been around in considerable numbers over the past 12 months. I have always found them friendly and, I think, somewhat amused at the workings of this place. Someone might get into the lift with them and they suddenly realise who that person is and take a second look. They have been very flexible in the way in which they have fitted in the construction works to meet the demands of members of parliament and the operations of the house.

I also thank the personal assistants and other staff who work for all of us and the drivers, who are often forgotten. Those members who have had a driver appreciate the tremendous support and effort that they put into their job. So, on behalf of the Liberal Party (in particular, the Leader of the Opposition, Rob Kerin) and the whole parliament, I pass on my personal thanks to them for their efforts, service and commitment to the parliament.

I would especially like to thank Kevin Simms. This is your life, Kevin; this is your day, after 41 years! I think Graham Gunn, who is now in his 34th year, is the longest serving member. When I look back to when I came to this place, I think, 'Gee, that's a few years ago,' but Kevin was here then, and Graham, as the longest serving member, clearly recollects Kevin being here when he came in 1970.

Kevin, you have given outstanding service to Hansard and this parliament. On behalf of the Leader, Rob Kerin, myself and all members of the house I want personally to thank you for your years of service. I think you and I can say that we have grown older together, or we have matured together. Some of my younger colleagues would not know what long hours are in this house.

A classic example of those long hours is the year 1973, when we sat virtually every week. In those days, the only week we did not sit was for the royal show. When we came back to the parliament at the end of July, we sat from the end of July continuously (week after week) through to early December. I think the only week that we had up was for the show, and that was the week after the Thursday on which the budget was brought in, so that all the members could go down to the show and tell the farmers the good news about which roads would be sealed, etc.

In 1973 we passed major legislation dealing with such matters as WorkCover, SGIC, the Land Corporation, and

other significant bills. I recall sitting in this house night after night until 2 or 3 in the morning, sometimes 7 or 8, and some mornings going even beyond that. I am sure that the member for Stuart would remember that, by the end of that session, even rational people in this place were no longer rational. I suspect that with that sort of a time frame we sat almost double the hours that we sit now.

So, Kevin, on behalf of all of us, thank you for your outstanding service to Hansard and the parliament. We wish you the very best as you now take your long service leave. You will remember this day for a long time as your last working day in the parliament. We wish you a happy and enjoyable retirement.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I further endorse our thanks once again to all the other staff who have made the operation of this parliament very pleasant and functional. May they enjoy the next eight weeks before we come back to it again.

Motion carried.

[Sitting suspended from 6.28 to 7.50 p.m.]

The SPEAKER: Honourable members have already passed a motion of gratitude to those people who serve us throughout the year. We acknowledge that this is the last day of sitting of this session and that the *Notice Paper* will be clear when we return. May I add my expression of gratitude to those which already have been made by many of you before we rose until the ringing of the bells for a repast. In so doing, I point out that we are advanced in our assessment of better ways of recording and providing to the public that recording of our proceedings, and I particularly appreciate the efforts that have been made by the Leader of Hansard and all the staff in Hansard in the adoption and use of SAPHIRE, which is the South Australian parliamentary Hansard recording system that is being looked upon not with envy but, rather, with respect by other parliaments around Australia and the Pacific. Hansard officers from other parliaments have been here to look at what we have been doing.

In addition to that good work, with the assistance of the Clerk and some members from the chamber, we have examined the options available to us to take video recordings of the proceedings of parliament and to match them to the written record of parliament in a way which many of you would otherwise describe, perhaps, as karaoke, meaning that in fairly short time you will be able to take the written record of the proceedings of parliament and look at it on a CD—a video disc—where by using any word you will be able to search the record to see what was said either by yourself or by any other member about any subject matter whatsoever. You will know on what day it was said and you will be able to hear members, including yourself, saying it, in which case the nuances that add to the understanding of what each of us is saying, by the body language we use when we are saying it and the intonation of the voice we use when we are saying it, will be available to us and, more particularly, to members of the general public who want to know how we have done the job of representing their interests.

In no small measure, I think this will enhance our reputation as acting responsibly and in the public interest in doing it, more so than can otherwise be the case by just looking at the page and reading the words that have been said, recorded in *Hansard*, and provided for us and all members of the public who are interested in those matters. To my mind, in the 21st century—just as a little over 100 years ago

we adopted the practice of writing down what was said and what was done in terms of votes for the benefit of the public—we are now able, through the advances in technology, to provide them with an even greater measure of the dimensions of communication through the multimedia that is now open to us.

We have looked at what has been done in the analog context in Western Australia. We have looked at what has been done in the same way in New South Wales, and we have examined (without going there yet) the federal parliament to see what is happening. I am quite sure that we can learn not only from their mistakes but also how we can do it far more cheaply in South Australia; and, in the process of doing so, before the next election I am confident that all members will be pleased to have at their disposal a video disk, if you like, of the proceedings of the parliament, especially the contributions which they have made and which they can circulate at very little expense to their constituents—and there are other benefits beside that.

In addition, I recognise the good work that has been done by the people who keep this building functioning, and that is not just to keep the pigeons from shitting on us outside the front but also to keep the building clean and habitable, as well as providing us with wholesome food of sufficient variety to meet the most fastidious requirements of any diet and, in doing so, ensuring that we are efficient in maintaining an environment in which we can work. I thank the building attendants and the maintenance staff, whether they be in air-conditioning, plumbing or anything else. I thank the Hansard staff and the people who attend us in this chamber and those who equally attend the other place to make up the parliament to enable us to get through our work and do what we know to be in the public interest, whether we all agree with everything that is done or disagree with some of it. I would suggest that, if any of us have ever been in full agreement with everything that is done, then any such member is almost certainly going to lose their seat at the next election. We are, after all, an abstraction of society at large. We should respect each other accordingly and enable the community to do likewise.

I thank you for your attention and I know from the remarks you have already made that you join me in expressing those sentiments to anyone who has had anything to do with making it possible for the parliament to continue to function in the public interest as a consequence of your collective contributions in that cause.

CORONERS BILL

The Legislative Council did not insist on its amendment No. 1 to which the House of Assembly had disagreed and agreed to the alternative amendment made by the House of Assembly in lieu thereof.

WATERWORKS (SAVE THE RIVER MURRAY LEVY) AMENDMENT BILL

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

No. 1. Page 5, lines 20 and 21 (clause 7)—Delete these lines and insert:

(b) if the state's contributions to the Murray-Darling Basin Commission for a particular financial year exceed \$15 million (indexed¹)—payment of the excess; and

¹ The sum of \$15 million is to be adjusted, for each financial year commencing after this paragraph comes into operation, by the same indexation factor as is applicable to the calculation of the amount of the levy for that financial year.

No. 2. Page 5, (clause 7)—After line 24, insert:

(5a) The minister must, as soon as practicable after 30 June in each year, submit to the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the House of Assembly a report detailing—

(a) the amount of money paid into the fund under this section; and

(b) the application by the minister of money paid into the under this section, during the period of 12 months preceding that 30 June.

(5b) The President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the House of Assembly must, on receiving a report under this section, lay the report before their respective houses.

Consideration in committee.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

I am comfortable with the suggested amendments from the other place in negotiations between the opposition and the government. The Treasurer has been fully apprised of all these amendments, and the government supports them.

Mr BRINDAL: The opposition believes that the Treasurer listened to the debate in this house, including the remarks of the member for Chaffey. We think this bill is improved by these amendments. We will continue to scrutinise closely the operation of this bill, as the government would expect, and as the manager of the house's business said, but we are minded to accept the amendments proposed by the other place as well.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL 2003

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

STAMP DUTIES (RENTAL AND MORTGAGE DUTY) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

PARLIAMENTARY REMUNERATION (POWERS OF REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8.12 p.m. the house adjourned until Monday 4 August at 2 p.m.

Corrigenda

Estimates Committee B

Page 208, column 1, line 54—For '\$200.05' read '\$2.05'.

Page 211, column 2, line 44—For '\$265 000' read '\$65 000'.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday 14 July 2003

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

CITY WEST BYPASS

125. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:**

1. When will Transport SA begin public consultation regarding the proposed construction of the Western Bypass at Mile End?

2. When will the design work for the Bakewell Bridge replacement commence and will there be public consultation on the design?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The public/community consultation process for the City West Bypass project has been completed. Public comment was received by Transport SA between 6 November 2002 and 31 January 2003.

A community reference group, including members of the Council, local small businesses and residents was formed to enhance communication for this project. Advertisements were placed in the Messenger Newspaper, with displays in the City of West Torrens Council offices and the City of West Torrens Library. The project brochure was available at these display sites. Further, the project brochure and covering letter from the Project Manager was letterboxed and dropped to residents of Hilton, Mile End, Mile End South, Richmond and Thebarton.

The replacement of Bakewell Bridge is a major project of approximately \$12 million, and is likely to be constructed within the next 5 years, subject to budget and other road network priorities.

Transport SA will undertake public/community consultation on the design at an appropriate stage, once it becomes an active project.

WATER QUALITY

137. **Mrs MAYWALD:**

1. What is the total federal and state Government funding allocated to the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality program and which projects have been funded?

2. How many people have been employed by the department since July 2002 and in what capacity.

The Hon. J.D. HILL:

1. Total funding for the National Action Plan (NAP) for salinity and water quality program is \$189.5 million for the period 2001-2002 to 2007-2008, of which the commonwealth investment totals \$93 million.

Projects funded under NAP are detailed in the following attachments:

- Attachment 1—NAP First Priority Round Projects 2001-2002
- Attachment 2—NAP Second Priority Round Projects 2002-2003
- Attachment 3—Other projects funded by NAP (Agreed National Initiatives (matched), Program Administration and Unmatched by NAP).

2. Since July 2002 the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation has employed five people to work on programs funded through the NAP. They have been employed on the following programs:

- Salinity Response Team—Riverine
 - 2 Project officers
- Accelerated Evaluation of Salinity Interception Options in South Australia
 - 1 Project officer
- Mt Lofty Ranges Interim INRM Group
 - 1 Project officer
- Water Quality and Water Use Improvement for the SA Lower Murray through Irrigation Restructuring and Rehabilitation
 - 1 Senior Project Officer

Attachment 1—NAP First Priority Round Projects 2001-2002

Project Title	NAP Funding
Region: Kangaroo Island	
Foundation Funding for Kangaroo Island	\$162,400
Salinity and Water Quality Management through on-ground works and surface water monitoring	\$502,875
Total KI	\$665,275
Region: Northern & Yorke Agricultural Districts (N&YAD)	
Foundation Funding—Support and Planning in the N&YAD	\$179,200
Amelioration of salinity & improvement of water quality through on-ground works & monitoring of surface & groundwater - N&YAD	\$481,655
Total NAYAD	\$660,855
Region: South East	
Foundation Funding for the South East Region of South Australia (SENRC)	\$220,000
Salinity Fightback in the Upper South East Region	\$3,000,000
Total SE	\$3,220,000
Region: Lower Murray	
Foundation Funding for the INRM Group for the South Australian Murray Darling Inc.	\$220,000
Water Quality and Water Use Improvement for the SA Lower Murray through Irrigation Restructuring and Rehabilitation	\$2,180,000
Accelerated Evaluation of Salt Interception Options in South Australia	\$1,000,000
Total LM	\$3,400,000
Region: Mount Lofty Ranges	
Foundation Funding for the Mount Lofty Ranges Interim INRM Group 2001-2002	\$218,400
Accelerate work in the Mt Lofty Ranges to improve water quality, enhance biodiversity and rehabilitate riparian zones	\$559,500
Total MLR	\$777,900
Statewide (cross regional)	

Salinity Mapping and Management Support	\$3,800,000
Salinity response team—Dryland	\$380,000
Salinity response team—Riverine	\$450,000
Priority Research and Development Proposal	\$1,783,000
Total Statewide	\$6,413,000
Total	\$15,137,030

Attachment 2—NAP Second Priority Round Projects 2002-2003

Project Title	NAP Funding
Region: Kangaroo Island	
Foundation Funding for Kangaroo Island	\$161,700
Salinity and Water Quality Management through Management of Water Repellent Sands, Kangaroo Island	\$102,600
Supporting Community Groups Build their Capacity to Deliver Regional NAP Projects	\$85,000
Assessment and Monitoring of Kangaroo Island's Surface and Ground Water Resources	\$376,400
Total KI	\$725,700
Region: Northern & Yorke Agricultural Districts	
Foundation Funding—Support and Planning in the N&YAD	\$225,000
Small Groundwater Basins Risk Assessment	\$56,500
Detailed catchment planning in the N&YAD	\$75,000
Mapping Sea grass changes on the West Coast of Yorke Peninsula	\$25,000
Willochra Catchment Hydrological Assessment and Threat Analysis	\$42,000
Assessment of Biodiversity Assets at risk	\$325,000
Total NAYAD	\$748,500
Region: South East	
Foundation Funding for the South East Region of South Australia (SENRCC)	\$295,800
Fingers on the Pulse—Determining outcomes and justifying investment in natural resource management in the South East	\$140,000
Pathway: Salt Accession Investigations and Determination of Sustainable Extraction Limits (PAV)	\$500,000
Upper South East Community Support for Recharge Control (Devolved Grant Scheme)	\$1,661,100
Total SE	\$2,596,900
Region: Lower Murray	
Foundation Funding for the INRM Group for the South Australian Murray Darling Inc.	\$360,000
Water Quality and Water Use Improvement for the SA Lower Murray through Irrigation Restructuring and Rehabilitation - Year 2	\$4,285,000
Riverland Ramsar Management Plan	\$100,000
Implementation of the Coorong, and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert Ramsar Management Plan	\$360,100
Accelerated Evaluation of Salt Interception Options in SA (Part A - Chowilla, Loxton, Lock 4 Bookpurnong & New Proposals) - Stage 2	\$2,848,000
Accelerated Evaluation of Salt Interception Options in South Australia - Part B: Regional Saline Disposal Strategy - Stage 2	\$108,500
Salinity Response Team - Riverine - Stage 2.	\$420,000
Maintaining the Momentum	\$1,463,000
Coordinating Monitoring and Evaluation in the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin	\$280,000
On-ground Assistance to Achieve Irrigation Efficiency in the SA Murray-Darling Basin	\$186,300
Assessing Impacts of Land and Water Management on Floodplain Health	\$148,800
Providing baseline data to improve wetland management aimed at reducing salinity, improving water quality & enhancing biodiversity	\$305,000
Development of market based investment programs for NRM along the River Murray/Mallee dryland corridor	\$335,000
Impacts of salinity on the aquatic invertebrate & aquatic & terrestrial vertebrate fauna of the River Murray Floodplain in SA	\$187,500
Implementing the River Murray Catchment Water Management Plan	\$1,450,000
Total LM	\$12,837,200
Region: Mount Lofty Ranges	

Foundation Funding for the Mount Lofty Ranges Interim INRM Group 2002-03	\$475,500
Myponga Watercourse Restoration Project	\$101,300
Addressing Salinity and Water Quality Decline in the Bremer Barker Catchment	\$87,000
Sustainable Salinity and Water Management on the Northern Adelaide Plains. Stage 1	\$329,000
Local Action Plan for the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula	\$109,000
Vegetation for water quality - integrated bush management, revegetation and seed resource preservation	\$289,100
Dung beetles for cleaner water	\$64,300
Dryland Salinity Response Team	\$213,200
Upper Torrens Land Management Project - community responses to salinity issues	\$249,000
Supporting Community Groups Build their Capacity to Deliver Regional NAP Projects.	\$180,000
Mid Torrens Catchment - "Towards Water Quality Improvement" Project.	\$150,000
Stop the Loss: Reducing Dryland Salinity and Maintaining Water Quality by Halting the Premature Death of Remnant Vegetation	\$237,600
Wetland Inventory for the Southern Mount Lofty Ranges	\$57,500
Saving the Swamps: Conserving the Most Significant Wetlands of the Mount Lofty Ranges, the Fleurieu Swamps	\$322,500
Water Proofing Adelaide	\$415,000
	Total MLR \$3,280,000
	Total \$20,188,300

Attachment 3—Other projects funded by NAP (Agreed National Initiatives (matched), Program Administration and Unmatched by NAP).

Project Title	NAP Funding
Agreed State/Commonwealth Initiatives	
National Communication Strategy	\$1,780,000
Market Based Instruments Pilot Program	\$195,000
Community Forum	\$12,850
EMS Communication Strategy	\$2,720
National Research and Development	\$4,000
	Total National Initiatives \$1,987,850
Program Administration	
NAP State Administration (5% over 7 years)	\$4,650,000
NAP Commonwealth Administration (5% over 7 years)	\$4,650,000
	Total Program Administration \$9,300,000
State Unmatched Projects	
CRC Plant-Based Management of Dryland Salinity (over 7 years)	\$700,000
CRC Irrigation Technology	\$300,000
	Total Unmatched \$1,000,000
	Total \$12,287,850

Title	Classification	Step	% NAP funded	Salary
Senior Policy Officer	ASO-6	3	30	\$60,734.00
Graduate Officer	ASO-3	1	100	\$38,569.00
Project Coordinator	ASO-7	1	100	\$69,699.00
Principal Policy Officer	ASO-7	2	100	\$65,323.00
Project Manager D&NS	ASO-6	2	100	\$58,979.00
Senior Policy Officer	ASO-6	3	100	\$60,734.00
Project Manager	ASO-6	1	100	\$57,224.00
Principal Policy Officer	PSO-3	1	100	\$57,224.00
Principal Policy Officer	ASO-7	1	50	\$63,747.00
Wetland implementation Officer	PSO-2	1	100	\$49,397.00
Manager Licensing	ASO-6	3	100	\$60,734.00
Project Officer	PSO-2	Vacant	100	\$49,397.00
Project Officer INRM	PSO-2	1	100	\$49,397.00
Executive Manager	MPS3	1	100	\$75,716.00

Leader	PSO4	2	100	\$65,323.00
Technical Manager	PSO-2	4	100	\$44,267.00
Consulting Director	ExecOB	N/A	100	\$106,733.00
Admin Officer	ASO-1	4	100	\$25,166.00
Office Coordinator	ASO-2	3	100	\$35,845.00
Senior Project Officer	ASO-6	3	100	\$60,734.00
Program Administrator	ASO-3	3	100	\$41,296.00
Personal Assistant	ASO-2	3	50	\$35,845.00

ROADS, MORGAN TO BLANCHETOWN

139. **The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** What is the current volume of traffic using the Morgan to Blanchetown Road and what plans are there to seal this road?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The most recent traffic count on this road, undertaken by Transport SA in July 2002, was at approximately 4.5 km south of Morgan. This count showed an average volume of 187 vehicles per day on this road. This compares with an average volume of 191 vehicles per day at the same location in February 1999.

There are no plans to complete the sealing of this road at this stage. Expenditure of funds for sealing this road is very difficult to justify in State-wide terms. The volume of traffic using the road is low, most of which is local access traffic to adjacent properties along the road, including river shacks.

In addition, the volume of longer distance traffic is not high, for a State arterial road. Ten kilometres of the road have already been sealed and there is also a parallel sealed road available on the eastern side of the river, supported by a high capacity Transport SA ferry at Morgan.

While sealing this road would clearly have benefits for local access traffic, this expenditure is not justifiable in economic terms. Furthermore, other sealed roads on the rural arterial road network have higher priority needs in State-wide terms, with higher traffic volumes, heavy vehicle movements and higher crash history. Given these greater needs elsewhere, it is not considered appropriate for the Government to allocate funds for sealing works on the Morgan-Blanchetown Road at this stage.

The Government is mindful, however, of the tragic death of two people in separate accidents over the last two years on this road and will do as much as possible to ensure safe operating conditions are maintained on the existing road. Transport SA is increasing its maintenance effort on the road, with plans to re-sheet the worst 4 km in the next three months. Further re-sheeting works, particularly at the southern end, are also being considered as further funds become available, while signs advising of the availability of a sealed road on the eastern side of the river are being erected.

TAXIS

144. **The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:**

1. What commitment has the Government given to the deregulation of the South Australian Taxi Industry?

2. Have discussions occurred between Fleet SA and Treasury regarding the provision of light vehicles to Transport SA and if so, what are the financial implications to Transport SA?

3. What is the status of the Highways Fund and is there any intention to abolish it?

4. Has a Ministerial Review into the safety of level crossings in South Australia been commissioned and if not, why not?

5. What are the details of the restructure of Transport SA, including the relocation of the call centre and associated costs?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The Government has not given any commitment to deregulate the industry.

Yes. As from 28 June 2002, Transport SA lease all light vehicles from Fleet SA under the standard Fleet SA terms and conditions. These Fleet SA lease terms and conditions are not the same as the AH Plant lease terms and conditions and represent different service level arrangements. The net costs realised a savings in the vicinity of \$500 000 when adjusted for similar service levels.

The Highways Fund is a Non-Interest Bearing Special Deposit Account administered under the *Highways Act 1926*. Currently, there is no intention to abolish the fund.

The Government has reconvened the Level Crossing Strategy Advisory Committee. The express aims of the committee are to further improve level crossing safety in South Australia. The

Committee reports to me and is chaired by Mr Jon Steele, Executive Director, Transport SA. Its membership comprises the Australian Rail Track Corporation, Australian Railroad Group, TransAdelaide, Pacific National, Australian Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union, Royal Automobile Association of SA Inc., Local Government Association of SA, SA Police and Council of Historic Railways and Tramways of SA Inc.

The Government has established a small full-time Level Crossing Unit within Transport SA. In conjunction with the State Level Crossing Strategy Advisory Committee, this unit is conducting ongoing risk management of all rail level crossings in South Australia.

TransAdelaide and Transport SA are undertaking a program of initial and ongoing risk assessment of all SA level crossings.

The restructure of Transport SA included:

- Consolidating into a single agency (Transport Planning) the existing Transport SA functions of Investment and Planning, Transport Policy and Executive Support together with the Public Transport Investment Unit previously in the Office of the Chief Executive.

- Consolidating the functions of Transport SA's Operations Management, Operations Support, Regulatory Services and Corporate Services into a single agency (Transport Services).

There has been no relocation of the call centre. Costs for the restructure are within existing budgets and funded from savings achieved through accommodation efficiencies.

NATIVE VEGETATION INSPECTORS

146. **The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Do inspectors authorised under the Native Vegetation Act 1991 keep records of the farming properties they have entered, is the departmental chief executive provided with this advice and are inspectors obliged to notify landholders of their visits?

The Hon. J.D. HILL:

1. Authorised officers appointed under the provisions of the Native Vegetation Act 1991, who undertake an inspection or an assessment of private property, keep personal diaries or notebooks detailing their visit.

The departmental chief executive is not advised of inspections relating to routine activities, however, he is advised of inspections relating to highly complex or more serious clearances or suspected clearances.

An authorised officer may enter and inspect any land (excluding residential premises) for any reasonable purpose connected with the administration or enforcement of the Native Vegetation Act 1991. Where an authorised officer enters land and takes photographs, films or makes audio, video or other recordings, or takes samples of any plant or any part of any plant for identification and analysis, the authorised officer must, as soon as reasonably practicable after entering the land, serve notice on the owner or occupier of the land informing him or her of the date on which the authorised officer entered the land and provide the owner of the land with a reasonable amount of information about his or her actions.

EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

152. **The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:** How many people have received emergency accommodation provided by Anglicare SA in the Elizabeth and Gawler areas and what has been their average length of stay?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Fifty four people were accommodated by the Anglicare SA program "Northern Family Accommodation Service" in the 2001-02 financial year. The average length of stay was 166 days. This accommodation service is funded by the government through the Department of Human Services Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

TOURISM PLAN

157. **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** What are the full details of the emergency plan mentioned by the minister in the house on 14 May 2003.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: The National Tourism Crisis Response Plan is a joint initiative of Federal/State/Territory Tourism Ministers and was developed in 2002 with the input of the Australian Tourist Commission and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources and agreed to at the Tourism Ministers' Council Meeting in September 2002 in Auckland.

The Plan establishes a framework to ensure national tourism crises are managed in a coherent whole-of-government way to minimise potential negative economic impacts. The Plan includes mechanisms to communicate accurately and timely information to various groups, including State/Territory and Commonwealth Governments and tourism organisations; the Australian and international tourism industry; and the domestic and international travelling public. It also seeks to ensure coordinated policy responses and remedies across governments and coordinate and disseminate information relating to impacts of crises on the tourism industry.

The Plan was activated during the lead up to the War in Iraq and has continued throughout the SARS crisis.

A secure website has been established as part of the strategy and includes a copy of the Plan, speaking points, impact statements and

relevant post crisis information. The site serves as a secure point of communication between the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, the Australian Tourist Commission and State and Territory Tourism Organisations.

SCHOOLS, MYLOR PRIMARY

165. **Ms CHAPMAN:** Why has the proposed \$1 million building work at the Mylor Primary School been delayed, when will it commence and when will it be completed?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: The project has not been delayed. In fact, part of the project has already been undertaken—the construction of new toilet facilities.

The remaining works are scheduled for on-site construction commencing April 2004 with completion by February 2005.

SCHOOLS, WHYALLA

179. **Ms CHAPMAN:** When will the amalgamation of the three Whyalla secondary school sites into two year 8-12 schools occur?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: No decision has been taken to amalgamate the three Whyalla secondary school sites into two year 8 to 12 schools.