

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 23 July 2008

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.J. Snelling)** took the chair at 11:00 and read prayers.

LEGAL PROFESSION BILL

The Hon. **J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Volunteers, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister Assisting in Early Childhood Development) (11:01)**: I move:

That the sitting of the house be continued during the conference with the Legislative Council on the bill.

Motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr HANNA (Mitchell) (11:02): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be and remain so far suspended so as to enable all Private Members' Business—Committees and Subordinate Legislation: Orders of the Day listed for today to be taken into consideration and the question put, without any further debate, forthwith.

The strange system we have of allocating an hour on Wednesday and 2½ hours on Thursday for private members' business, that is, non-government business, has some limitations, one of which is that there are numerous committee reports that have not been dealt with. In fact, today's *Notice Paper* has 31 items to be dealt with today. Yesterday, there was an indication from the Attorney-General that the parliament would be prorogued. If that is the case, debate on all of those 31 items is cut short—in fact, terminated. A good many of those committee reports are from the Public Works Committee or other committees where the government has a majority. There is no risk to the government in completing the debate on those items; indeed, there are some non-government members who also have motions there. The problem is that those items will simply disappear if the parliament is prorogued. I think that they deserve the consideration of the parliament at least to the extent of being voted upon even if we do not have a full debate.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens) (11:04): The government opposes the member for Mitchell's motion. There are critical reports on matters that the parliament has asked its committees to inquire into, which need to be debated.

Mr Hanna: They need to be voted on.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: They need to be voted on today. If we support the member's motion, we cannot debate them.

Mr Hanna: We can vote on them.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: We can vote on them but not debate them. The role of this house is to debate and vote. I think it is important that we allow the committees, which the parliament has asked to do that work, to expect these matters to be debated and for all members to have a say. I think that, while the member's use of the guillotine is interesting in relation to the committees of this parliament (and I can see the father of the house sitting opposite), their role is one of the most important roles of this parliament, and we need to make sure that those committees are in no way stymied or taken for granted.

I think that guillotining (which is the effect of the member's motion) and stopping debate on these matters would, in fact, be a poor reflection on the house. I urge members to oppose the motion.

The SPEAKER: The question is that Notice of Motion No. 1, standing in the name of the member for Mitchell, be agreed to—declared negatived.

Mr HANNA: Divide!

While the division was being held:

The SPEAKER: There being only one member voting for the ayes, the motion is defeated.

Motion negatived.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Taylor) (11:12): I move:

That the 27th report of the committee, on an inquiry into the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE), be noted.

As members know, the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) is the common certificate of achievement for high school education in this state. It is also currently used as the basic requirement for entry into a range of higher education institutions. The Social Development Committee's inquiry came about from a motion moved by the Hon. Stephen Wade MLC in another place as a result of the recent reforms announced—and in process—to senior secondary school education, as proposed in the final report of the SACE review, called 'Success for All'.

To recap, for members' benefit, in February 2004, when I was education minister, I set up a review of the SACE, headed by the Hon. Greg Crafter, a former education minister and the very same minister who had introduced the current SACE 20 years prior. Also on the review panel were Dr Patricia Crook, representative of Business SA, and Professor Alan Reid from the University of South Australia.

The review report, which was released in March 2006, recommended that a single new qualification be formed, and had 26 recommendations about ways to reform the current certificate. It was recommended that, while the current certificate had served South Australian students well over those 20 years, we drastically needed to improve school retention rates (even though, since the election of the current government, those have been improving), and that it was necessary to revamp the certificate; indeed, after 20 years, that should be no surprise.

There were over 200 meetings across the state. Over 1,600 individuals, including not only South Australians but also people from both interstate and overseas, contributed to that review, and 1,200 pages of text were reviewed by that exercise. There were 600 responses to an online survey, for example, so consultation was quite extensive. The review report was released in March 2006, and our committee conducted this inquiry.

As is often the case when a committee conducts an inquiry about a review of something that is still in the process of being formed (as it was then), we found that some of the issues raised at the beginning of our evidence had changed as time went on. Subsequent to the review and the initiation of our inquiry, the current education minister (the Hon. Jane Lomax-Smith) responded to the review team's recommendations, accepting most recommendations but rejecting or amending some.

That is for information as to the context of this inquiry. Members should also realise that the new SACE certificate has not yet been introduced. Next year, year 10s will begin the new SACE, so the first graduates of the new SACE certificate will be in 2011. While the new SACE is intended to build upon some of the positive features of the current certificate, the inquiry heard that it will have greater flexibility and provide the opportunity for students to undertake in-depth study of subjects that are of particular interest to them.

There are a lot of great new initiatives. I will not take the house through those because there are published reports that can be studied by members in detail. Before I go further, I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their contribution: my colleagues in this place, Mr Adrian Pederick and Ms Lindsay Simmons and, from the other place, the Hons Ian Hunter, Dennis Hood and Stephen Wade. I also acknowledge the very valuable and dedicated contribution of the staff of the Social Development Committee.

Our committee was keen to make sure that any concerns about the new SACE were fully canvassed, so it advertised nationally and its terms of reference were placed on the committee's website. Public hearings commenced towards the end of July last year, and the committee completed its hearings on 3 December. All in all, despite the committee's calling for submissions, a relatively small number of formal submissions were received. In total, we received 17 submissions consisting of nine written submissions and eight oral presentations, but that is not really surprising given the extensive consultation that I outlined earlier in the initial review.

Nevertheless, on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank the individuals and organisations who presented evidence to this inquiry whether through written submissions or by appearing before the committee. Through their evidence, the committee was able to gain a very clear picture of the key issues. Overall, most submissions received by the Social Development Committee supported the need for South Australia's senior secondary education to be reformed

and were in principle supportive of the new certificate. There were, of course, areas of concern, which were addressed during the course of the inquiry.

For example, some witnesses earlier considered that there had been delays in communication about the new SACE and inadequate information about the proposed changes and its implementations. Our committee hearings were public and, no doubt, that information did get back to the minister. In subsequent witness statements, we noted reported improvement in that particular area. So, that is a factor of a review inquiry taking place at the same time as the implementation is in process within the department.

Other evidence focused on the external assessment component of stage 2 of the new SACE. At present, subjects are either entirely assessed or they have an external assessment component which varies between 30 and 50 per cent. As part of the new SACE, all stage 2 subjects will have the 30 per cent external assessment, with the remaining 70 per cent being a school-based assessment. That is the case for some subjects currently, but for a lot of subjects that will be a change.

Some evidence suggested that this was no problem and other evidence suggested that any reduction at all of the external assessment for some subjects may compromise the credibility of the certificate. Other matters raised—some of which are yet to be finalised as the new SACE has not yet been introduced—focused around the tertiary entrance rank used by higher education institutions to rank students for selection to particular higher education courses. The process of moderation is used to ensure that standards of assessment are comparable and fair and that the South Australian certificate aligns itself with proposed educational changes at the national level.

The committee also received evidence on the composition and representation of the SACE Board, the ongoing training and professional development of teachers and the capacity of the SACE to cater to the needs of disadvantaged students. The committee acknowledges that some ongoing issues need to be resolved before the new SACE is introduced. For this reason, the committee has recommended that an effective communication strategy needs to be established so that information regarding the implementation of the new SACE is conveyed in a timely fashion to all those affected by the changes.

The Social Development Committee identified a number of other areas in which improvements could still be made. Its recommendations include: that the government provide focused support to students at risk of disengaging from education; that sufficient resources be provided for the ongoing professional development to secondary school teachers; and that the government closely monitor any proposals to introduce a national Australian certificate of education.

Changes such as those proposed by the new SACE require open and ongoing dialogue with stakeholders, and the committee sees an ongoing role for the SACE Review Implementation Steering Committee, or a similar multi-sector structure. The committee I have mentioned has been set up for the purpose of implementing the new SACE, but we think it would usefully provide a forum for discussion of contemporary educational issues and, importantly, it will ensure that the senior secondary school sector is well placed to adapt to emerging educational labour market needs on an ongoing basis.

The committee believes that the membership of that committee should include representatives of the government, independent and Catholic school sectors, along with representatives of the further education and tertiary sectors. As mentioned, the committee believes that the existing structures have already allowed this dialogue to occur, and we should make use of them.

At a national level, discussions have occurred about the introduction of a national Australian certificate of education. The committee would certainly like to see the state government closely monitor the proposed introduction of a single nationally consistent Australian certificate of education and examine its likely implications for the new SACE.

Finally, the committee considers that an evaluation of the new SACE must be undertaken in due course to determine the success, or otherwise, in meeting the needs of the community. In particular, it must be responsive to the needs of students at risk of disengaging from the education system. We know that young people who drop out of school early are at far greater risk of engaging in antisocial behaviour, ending up on welfare or, worse still, in the prison system, and underachieving in further endeavours.

The committee strongly believes that the needs of disadvantaged students must be carefully examined as part of any SACE evaluation to ensure that they have the best possible chance of achieving successful outcomes.

In conclusion, the senior years of secondary school education are of critical importance for young South Australians and the state as a whole. The new South Australian Certificate of Education has been proposed as a way of responding to social change and economic needs. The committee believes it is necessary.

The committee has welcomed the feedback it received and has noted that, whilst we heard some criticisms overall, the evidence supported the proposed changes. The committee has put forward a number of recommendations that it considers will address the concerns that were raised. We hope that the government will take on board these recommendations.

Young people, irrespective of whether they are university bound, must have access to a system of education and training that provides them with the skills, the values and the knowledge to lead productive lives and positively contribute to our community. This remains a significant challenge; nevertheless, it is one that we must ensure is met.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:26): I commend the member for Taylor's remarks. This inquiry came to us via a member in another place (the Hon. Stephen Wade) in regard to the SACE in South Australia. A broad range of presentations was made to the Social Development Committee. Certainly, there was some criticism about changing the system we now have. There were some perceptions by people involved in the tertiary sector—in our universities, etc.—who were concerned that perhaps the new SACE would mean a dumbing-down of the system. As long as the recommendations are taken on board, it will make sure that we do not have a dumbing-down of our education system.

There is nothing more vital in our society than education. It has been found that people have gone right through the school system but they cannot even spell. This is supposed to get picked up in primary years but it beggars belief how people can get right through secondary education, to perhaps year 11 or year 12, and they can barely string a sentence together on paper. I think there are some real difficulties that need to be addressed there.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: No worries! The Attorney puts out a challenge—at any time, Attorney.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, I am sorry I do not have a pair of skis and boots to go with you next week. Be that as it may, the educational standards of our children are not something to be trivialised. They need to be taken into account to make sure that young people can meet an adequate standard to complete their SACE requirements successfully and can go on to lead a broader life, perhaps doing a full university course.

The recommendations include vocational education and training courses in this program and that is a major plus, because not everyone is bound for a full academic career. In the past I think we have let students in the state down—those who are more aligned to technical education than academic—and it has only just been realised that there has been a really big gap in the last 20 years of education in that regard.

Overall, there are 26 recommendations. I hope that the SACE, as it is rolled out from next year, is monitored by the appropriate authorities to see that it is kept up to speed and gives the best education to students in this state that it can. Otherwise, if it does not work, the matter will just have to come back and be reviewed again.

I acknowledge that a huge body of work has gone into this issue. I hope that the universities do not find a problem or find that there is a dumbing-down of skills across the state, that entry requirements meet international standards, and that we can supply the best students, not just from our state and this country, but also from around the world. With those few remarks, I commend the report.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Taylor) (11:30): I thank the member for Hammond for his contribution to this debate and his valuable contribution to the work of the committee. An extensive review was conducted by government, involving a large number of submissions to the Crafter

review. Since then the proposal has evolved. One thing I did neglect to mention is that there have been trials in at least 40 schools—probably more by now—on certain aspects of the new SACE. The committee did have confidence that there was a good process in taking what is a 20-year old certificate into the 21st century.

Motion carried.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE: EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens) (11:32): I move:

That the 66th report of the committee, on the Emergency Services Levy, be noted.

The committee has examined the minister's determination in respect of the emergency services levy for the financial year 2008-09. The committee notes that the total expenditure on emergency services for 2008-09 is projected to be \$218 million, with total expenditure for 2007-08 now expected to reach \$208.6 million, an increase of \$3.7 million on last year's projections caused, largely, by increases in property values due to a booming economy under the new federal Labor government and continued economic growth under the state Labor government.

The committee notes that cash balances in the Community Emergency Services Fund (CESF) are expected to reach \$2.6 million by 30 June 2008, of which \$2.5 million is committed to fund the computer aided dispatch (CAD) project, which has been carried over into 2008-09. There will be no increase in the effective levy rates either for owners of fixed property or for owners of motor vehicles and vessels in 2008-09. I do not know whether the member for Bragg owns a vessel, but I am sure she is cheering.

The committee notes that the 2008-09 target expenditure of \$218 million has increased by \$9.4 million from the 2007-08 estimated outcome. This increase is mainly due to the following:

- \$7.2 million relates to initiatives approved by cabinet as part of the highly successful 2008-09 budget; and
- \$2.5 million relates to deferred expenditure on the CAD project carried over from 2007-08.

The Economic and Finance Committee has maintained an interest in the collection of the ESL and has been vigilant year after year in questioning the department on this matter. After this year's hearing, it was apparent from the evidence provided that collection costs appear to have reached, or are near, the minimum level that might be expected from such a stand-alone collection system, which was introduced by the former government. Nevertheless, the committee urged the continued investigation of collection options, such as electronic delivery of bills, which might further reduce the cost of collecting and processing the levy.

The committee was also told that the new integrated IT system being procured by the department would replace the current structure, part of which involves the ESL being run as a stand-alone system. The result of this department-wide integrated system will be further reductions in IT costs associated with the levy.

Finally, the committee notes with approval the operation of the Native Vegetation Council's Bushfire Prevention Plan Subcommittee. The committee was flagged by representatives of the CFS in previous years as a response to problems experienced by landowners in obtaining a timely approval to clear areas of their land for fire prevention. I will give credit to the father of the house for this. He is the one who has educated many members on this side about the urgency of recognising the appropriate time to back-burn and about holding your nerve when you do these things. He tells me it is all about holding your nerve.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: And holding your nerve. The committee was told that a new subcommittee is accelerating the process of obtaining these approvals, and we will wait with interest to see that these improvements continue. As ever, the work of the committee on this matter has been exemplified by a spirit of cooperation and willingness to put the duties and responsibilities of the parliament first. As has been said elsewhere: 'Always give your best, never get discouraged, never be petty. Always remember, others may hate you, but those who hate you don't win unless you hate them, and then you destroy yourself.' Do you know who that is?

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I told you earlier; that's cheating. Words to live by, and words the Economic and Finance Committee lives each week. Given the above, and pursuant to section 6 of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Economic and Finance Committee recommends to the parliament that it note this report—and you will not have Tom Koutsantonis to kick around any more.

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (11:37): I must say, that was an amazing performance from the honourable member. I was delighted to hear his quotes and I was most interested to hear the comments in the committee's report. There are a few points I would like to make on the emergency services levy because, as a former chair of a CFS board, along with the current CEO of the Department for Environment and Heritage, it cost us our heads when it was introduced through the dearly departed member for Mawson, who is due to come back into this place in another capacity tomorrow. But that is a story for another day.

The reality (and the presiding member of the committee may care to pick up on this) is that I find it totally and absolutely ludicrous that CFS brigades are still running around raising funds for different things. I find it to be an embarrassment and an area of neglect that they are still required, despite the enormous amount of money that the emergency services levy has brought into the central fund, to raise money at all. Indeed, I think the money that is raised could be better spent on other projects in communities for various organisations.

For the life of me, every time I see members of the CFS collecting, I think we are failing with respect to the distribution of the emergency services levy. Indeed, after the considerable fires that began on 6 December last year in my electorate on Kangaroo Island, the CFS went out of its way to put out donation bins to raise money for more communication equipment—and all sorts of equipment, quite frankly. This is where I think the system is failing. They simply should not have to raise that money.

I hope that the honourable member opposite picks up on that and perhaps looks at it when they look into the emergency services levy at another time, because I think it is foolish. I do not think it is needed. Given the broad spread of where this money goes out of the emergency services levy over the various agencies—and I am picking particularly on the Country Fire Service on this one—I think it is an embarrassment that they still have to go out and raise money. However, I note the report and the comments of the committee's Presiding Member. Thank you for the opportunity to make a brief comment.

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (11:40): Being a member of the Economic and Finance Committee, it is my pleasure to comment on this report today. In the 2½ years that I have been a member of the Economic and Finance Committee, I always looked forward to the hearing days, because I have never seen such a collection of public servants in one room. There would have to be 20 people in attendance. The opportunity to speak is only ever provided to four, five at the most, and everyone else is present just in case they need to provide an answer. Honestly, it must cost thousands. I think it is fair to say that both sides of politics question why so many people are in attendance, but they still continue to roll up every time.

I have noted that, in the past two years, the total expenditure for the Emergency Services Levy has increased by approximately \$30 million. The committee's presiding member has noted that, in 2008-09, it is anticipated that it will be \$218 million. My recollection from reviewing the initial report is that, two years ago, it was \$185 million, but I stand to be corrected on that. I paid particular attention to the one affecting property owners; that is, land-based property owners, but I also noted that the levy also applies to mobile assets such as cars, motorbikes and trucks. This year the cost to property owners will increase by 10 per cent (just under \$82 million).

It has gone from \$74 million or so to approximately \$82 million. I know the committee's presiding member has mentioned the fact that, this year, the increase in property value has resulted in an additional income of \$3.5 million (or thereabouts) above the original budget. It goes to prove that windfall revenue from property valuations has not only improved the government's bottom line position in so many different areas but it has also helped emergency services, too.

I am not sure whether everyone supports the Emergency Services Levy, but having previously been a local government CEO for communities struggling to raise revenue but wanting to support the CFS brigades in their area, it was important that an equitable system be introduced so that all property owners contributed to the cost of providing this service. Previously, there was a varying degree of subsidy for CFS purchases based on the disadvantage of an area and its ability to raise revenue. I think that some council areas received a 90 per cent (or thereabouts) subsidy

rate for CFS equipment, whereas others received 20 per cent: it depended on the revenue they received.

That has all changed now with the introduction of the Emergency Services Levy. It is still based on priority bids within the regions and the departments responsible for all the emergency services as to who receives the majority of support and to where in each financial year that support goes, be it land assets such as stations, or mobile assets such as firefighting equipment or SES vehicles, but they all do a good job. The member for Finnis referred to the wonderful job performed by CFS volunteers from across South Australia who responded and helped to fight the fires on Kangaroo Island in December last year.

I put on the public record the fact that Yorke Peninsula (the area which I represent) also had fires in early December last year. It required the strike teams to come to the area. My brother-in-law is a captain of one of the brigades in the area in which a fire was fought. We have talked about the incident management on some of those occasions which were not quite as good as they could have been.

However, the important thing is that people respond and they recognise the importance of getting on to a fire straightaway, putting firebreaks in place and ensuring that property damage is minimised and that human loss very rarely, if ever, occurs. In the case of Kangaroo Island, tragedy did occur when one young person was caught in a fire. Luckily for Yorke Peninsula, that was not the case. I am sure that everyone in this house prays that, every time a fire occurs, no-one is hurt. It is important that parliament and the House of Assembly support our volunteers in any way that we can.

I did note that the Emergency Services Levy is not charged on boats. I would not want to suggest that it should be charged on boats because 300,000 recreational fishers would object, but it was an interesting point. In his comments, the committee's presiding member referred to collection costs. My understanding is that, when the Emergency Services Levy was first introduced, collection costs were about 14 per cent of the value received from the levy; that is, approximately \$7 million out of a revenue of \$50 million.

There is no doubt that it has decreased significantly as efficiencies have come into play. I think it is down to the 2.5 per cent range at the moment. It was interesting in the submissions that we received as part of our inquiry into the Emergency Services Levy that the state government's average collection cost across all departments for revenue is about 0.6 per cent. So, the fact is that the emergency services levy is the more expensive revenue to raise.

Also, in the expenditure areas, I am pleased to see that support is ongoing particularly for the volunteer coastal rescue units that operate across the state. I think Yorke Peninsula has three of those units, and they are wonderful people who do a great job. They have been financially supported in recent years. I know that the Wallaroo Flotilla has recently received a new vessel valued at \$180,000, and that is wonderful for that area. In the last few years infrastructure has been built at Port Vincent and also Port Victoria. So, it is good to see that the emergency services levy is benefiting all areas of the state.

Our state has an enormous amount of coastline, and a lot of people enjoy the opportunity to go on the water, whether it be in their own boat, with friends or in charters, and it is fantastic that we have dedicated volunteers out there who are prepared to donate their time. Some people sit in radio shacks for days on end listening for calls that might come in. So, those people really do deserve all the support provided to them.

I note also that that might be the last meeting for the chairman, depending on what happens in the next few weeks—and he is shaking his head. We wish him well, and we hope that the impending announcement from the Premier is a positive one for him.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel) (11:46): Being a member of that august committee, I want to make a couple of points in relation to the 66th report of the committee, dealing with the emergency services levy, but I will keep my comments relatively brief in view of the fact that the chairman and my colleague the member Goyder have covered the issue reasonably comprehensively.

I note that the rate used to calculate the levy has not changed from that used in the 2007-08 year, but there has been a \$7.7 million increase in total revenue raised, and that has been brought about primarily by the increase in property values. We know that the percentage contributed by the private sector compared to the contribution the government makes does not vary

markedly from year to year. The government contributes about 50 per cent of the total funds raised through the levy, which is held in the Community Emergency Services Fund (CESF).

Having made those points, I want to talk about a couple of areas, one in particular, relating to how these funds are utilised in providing the Country Fire Service with all its firefighting capabilities during our really high wildfire seasons, which arguably run from November (or even October in some years) right through to May, when the season breaks. In particular, I refer to the capabilities of our aerial firefighting units. I have spoken previously about these issues in the house and referred, in particular, to the utilisation of the air-crane helicopter—the Elvis, the Delilah, or whatever the name—

Dr McFetridge interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, the Goldie, as the member for Morphett says. For three or four years now, I have been a strong campaigner for this state to commit the funds to have an air-crane style helicopter based here in South Australia permanently during the bushfire season. As the member for Morphett has said, it is pleasing that the Minister for Emergency Services (Carmel Zollo) in the other place has seen fit to adopt Liberal Party policy (especially as we know the government is bereft of its own policy on a whole range of issues) by having an air-crane helicopter based here permanently, rather than this state being 'tail-end Charlie', so to speak, at the whim of the other states. My being a strong campaigner for the air crane helicopter being based here permanently, my colleagues have suggested that the name should not be Delilah or Elvis: it should be Goldy. So, hopefully when we get the helicopter there this summer there will be—

Ms Chapman: Mark 2.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Mark 2 or Goldy, but you have to spell it with a 'y' not an 'ie'. There is a definite way of spelling it.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I am not too sure about that. We could go there. That is a point that I want to raise in relation to this. The government has really only moved as a consequence of the coronial inquest into the Wangary fires. We have had an enormously devastating fire on Kangaroo Island since those Lower Eyre Peninsula fires. It is a hallmark of this government, a stand-out feature, that something catastrophic has to happen before it tends to move on its policy. We have to have these horrendous consequences before the government finally decides to commit additional funds to these services. As I said earlier, I intend to speak only briefly, and with those few words I support the motion of the chairman.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens) (11:51): It was interesting to note the two different views coming out. The two members of the committee are financially responsible, I think, with conservative fiscal values. The member for Kangaroo Island, I think, almost called for an increase in the ESL. It sounded very progressive, his calls for more spending in the area of CFS. It is often a problem within the Liberal Party that you have one group calling for more spending (the member for Bragg, the leader) and then you have the fiscal conservatives saying, 'Well, hang on a second. Taxes are evil. Spending is evil. We can't spend money on services; let the market do that.' Then you have the old guard, the old soft Liberals coming out saying, 'Spend and tax, spend and tax, spend and tax as much as we can.'

I think it is a fascinating debate. Luckily for the people of South Australia, they have a fiscally conservative, caring, compassionate and moderate Labor government in office that can weather the calls of the tax and spend Liberals at the back, and the tax cutters and spending cutters in the conservatives. We saw that played out in the Mayo preselection, where you had the conservatives get their WorkChoices man up—

Ms CHAPMAN: I rise on a point of order. Nothing in the response so far from the member has had anything to do with the report that the parliament is being asked to receive. He is now straying into other subjects that are just so far removed that I cannot possibly think how it is even relevant to the parliament, let alone this motion for the acceptance and adoption of this report.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the deputy leader has made an interesting point. I think that, if the chair were to over-rigorously enforce the standing orders with regard to relevance in debate, the chair would be doing nothing else other than picking up members. I think the member for West Torrens is making a response to points made in the course of the debate. Perhaps the Mayo preselection is pushing it a bit, but the other points he made, I think, are orderly. The member for West Torrens.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you, sir, for your wisdom. It is about the ideological divide opposite. You have your tax and spend Liberals who want to spend more than we have. This is not our tax. This was not our idea. This tax was the idea of the former government: it is its baby, and it loved it, it loved bringing it in.

They love taxing and they love spending, and that is why for the entire time they were in government they did not deliver one balanced budget. I always thought, with the Hon. Tom Playford looking down on them, how they let him down so often. The remarks made by you, Mr Speaker, in your maiden speech about the ideological divide are interesting because when the member for Goyder, a future leader, gets up—that is right; he will just jump right over the member for Bragg—and talks about restraint, spending and not wanting to increase the tax base, he is talking about his base. When the member for Finniss gets up, he is talking about this Chris Pyne soft, wet Liberal view of spending more than we have, and that is a debate we saw in the Mayo preselection between the two divides.

Ms CHAPMAN: I rise again on a point of order. We are straying entirely out of the jurisdiction of this parliament, let alone the motion before us.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. I will let the member for West Torrens go on.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: When the members for Bragg and Finniss tried to get a dairy farmer called Basham up, they tried to impose their wet, Liberal tax-and-spend ideology that we have seen articulated today by the member for Finniss onto the federal parliament, but the conservatives fought back. After having been wiped out of the state executive, they have fought back. They did everything they could, including holding the Mayo preselection in Hindmarsh on a Sunday. I hear with great authority that, of over 500 eligible members, over half did not know that they were members.

Ms CHAPMAN: I rise on a point of order. Clearly, we are now moving entirely into a topic which has nothing to do with the motion, and I ask you again, Mr Speaker, to reconsider your previous decisions on this.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The truth of the matter is that, if we ever leave the member for Finniss in charge of the state's finances, we will be bankrupt within a year.

Motion carried.

CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTAL DISEASES

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11:57): I move:

That the regulations made under the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 entitled Controlled Environmental Diseases, made on 1 May 2008 and laid on the table of this house on 6 May 2008, be disallowed.

I indicate in the few minutes that I have to present this that, whilst I will be seeking leave to continue my remarks in anticipation of the parliament being prorogued, I will give notice in due course that these regulations be disallowed.

The Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 is over 20 years old. I note, as repeated in the budget again this year, that the government has under consideration a review of the whole of the act. The opposition welcomes that review and we certainly hope that in due course we will have a new bill before us sooner rather than later to review, because this is an act which is in need of review but which currently has the important responsibility of protecting us, regulating and controlling to ensure proper sanitation and drainage in premises and property, and also to ensure protection of our water supplies from pollution and other measures.

One of the most significant aspects of this legislation is to protect us from diseases, and the principal way that this is attended to in the legislation is to have an obligation to certain diseases as identified in the legislation or by regulation as notifiable and/or controlled notifiable diseases, and they are scheduled. Those identified as controlled notifiable diseases have been determined to be dangerous, which often can cause death or significant disfigurement or disability, and for which the course of action is to maintain some vigilance in the management of these diseases, often for which there is no cure but for which there can be some treatment, and to ensure that we know when they are in the community.

So, there is a process whereby certain persons, including medical practitioners, are obliged to report to the department the existence of such diseases. Whilst there is some provision for immunity from prosecution under a penalty arrangement, essentially that imposes obligations on relevant health authorities (particularly local governments) to activate procedures. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Debate adjourned.

STATUTES AMENDMENT AND REPEAL (TAXATION ADMINISTRATION) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 7 May 2008. Page 3230.)

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (12:01): I confirm that I am the lead speaker for the opposition on this bill. Several members will speak; however, there will be no need to ask any questions before we proceed to committee. This bill was introduced, I think, on behalf of the Treasurer by the Hon. Paul Caica on 7 May 2008. Very promptly after that—and I am grateful for the support given by the Treasurer's office—a briefing was provided to me by Mr Graeme Jackson and Mr Carlo Mancini; and, as normal, those staff members were very thorough, so I thank them for that.

As I understand it, the intention of the bill is to make amendments to the Emergency Services Funding Act 1998, the Land Tax Act 1936, the Pay-roll Tax Act 1971, the Stamp Duties Act 1923 and the Taxation Administration Act 1996 and to repeal the Taxation (Reciprocal Powers) Act 1989. All these, I believe (and certainly it reflects the briefing and the second reading explanation), indicate that this bill is in line with the attempts by government to reduce red tape for business by 25 per cent by mid 2008. Certainly, members on this side of the house who have dealings with the business community (and that is all of us) know that, quite often, one of the strong pushes to us is to ensure that we try to make business transactions with government as simplified as possible, so any effort that will do that is supported by this side of the house.

I am advised that the bill is an attempt to remove all redundant provisions. The majority of redundant provisions will be removed from the Stamp Duties Act, and that particularly relates to provisions within the listed marketed securities, but that is not stamp duty. It will make the act easier to read and create less confusion for the business community; and, again, I enforce the fact that that is obviously a good thing and something that we support quite strongly. The bill also amends the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to include provisions that provide an administrative framework to allow tax investigations to be conducted by taxation officers between state and territory borders.

Again, this is important. I think that, as we exist now, very clever accounting firms are providing advice often to large customers, and transactions are conducted across many states in Australia, which means that it is important that we have opportunities for the states to carry out investigations across their own borders, or in liaison with state officers from other states. While every effort is made to minimise tax from business from an individual point of view, there is also clearly a responsibility for taxation to be paid where it is appropriate. While there are people who make a living out of being very clever in terms of how transactions and accounts are disposed, I think it is important also that we ensure that the taxation provisions we have enshrined in our legislation allow for the appropriate level of tax to be paid in South Australia.

From my reading of the second reading explanation, I hope I understand properly that South Australia and Victoria are currently the only jurisdictions that retain independent reciprocal taxation powers legislation. So, that will be improved. The benefits of the consolidation of investigatory powers in the Taxation Administration Act will include greater interjurisdictional consistency and modernisation of the language and structure of the provisions and provide the opportunity to review and update statutory requirements.

I noted also in the briefing paper (and it was a question I asked during the briefing) the fact that the market rate of interest set under the Taxation Administration Act has previously been linked to the rate applicable under section 214(8) of the commonwealth Income Tax Assessment Act 1936. The commonwealth ceased publication of that market rate in 1999. Under the previous system the Treasurer was required each year to gazette what the interest market rate was intended to be, and it is now proposed under this legislation for that market rate of interest to be tied legislatively to the average rate of the 90-day bank accepted bill rate prescribed by the Reserve Bank. At least that provides for consistency across the nation, so that is a positive move.

The bill also amends the Taxation Administration Act to provide for an administrative framework to allow tax investigations to be conducted. I note also that it amends the Emergency Services (Funding) Act of 1992 in relation to the ESL levy (to which we were referring earlier in the debate on a motion moved by the Chairperson of the Economic and Finance Committee), to align the administrative processes under that act with those contained within the Taxation Administration Act. I am advised that, regardless of the amendments made across all these acts, it will be revenue neutral. One of the first questions I asked on this matter related to whether there was a potential increase or decrease in revenue to government as a result of these changes, and the advice provided to me by the Department of Treasury and Finance officers was that there was no such potential and that it is a revenue-neutral step.

During the briefing, the question was asked concerning what consultation the government had undergone in preparing the bill. I was advised that the Law Society, the Law Council and the Tax Institute were asked to determine whether the suggested amendments and content were appropriate, and the advice that came back was that, yes, that is the case. Trying to be thorough, as we are, we spoke to some people who have a vast amount of taxation expertise, and the advice that came back was that broadly they were supportive of this measure, and it was suggested that the opposition support the bill without any need for amendment. It is as easy as that.

We hope for a swift passage of the bill through the house and trust that the benefits that will flow through to the business community resulting from a simplification and reduction of the red tape that applies to them will in turn assist the economy of our great state.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel) (12:07): I am pleased to speak in support of the bill. Obviously the member for Goyder has outlined the purport of the legislation quite accurately, but I will highlight a couple of points. The bill amends the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to include provisions for an administrative framework to allow tax investigations to be conducted by taxation officers beyond state and territory borders. That is an important point, because we know that the work of accounting firms and those who look after the financial matters and dealings of people out in the community goes across state and territory borders. The accounting firm that does my work was initially an Adelaide-based business but it has joined with a fairly big accounting group in Sydney and progressively they have amalgamated their businesses and now go by the name of the Sydney-based accounting firm. Their Adelaide identity has been diminished, as they are now known by the name of the larger organisation in Sydney. This is an important point that the bill looks to cover. The Hon. Paul Caica made a couple of points in his introduction of the bill on behalf of the Treasurer, and stated:

South Australia and Victoria are the only jurisdictions that retain independent reciprocal taxation powers legislation. In consolidating the provisions of the TRPA (Taxation Reciprocal Powers Act) 1989 into the TAA (Taxation Administration Act) 1996 it is therefore consistent with the arrangements in place in other jurisdictions and will reduce the number of statutes with which practitioners are required to comply.

I presume that when we talk about practitioners, that refers to those people out in the private sector and the like:

The benefits of the consolidation of investigatory powers in the TAA include greater inter-jurisdictional consistency, modernisation of the language and structure of the provisions, and have provided the opportunity to review and update statutory requirements.

The minister also went on to highlight where the bill amends the Emergency Services Funding Act 1998 (the ESL act) to align the administrative processes under the ESL act with those contained in the TAA. Obviously anything to do with emergency services funding is of particular interest to me, as a member in this place representing an area in the state that is arguably one of the highest bushfire areas in South Australia. The ESL act obviously provides for the collection of funds for the provision of emergency services in this state.

Before going to government business, in other business we were talking about the Economic and Finance Committee tabling the Emergency Services Levy report. A number of members of that committee here spoke to that motion moved by the member for West Torrens. It is critically important that we do satisfactorily resource, fund and equip our emergency services agencies in South Australia for the ongoing protection of all our communities. As the member for Goyder, the lead speaker on this side of the house, has pointed out, the state Liberals are supporting this bill and, as such, I have been pleased to make a contribution—albeit brief—to the legislation.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:12): I, too, rise to make a brief contribution to this bill. I am pleased to see that the intent of the bill is to reduce red tape, and I wish it would go across all

sectors of government, but I will speak more on that later. I note that it makes amendments to the Emergency Services Funding Act 1998, Land Tax Act 1936, Payroll Tax Act 1971, Stamp Duties Act 1923, and also the Taxation Administration Act 1996. The target of this bill is to reduce red tape, and that can only be commended. The bill also amends the Taxation Administration Act, which I have mentioned, and the Emergency Services Funding Act 1998. I note that the bill is supposedly to remain revenue neutral throughout and is aimed at making the relevant acts easier to decipher.

As a person who has been in this place for just over two years, I am well aware that every day we pass another form of legislation that appears to take away more freedoms from people, but a bill of this nature, if its design is to reduce red tape, can only be commended. I hope it does make everything easier to decipher.

I raise an issue that has been brought to my attention regarding a constituent in my electorate putting forward GST paperwork to the federal taxation body and the grief that person is going through trying to get a faceless person to pick up the issue. Every time they ring up, it involves another person and they have to go through the whole detail of the situation (which was an honest mistake made by the constituent several years ago), and it looks likely that it will go on and will probably be referred further on. It is a terrible situation for people out there who are trying to run a business when they are held up by red tape. There does not seem to be an avenue at the federal level to meet someone face-to-face to sort it out and I think that needs to be worked out, but I do commend this legislation, if it goes through. As I said before, anything to fix up red tape I am happy with.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clauses 1 to 25 passed.

Clause 26.

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

Page 19, line 15—Delete '—means \$42,000;' and substitute:

- (i) commencing on or after 1 July 2002 and ending before 1 July 2008, means \$42,000;
- (ii) commencing on or after 1 July 2008 and ending before 1 July 2009, means \$46,000;
- (iii) commencing on or after 1 July 2009, means \$50,000;

I apologise to the committee for not having the amendment here, and the opposition not being briefed on it. This is a technical amendment. It is required for the payroll tax provisions in this bill due to amendments to the same provision contained in the Statutes Amendment (Budget 2008) Bill 2008, which was passed in the House of Assembly on 18 June 2008. This bill was introduced prior to the introduction of the budget, and therefore the need for an amendment was unavoidable. The amendment is necessary due to the government's decision to increase the tax-free threshold in 2008-09 and again in 2009-10. It is purely technical and aligning with the new threshold levels.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I thank the Treasurer for that explanation; and I think we were all frustrated by the fact that we were not aware of this amendment. I understand the payroll tax thresholds, but given that it was \$504,000 and then \$550,000, I am not sure how the \$42,000, \$46,000 and \$50,000 figures in this actually relate. Can I have some information on that, please?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: It is a monthly figure; it is the threshold divided by 12.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Given the basis of that explanation and that it is a monthly figure, I can understand the reasoning for it. A preliminary comment would be that the opposition would support this, but we may reserve our position on this between the houses. But there should be no problems.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (27 to 54) and title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Bill read a third time and passed.

SUMMARY OFFENCES (INDECENT FILMING) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 22 July 2008. Page 3900.)

Dr MCFETRIDGE (Morphett) (12:22): The bill is supported by the opposition, and I for one have been pushing for this legislation now for over four years. On 24 March 2004, I issued a press release, entitled 'Peeping Tom photography on the rise', because I had walked out of my office in Glenelg in Nile Street and gone to the Coles supermarket. When I came out, a bloke had a mobile phone and was taking photographs. I looked to see what he was photographing, and there was a young lady. It was summer, and she was not wearing a whole lot of clothing at the time, and this fellow was taking photographs of her. I fronted him and asked whether he knew the girl, but he just turned around and took off.

I spoke to the young lady (we could still see the guy) and asked her whether she knew him. She said no, and I told her that he had been taking photographs of her. She was really upset and offended, and this brought home the issue to me of these perverts out there who are now doing things that are just totally despicable.

The bottom line is that nowadays, with the advances in modern technology, you really have a television studio in your hand with a mobile camera. You can take photographs and videos, send them anywhere you like around the world and distribute them to millions of people. Recently, I spoke to the principal of one of the high schools near my electorate, where a student had been photographed in the toilet and it had been put on YouTube.

The student who took the photograph realised that it had been a stupid thing to do and took it off the website within a matter of minutes, but there had already been something like 80,000 hits on that section of the site, which I find absolutely mind-blowing. That is the power of the internet today, that is the modern technology we are dealing with and that is the reason we need to bring in this sort of legislation: to make sure that people who are acting indecently, stupidly or criminally are dealt with—and dealt with severely.

What I would like to see with this legislation is those people being dealt with not only by being fined or even gaoled (but certainly fined) but also by their equipment being confiscated because, if they do not have the equipment, or they have to buy further equipment, that may be a further reminder of the stupidity of their actions.

Probably the most recently publicised event of this sort in Australia was at the Australian Open Tennis Championships, when two men were arrested and charged with offensive behaviour (because that is all they could be charged with) for filming up women's skirts. This sort of behaviour is totally unacceptable, so we strongly support the legislation we are debating today. Why people are motivated to do this sort of thing only they know, in their own tiny minds. I just cannot understand how people would get any sort of gratification from this type of behaviour.

Upskirting or down-blousing videoing is just bizarre, and it should be condemned by everyone in modern society. This legislation will not interfere with legitimate videoing or photography undertaken by law-abiding citizens for legal or investigative purposes (such as WorkCover, or for the police, or some other reason); that is in a different realm to the peeping Tom or the perverted filming or photography that we are aiming at in this legislation. Police often need to be able to undertake covert surveillance, but it is for legitimate reasons.

This legislation is well overdue. In some of the legislation I have looked at from America and other places overseas (and reports go way back to the mid-nineties), there have been serious cases brought involving not just photographs up women's dresses, and things like that, but invasion into homes and putting secret cameras in dressing rooms, bathrooms and bedrooms. It has been a real invasion of privacy. As one victim described it, 'It is like being raped.' The insecurity and invasion of these people's privacy just cannot be quantified.

So I welcome this legislation, and ask the government to make sure it has covered all the bases and that people's equipment will also be confiscated, because we need to ensure that a real message is sent to people who act like this. This is something that must be condemned, and by supporting the legislation I, and members of the opposition, do condemn it.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (12:27): On behalf of the Attorney-

General, I would like to share my comments on this particular piece of legislation. I assume that it is not retrospective? Good, because—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No; I am quite okay. I wonder whether that would cover the fact that I took a photo of the member for MacKillop when he was sitting over here on his own supporting right of entry into the workplace.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind the Treasurer that it is against standing orders to film anyone in the chamber at any time. So I would rather not hear anything about it.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: What is the penalty?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: It happened a long time ago. The Attorney has come back in; I am just speaking as a member and it is probably best that the Attorney wind this debate up, because already the indications are that I will probably make a fool of myself.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Yes; this is my contribution to the second reading.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I cannot be accused of ever being guilty of that.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon—Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (12:29): When we were debating this yesterday, the member for Heysen was taking the point that private investigators investigating possible infidelity on behalf of one partner would be able to violate these provisions, under the exemption. That is correct.

The private investigation agent is only protected if the filming is done 'in the course of obtaining evidence in connection with a claim for compensation, damages, a payment under a contract or some other benefit'. Adultery, so far as I understand, does not give rise to a claim for damages or any other benefit, so the defence is not available to the private investigation agent. The investigator commits an offence. I thank members for dealing with the bill so swiftly and commend it to the house.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon—Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (12:31): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen) (12:31): I want to make a brief contribution on the third reading, mostly to cover a couple of things that I forgot to mention yesterday, and also to come back to this matter that the Attorney just responded to at the close of the second reading. It still seems to me that there is the potential if, for instance, a couple had entered into a prenuptial agreement—which is becoming increasingly common—that that prenuptial agreement could give rise to a claim in damages or some contractual claim or other benefit which would therefore spark the exemption provision.

I invite the Attorney to consider that a little further between now and the other place when it eventually reaches there over the next few weeks, because it does seem to me that on my reading of it, there is the potential for someone who is registered as a private investigator to claim the benefit of the exemption in the legislation, and I am sure that is not what is intended, that registered private investigators are able to go around and take photos of people involved in—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: A private act.

Mrs REDMOND: A very private act. I invite the Attorney to consider that between this and the other place.

There were two other issues that I wanted to raise during the debate. I apologise that I forgot to do so, and I do not expect that the Attorney necessarily will be able to answer these, but they are matters for our contemplation between here and the other place. In terms of the definition, the legislation essentially provides that people are entitled to an expectation of privacy, and the

breach and the offence under this legislation occurs where someone takes a photo in circumstances where a person would reasonably expect to have privacy.

In thinking about this legislation, it occurred to me that we have, famously, in our state, a beach called Maslin Beach where people are at liberty to go about in a state of undress, and one might argue (reasonably, perhaps) that, if you go to Maslin Beach and you are in a state of undress, you thereby waive your expectation and right to privacy. I wonder whether that is really the case. I wonder whether or not people going to Maslin Beach and choosing to enjoy the wonders of nature in a very natural state are thereby necessarily saying that it is all right to be photographed in that state.

I suspect that quite a number of people who might choose to go to Maslins and undress because they like to be at one with nature (or whatever the reason) are not necessarily as a result of making that decision comfortable with the idea that they are thereby giving up their right to an expectation of privacy in not being photographed or filmed and having that photograph or film transmitted to other people. I invite the Attorney to apply some consideration to that also between the houses.

That leads on to the last point that I want to raise; that is, whether there is a different expectation of privacy for people in public life. We have had paparazzi surrounding famous people like Nicole Kidman in Australia. There are many more paparazzi in other countries. Will there be circumstances where someone taking a photograph of a person engaged in what would otherwise be a private act could argue, 'Well, this person is in public life,' and will the barrier for assessing their right to privacy be different from the expectation of the average person in the community?

I expect that the answer to that is that we will have to wait and see what the courts decide, because that is the way the legislation is structured. That question will be one for the courts on the facts of each case, and we will have to wait for the build-up of a body of law. It is, nevertheless, something that I think we need to at least contemplate and maybe express a view about in relation to this debate, because I think that we will increasingly see in our society people taking photos of others who, although they are in public life, might not necessarily expect to have to give up the right to privacy—particularly family members of those in public life.

As I said, whilst I do not necessarily think that there is a simple answer, I expect that the courts will have to resolve that. Nevertheless, it is something that I think we should at least be contemplating in relation to this type of legislation. So, with those few words, that now completes the contribution I should have completed yesterday during the second reading debate.

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (12:37): I have found this to be a most interesting debate, and the issues are very relevant to life in 2008. I struggle to know where all this will finish. I totally support this bill, but I wonder whether it will be adequate to stop this sort of nonsense in five or 10 years, or even in 12 months. Being the father of three children—albeit they are now all in their 20s—and knowing the nonsense that goes on in public places and the impact of drugs and alcohol, and anything else that might be around, I think it is a major step in the right direction, and I support it. What takes place in public places is a matter of great concern to me. If this is a small step towards exposing these people and bringing them to account, it is good. I think it is most appropriate and, as I have said, the contributions have been most interesting.

Unfortunately, as mere mortals, we simply cannot keep up with technology, even though it has been brought on by us. I think it is far in advance of anything that we expected even five or 10 years ago. I think this is good legislation, and I cannot see that there would be any impediment to it in another place. I noticed that the Attorney took note of the comments and the additional points raised by the member for Heysen. We will wait with interest to see whether any other pertinent points are brought up regarding this measure when it goes to the other place. I support the bill.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon—Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (12:39): In reply to the member for Heysen, if the prenuptial agreement provides that either party is contractually entitled to damages for the other party's adultery, she is right: the exemption will apply. I have never heard of such a clause in a prenuptial agreement.

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The member for Heysen says that she has heard of them in the United States of America. I would say they would be pretty rare in Australia, but things could change and, if they did, we might have to revisit that clause.

At Maslin Beach people reasonably expect that others can or may see them. The reasoning in the bill is that a reasonable person would not expect privacy at Maslin Beach and, therefore, no offence is committed if they are photographed. The member for Heysen raises an interesting point in that people who are skinny-dipping at Maslin Beach are content to be seen by other skinny-dippers. I seem to recall what the member for Heysen calls voyeurs coming to Maslin Beach to look at bathers. The voyeurs are, of course, fully clothed, and it may be that the bathers are not in favour of that. Whilst they are content to be seen by other skinny-dippers, they are not content to have their image recorded and uploaded on the Internet. That is something I will give some thought to.

The third point is that, under the bill, celebrities are treated the same way as all others. We do not have a lower threshold for celebrities at which privacy is lost. One may have gained the impression from the debate that everyone is in favour of the bill. Let me assure you that *The Advertiser* is not in favour of it in its current version, nor is the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation).

No doubt representations will be made between the houses to try to persuade the government, the opposition and minor parties to abandon the proposal or modify it. I recall, when I was first a member of this place (about 1990-91), that this house passed a law which would have given citizens a modest right to privacy. However, by the time it got to the upper house it was as dead as a proposal could possibly be. We will see how this debate progresses. I thank the member for Heysen for her constructive participation.

Bill read a third time and passed.

[Sitting suspended from 12:43 to 14:00]

ROAD SAFETY

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson): Presented a petition signed by 378 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to improve safety at the intersection of Victor Harbor Road and Main Road, McLaren Vale.

GLENSIDE HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Presented a petition signed by 94 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to retain the areas known as precincts 3, 4 and 5 of Glenside Hospital to ensure they continue to be available as open and recreational space, together with mental health services.

HOUSING TRUST WATER METERS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Presented a petition signed by 188 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to ensure all Housing Trust households are provided with their own individual water meters in order that they might monitor and control their own water use and pay SA Water for the accurate and appropriate usage.

CABINET RESHUFFLE

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:01): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I have indicated previously that I intended to reshuffle ministerial portfolios at about this time; in fact, I said 'late July or early August'. I am now able to announce to this house the changes to my cabinet, which will become effective following a special Executive Council meeting and swearing-in ceremony involving His Excellency the Governor, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce, at Government House tomorrow.

I think it is important to freshen up the ministry every few years in order to keep new ideas flowing and new perspectives on issues. This is not a total makeover of the cabinet because I believe ministers have been performing very well and I want to maintain stability within our solidly performing government. However, remixing portfolio responsibilities can stimulate new ideas and bring a fresh approach. Ten of the 15-member cabinet will either change posts or take on or lose various portfolios. This reshuffle affects about two-thirds of the members of the cabinet, so 10 of the 15-member cabinet will either change posts or take on or lose various portfolios. The changes are designed to broaden the experiences of ministers. It is not about creating winners or losers.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It is very interesting that members opposite reshuffle their leaders. They stab them in the back. This is the fifth Liberal leader I have had to face and he is still stabbing his former leader in the back—as he did before. The changes are designed to broaden the experiences of ministers.

One of the most significant changes will be the creation of a new portfolio of Minister for the Northern Suburbs. This responsibility will be taken on by the member for Wright, who changes her portfolios completely, also taking on the roles of Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing and Minister for Disability.

The member for Wright, who is a long-time resident of the northern suburbs, has lived and represented people in the area for many years. She has incredible empathy for people in the northern region and will champion their causes strongly around the cabinet table, in the same way that the Minister for the Southern Suburbs champions the causes for that area. As a mother and grandmother with a strong community involvement, already she has a very good grasp of the roles and responsibilities of the Families and Communities portfolio, and I am confident that she will become a strong leader in her other responsibilities as Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing and Minister for Disability.

The member for Cheltenham will take on environment and conservation, as well as the new portfolio of early childhood development. As a father of two young children, he has a passionate interest in this area. He will keep his other portfolios of Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, and Minister Assisting the Premier in Cabinet Business and Public Sector Management.

The Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education (the member for Colton), will lose the gambling portfolio to the Hon. Carmel Zollo, but he will take on the tough industrial relations portfolio, as well as volunteers. As a former firefighter and a former secretary of the South Australian and National United Firefighters Union, the member for Colton will bring terrific experience to his new industrial relations responsibilities. He maintains his portfolios of science and information economy, and youth, as well as employment, training and further education.

Other changes include the member for Adelaide relinquishing children's services and taking on the important mental health and substance abuse portfolio, whilst retaining education, tourism, and the City of Adelaide.

The Hon. Paul Holloway will take over the small business portfolio from the member for Chaffey because I want the member for Chaffey to concentrate solely on the vitally important area of water security and because she has recently taken over full responsibilities for SA Water. She will maintain her responsibilities as Minister for the River Murray and Minister for Water Security. Her regional development role will shift to the member for Mount Gambier, who retains his other portfolios of agriculture, food, fisheries and forests.

The member for Lee will take on the responsibilities of police and emergency services, while maintaining his role as Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing.

The Hon. Gail Gago will take over the portfolios of Minister for State/Local Government Relations—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, and minister assisting in the important transport, infrastructure and energy areas.

I am confident that the changes I have announced today will further enhance our strong and stable government, which is working for the benefit of all South Australians. As I say, meanwhile on the other side of the house they have had five Liberal leaders. I have had to face five Liberal leaders. They just keep reshuffling, because all they are about is their own jobs, not the jobs of South Australians, stabbing each other in the back, including stabbing Iain Evans in the back for the second time.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! When I call for order, I expect the order to be observed.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (14:08): I advise the house that I will be the Acting Leader of the House today, representing the Leader of House and the Minister for Infrastructure.

PAPERS

The following paper was laid on the table:

By the Deputy Premier (Hon. K.O. Foley) on behalf of the Minister for Infrastructure (Hon. P.F. Conlon)—

Land Management Corporation—Charter

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Adelaide—Minister for Education and Children's Services, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (14:08): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I rise today to inform the house about the government's significant investment in and reform of our early childhood development services. I do this today when the government is releasing the Dr Fraser Mustard, Thinker-in-Residence, report. Dr Mustard has spent a significant amount of time here in South Australia over the last few years. We are very lucky to have had—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Education.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Thank you, sir. We are very lucky to have had one of the world's leading experts on early childhood development here in South Australia, and I thank him for his report and his inspirational ideas, which will help South Australia build on our reputation as a family-friendly state.

The official release of Dr Mustard's report today also coincides with an announcement of \$2 million over two years to improve the attendance of children at 83 of the state's preschools in disadvantaged locations. Dr Fraser Mustard has enormous expertise and standing in the field of early childhood development. Many of his ideas endorse and complement the work we have already started here in South Australia to give young children the best possible start to their life. His ideas will help us to build on ideas raised in the Virtual Village inquiry into early childhood services that we conducted in 2004. We want South Australia to be recognised around the nation as a family-friendly state, with government services that work for children and their parents. Early investment in a child's life can help to set them on the right path in terms of their behaviour, learning and health well into the future. We are taking his advice and will support 32 of his 39 recommendations and we will provide qualified support for a further six of those recommendations.

The government has made a strong commitment to early childhood development. Some of our directions that are supported by the recommendations in Dr Mustard's report include:

- part scholarships to teachers to undertake a graduate certificate in neuroscience;

- four new family services coordinators to work with vulnerable children and families to prevent family breakdown and to help predict the need for intensive support, as well as 13 community development coordinators already working with parents and local communities to support and encourage participation by families in child rearing;
- using the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) to measure progress in children's development by gathering community data;
- developing 24 children's centres bringing together child care, school and family services at one location, including four in new school developments;
- a two-year trial in three childcare centres that give children access to kindergarten without leaving child care;
- a \$1.1 million joint federal/state project that will trial 15 hours of preschool a week, up from the current 11 hours a week. Ten areas across South Australia have been funded to trial these new approaches to deliver these extra hours;
- extending preschool to three year old Aboriginal children and those under the minister's guardianship to give them a head start in life;
- developing an Aboriginal family strategy to deliver better health, education and family services for Aboriginal children and their families;
- incorporating new knowledge about child brain development into university and TAFE early childhood training programs;
- home visits by CYWHS nurse for newborns in the first week of their life (Every Chance for Every Child);
- an extra \$190.6 million investment over four years in the recent state budget to keep children safe and intervene early when children are at risk of abuse or neglect; and
- linking information material between health, families and communities and education departments so informed decisions can be made about children.

South Australia has taken the lead nationally on early childhood development initiatives to give young South Australians the best possible start in their life. Dr Mustard's report will help us to bring on our efforts well into the future. In his report, Dr Mustard says:

I believe South Australia is a leader in the English-speaking culture in taking steps to close the gap between what we now know about early brain and child development and what we, as societies, are doing to ensure equality of development for all infants, toddlers and young children.

I publicly thank him for his commitment, dedication and valued opinions towards progressing opportunities for children in South Australia. I also applaud our fantastic early childhood staff who work with parents and community members and make South Australia an even better place to live and work and, certainly, to bring up children.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens) (14:13): I bring up the 22nd report of the committee.

Report received.

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I draw to the attention of members the presence in the chamber today of students from St Ignatius College, who are guests of the member for Morialta, and members of the YWCA, Semaphore, who are guests of the member for Lee.

QUESTION TIME

WATER BILLING

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (14:14): My question is to the Treasurer. Has the government's water bills overcharging backflip caused a flow-on funding shortfall for the desalination plant planned for 2012-13, and, if so, how will the government fund the revenue forgone as bill payers receive refunds? Page 9 of the government's 2008-09 transparency statement states that in order to fund the desalination plant, 'A longer term in principle revenue direction to 2012-13 has been based on water and wastewater price increases of similar magnitude

as in 2008-09.' Water bill increases are planned each year from now and flow on from the initial increase. The opposition is advised that the flow-on effect of the government's revenue miscalculations may create a shortfall of up to \$172 million by 2012-13.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (14:15): If that is the best an opposition can come up with—as all the media that were with me at the press conference on Monday heard (a 50 to 55 minute press conference), I answered that question on a number of occasions, and volunteered the answer. It will not affect it. We have made it very clear that the cost of the desalination plant will be offset by water pricing increases, and not a dollar more will be taken to general revenue; a quarantined account will be made available. At this stage, we are not aware of the final cost of the desalination plant. Why? Because we have not gone to tender. We have an approximate cost, obviously. Consultants have given us what we can expect to be the range of costs and we have factored that into our understanding of what the cost will be. Once we know exactly what the cost is, that cost recovery will be met from price increases in water over a five year period.

As I have said often at press conferences and in response to earlier questions from the media, in reality this is a timing issue, and the fact is—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No, look, there will be more to be said about the desalination plant in the near future. We are moving very swiftly to get the desal plant operational and the revenue that—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for MacKillop!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: As I said from the outset, I was expecting the revenue to be raised from 1 July 2008. The fact that some revenue has been accounted for earlier in the cycle—which I am advised is about \$10 million—that will not affect the funding of the desal plant. We have already said whatever the desal costs is what we will be raising from water price increases to cover it. So your question is three days old and it really demonstrates to me that you have no idea about how government operates.

EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (14:17): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier inform the house about the potential impact on South Australia of the green paper released by the federal Minister for Climate Change and Water, the Hon. Penny Wong?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:17): The federal Minister for Climate Change and Water, the Hon. Penny Wong, released the government's green paper on the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme last Wednesday at the National Press Club. The minister described the scheme as a 'necessary market reform for a low carbon future', one that is on par with past economic reforms such as the reduction in tariffs or deregulation of the financial system (which, of course, occurred under the Keating/Hawke government). There is no doubt that this will be one of the most significant economic changes experienced by Australians. For the first time in this nation's history a limit and a price on carbon will be implemented.

At the heart of this reform will be the establishment of an emissions trading scheme. Much of the design of this emissions trading scheme is based on the National Emissions Trading Scheme, which was first released as a discussion paper by the states and territories in August 2006 through the Council of the Federation at a press conference on Bondi Beach. Of course, the work undertaken by Professor Ross Garnaut was also commissioned by the states collectively in April 2007 and contributed to the green paper.

The government intends to respond to specific issues addressed in the report after detailed analysis, but overall the paper reflects a common sense and practical approach in dealing with the challenge of climate change. I believe the paper is a common sense and practical approach in dealing with this vital issue. The emissions trading scheme will be a cap and trade scheme using annual permits. I understand that every cent raised from the selling of permits will be used to help

business and households as they make the move to a clean energy future. This is the view I have held all along. Put simply, the federal government will set a limit on how much carbon can be produced by industry and then sell permits up to that limit which will, in turn, create an incentive to adopt cleaner options.

An estimated 1,000 firms nationally will be covered by the emissions trading scheme. Businesses which exceed the threshold of 25,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually will be affected. I am advised that, probably, around 30 to 40 South Australian firms will come within the ambit of such an emissions trading scheme. There will obviously be some of the big players such as OneSteel, Santos and Adelaide Brighton Cement.

To help reduce the costs, the federal government has made the scheme as broad as possible to allow those sectors which can abate their emissions most cheaply to do that. This will minimise the total cost of achieving the federal government's abatement levels. The direct liabilities under the scheme will fall on the largest industrial players in the state, including those in the electricity, mining, steel, cement, and oil and gas industries.

Agriculture is a sector that has not been included in the scheme in its initial stages. Agriculture has been excluded in the short term in part because of difficulties in measuring and monitoring emissions from such a large number of small sources. I understand that from 2015 a decision will be made about whether the agricultural sector may fall within the scheme. Certainly, a decision will be made later on.

Forestry businesses can choose to opt into the scheme. This means that any landholder who reforests in a way that is consistent with the conditions of the Kyoto Protocol will be eligible to earn permits for the carbon stored in these forests. There will not be a liability imposed for emissions from deforestation for those who choose not to opt into the scheme. Compensation for emissions-intensive and trade-exposed industries will be provided in the form of free permits. There will also be some form of compensation for electricity generators, but it is unclear at this stage whether this will be in the form of free permits or a cash subsidy.

The scheme will also have indirect flow-on effects in the price of goods and services. I am told that, if the price of carbon per tonne is \$20, the price of electricity for households across Australia would increase by around 16 per cent. That is why it is so important that the revenue raised through the scheme will help South Australian and Australian households adjust. Not one cent of this scheme must be used for general revenue. It must be ploughed back into the community for working families. It must also be used to help get better energy efficiencies and to help companies that are affected. The desal plant will not be delayed one minute.

Households will receive compensation in the form of tax and welfare adjustments and direct assistance for energy efficiency. There will also be offsets provided for the impact on fuel prices through the fuel excise on a cent-for-cent basis for the first three years of the scheme. Fortunately, South Australia's electricity generation sector has one of the smallest carbon footprints of mainland Australia.

I am advised that in 2007-08 electricity generated from gas made up 55 per cent of our profile, 34 per cent came from coal and 11 per cent from renewable energy sources. This will grow to 20 per cent by around the end of 2010, which will put us in a world leadership position. We will need to continue our leadership in renewable energy technologies so that we can reduce our reliance on coal. I am expecting some more announcements about investment in renewable energy in coming months. That is why I have made a submission to the federal government's \$20 billion infrastructure fund for investment in our transmission infrastructure so that geothermal energy, as well as our wind resources, can be connected to the national grid as well as providing clean energy to our major mining infrastructure.

I have spoken to Professor Garnaut and Sir Rod Eddington about our submission, and they both seem to be very supportive. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet, with the Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, has provided some initial advice on the green paper, but we will be doing further work to provide a whole of government submission for consideration as part of the white paper, which will be released later this year. The state government will be meeting with industry and local government as part of the process in developing the state submission to the green paper. I have already started meeting with businesses affected by the scheme in South Australia, and their feedback will be used as part of our submission to the federal government.

Unfortunately, Australia is lagging behind much of the world due to the inaction of the Liberal Howard government, which means that we are at least a decade behind implementing policy responses to tackle climate change.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It is amazing that they could disagree with that. Which countries in the world had not signed Kyoto before the last election? The United States and, of course, Australia under John Howard. If you did not know that, I find it extraordinary. There are significant consequences for our economy and for the environment. For the sake of future generations of Australians, both sides of politics will need to work together as we adapt to a carbon-constrained world.

WATER BILLING

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (14:25): My question is again to the Treasurer. If, as the Treasurer claims, he and other ministers had no idea of how the SA Water billing system worked, and decided only last week to change the system to a quarterly basis, why has the government, since July 2005, spent \$19.3 million on a computerised customer information and billing system (known as CSIS) to deal with meter management, processing of bills and correct receipting and recovery?

The 2005-06 transparency statement states that the upgrade of the information and billing system would cost \$19.3 million and was due for completion in the 2007-08 financial year before the recent water bills farrago.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (14:26): Maybe I could ask why you did not change the system for the eight years you were in government.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The transparency statements have indicated now for some time that we intend to move to a quarterly billing cycle, but that decision had not been taken. On Monday morning at nine o'clock, the minister and I took that decision and instructed SA Water to move rapidly to the quarterly billing system. What's the big deal?

WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Taylor) (14:27): My question is to the Minister for State/Local Government Relations. Is the minister receiving support in her efforts to increase women's participation in local government?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Volunteers, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister Assisting in Early Childhood Development) (14:27): As members would know, I am very committed to increasing the number of women in local government, both in—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Pardon? What was that? Are you going to put your finger in your mouth today or put your whole fist in? If you could just keep quiet for two seconds, it would be really good.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is really important to have increased numbers of women elected to local government, as well as in senior management positions. I know that the member for Finniss does not think so. Currently, we have something like 26 per cent of women elected to local government and approximately 16 per cent in senior management positions. Out of the 48 mayoral positions that are popularly elected, women hold only 10 of those positions, and only one female chair has been elected internally in councils. In our 68 councils, there are only two women chief executive officers, and those are in Walkerville and Kangaroo Island.

This is clearly an issue that needs to be addressed if the decision making in councils is to be truly reflective of the communities they represent. The Local Government Association agrees

that it is an issue, and its Executive Director chairs a state/local government working group on women in local government, which has been endorsed by a Minister for State/Local Government Relations forum. This working group includes representatives from the Local Government Management Association, council representatives and the Australian Services Union, as well as state government representation. Its task is to come to grips with the issues and identify possible remedies to respond to the under-representation of women.

The Local Government Managers Association here in South Australia is also managing a project to showcase good practice examples of current efforts, experiences and approaches that support women officers employed in South Australian councils. The City of Playford is hosting a Women's Leadership in Local Government Conference on 24 September this year, bringing together women from local government right across the state, and our push for greater participation is also being taken up at the national level.

The Australian Local Government Women's Association strongly holds the view that more needs to be done to achieve greater representation of women in local government and has established a national steering committee. It is also holding a national conference here in Adelaide in April next year. I am pleased that the federal Minister for the Status of Women (Hon. Tanya Plibersek) has supported the Australian Local Government Women's Association with funds of \$67,000 to assist in its project, and I have most recently been advised that the Local Government Managers Association national board recently adopted the establishment and promotion of the Year of Women in Local Government as a key strategy platform.

In planning for this, the Local Government Managers Association will host a national forum in Canberra on 2 and 3 September to look at understanding the issues and challenges as well as the possibilities and benefits related to increasing the participation of women in local government management and proposing and defining the Year of Women in Local Government management. I am very pleased that the need for greater participation of women both as elected officials and senior managers in local government is receiving significant support now around the nation.

WATER BILLING

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (14:31): My question is to the Minister for Water Security. How many—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney-General will come to order.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: How many water bills were raised in the calendar months March, April, May and June 2008, was the pattern of bill posting different from previous years and were SA Water bills withheld until this financial year to take advantage of the higher prices and retrospective charges linked to the government's three-tiered water billing system? With your leave, sir, I will explain—as I look at the galah, the member for Mount Gambier.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Sorry, sir.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Leader of the Opposition! The minister will be quiet. The Leader of the Opposition will withdraw the remark.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Thank you, sir. With your leave, I will explain. Because of the—

The SPEAKER: Order, the leader! I have not heard you withdraw. Do you withdraw?

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Sorry. I withdraw the word 'galah' and apologise profusely. Because of the seriousness of this question and the need to ensure that it is answered today, the opposition gave notice to the minister at 10.30 this morning that I would be asking it today.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (14:33): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question on notice. I can provide some information that I have received today from SA Water. SA Water advises that it did not withhold bills due to be issued during June so they could be issued in July. SA Water also advises that bills issued in June 2008, which included water consumption charges, covered water meter reading periods that commenced prior to 5 December 2007 when

the new charges were gazetted. Under the Waterworks Act, such consumption was charged on the basis of prices that had been gazetted in December 2006.

The information that was sought by the leader was the number of bills that were raised in March, April, May and June. I will give the two-year comparison so we can demonstrate the pattern. In March 2006-07 101,547 bills were issued; in 2007-08 there were 103,534 bills. In April 2006-07, 275,151 bills were issued, I am advised by SA Water; and in 2007-08, 335,415 bills were issued. In May, there were 321,064 bills. In May 2007-08, 269,950 bills were issued. In June 2006-07, 102,088 bills were issued; and in June 2007-08, there were 102,765 bills.

I have also been advised by SA Water that the same pattern has occurred over the last two financial years. The last two weeks of the month at the end of each quarter have no scheduled billing, resulting in lower numbers for those months—for example, September, December, March and June—and in each month some accounts are billed with the access charge, water use and sewerage, whereas some other accounts are billed with only the access charge and sewerage because the water is billed biannually.

There is a variation in numbers from one month to another, in some instances. If you look at the entire year, for example, in October 2006-07, 274,883 bills were issued, whereas in 2007-08, 334,707 bills were issued. SA Water advises that this is due to the number of weeks in those months in any given year.

HIGH COURT VACANCIES

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens) (14:36): My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney inform the house of vacancies that will soon arise in the High Court and what expectations does he have for the appointment of a South Australian?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon—Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:36): It has been more than a year since I last advised the house on the topic of upcoming High Court vacancies.

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: More than 100 years—never. In that time, the Hon. Justice Callinan (personally my favourite High Court judge) retired from the court at the age of 70.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Not a teller of ripping yarns like Justice Callinan. Justice Callinan went on to head the commonwealth's equine influenza inquiry—

The Hon. M.D. Rann: And did a brilliant job.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: And did a fine job—and was replaced in the court by a fellow Queenslander, the Hon. Justice Keifel. The next few months will mark the start of a period of substantial change to the High Court bench. Firstly, another two vacancies will open on the bench, including that of the Chief Justice. Secondly, for the first time in 12 years (since the appointment of Justice Kirby), these vacancies will be filled by a federal Labor government. I again pledge to do all I can to see a South Australian fill one of these vacancies.

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The member for Heysen says, 'Why not both?' The selection of High Court justices is among the most important appointments a federal government can make. The High Court is the last avenue of appeal for both civil and criminal matters from the state, territory and federal courts of Australia. Alas, I certainly voted against the proposition to abolish appeals to the judicial committee of the Privy Council when it was put to referendum in 1977, but I found myself in a minority at that time.

Mr Koutsantonis: It's where you're happiest.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: That is right; quite.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Don't remind me of what the Liberal Party did to remove the regnal year and Latin from our statutes—

The Hon. K.O. Foley: What year?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: For the information of the member for Port Adelaide, the regnal year is the year of the reign of the current monarch.

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The member for Davenport says that I could reintroduce it on my letterhead. That is a very good thought—and I will hold that. The High Court in the main has taken a centralist approach.

Mrs Redmond: Or an Eastern States approach.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Or an Eastern States approach to federalism. I am one of those who believes that the engineers case was wrongly decided. Perhaps the most recent important decision of the High Court has been that of determining the constitutional validity of the coalition's federal WorkChoices law in which the majority minimised the history, spirit and intent of our constitution.

I note that the Prime Minister won the federal election on a platform of reform, which included renewed federalism in Australia.

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Well, I do actually. I hark back to the days when the Liberal Party actually supported federalism in Australia—the days of Malcolm Fraser's new federalism. But those days are long gone and members opposite are happy to see all power taken to Canberra. I do not know why they minimise their importance in the federation. I would think any state member who supported centralism in Canberra would be suffering from some kind of cognitive dissidence.

Mr Hanna: We do not need state parliament.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The member for Mitchell says that we do not need state parliaments. Well, why do you not reach the logical conclusion of that, put down your magazine and leave the house—resign again. The views of the new appointees may play an important role in the success of this new federalism. Their role will be even greater should a new appointee rather than an existing member of the court take on the role.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: Does 25 years as a JP qualify?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: No. Interestingly, I note that now retired High Court Justice Callinan made a parting shot at the High Court judiciary late last year, arguing that they ought to be absolutely candid about any personal philosophy they may bring to a constitutional question and noting that they did not always reveal their real reasons for deciding a case. Although I fully support the former justice's call, I am not holding my breath waiting for change.

Rather than try to predict a candidate's personal politics, I think that, once the basic threshold of demonstrated judicial excellence, industry, suitable temperament and strong sense of civic duty is reached, the state of origin of the judicial nominee in relation to the current and historic make up of the High Court bench should be a factor of elevated importance in decision making; and I note the member for Heysen supports me on this.

In the 106-year history of the High Court there has never been a South Australian High Court justice, and I do not think it is owing to a dearth of suitable candidates. John Bray, Len King and Dame Roma Mitchell would have made great High Court justices. The South Australian legal profession holds a wealth of talented people—and I know the Premier agrees with me on that. As Attorney-General I have worked with and known many of the state's best legal minds, and I want to see at least one of these men or women on the High Court bench in my time as Attorney-General.

WATER BILLING

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (14:44): Does the Minister for Water Security have regular meetings with SA Water's CEO, Anne Howe; how often are the meetings; and, at any time since she became the Minister for Water Security, has she received a briefing from SA Water in relation to its plans to build the new pricing regime from 1 July?

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (14:45): I have regular meetings with SA Water, as I would, of course, as the Minister for SA Water. I actually have a meeting this afternoon. I meet with

SA Water probably on a fortnightly basis and sometimes more often, depending on the issues we are dealing with.

In relation to the 1 July pricing issue, it was a combination of work undertaken by a series of people because we were dealing with not only the water pricing issue but also the desalination infrastructure investment and a whole range of issues in that decision by cabinet. To go forward with the desalination plant, we needed to have a pricing policy. Treasury and SA Water were working closely together in relation to that part of the project. SA Water was working with the Water Security Council task force and the desalination working group to determine the way forward for the desalination plant.

We have been undertaking a full review of the Water Act 1932 and, yes, included in that full review of the act was the notion of quarterly billing. The quarterly billing issue has now been withdrawn from that entire review and will be implemented ahead of the completion of that full review.

WATER BILLING

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (14:46): I have a supplementary question. Will the minister, together with the Minister for Water Security, table the minutes of these meetings? Has Ms Howe been given any warning or other notice pointing to her possible removal from her post?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (14:47): I will answer that, if you do not mind, Mr Speaker, because I find that offensive.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Yes, and Kate Lennon deserved exactly what she got. I tell you what: there is one thing this government isn't; we are not weak when it comes to dealing with CEOs who are not up to standard and who make errors. Unlike the Liberals when in office, who stuck by a whole series of chief executive officers, which ended up costing the former Liberal government hundreds upon hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of dollars when they finally separated with them. So, don't you come in here and lecture us about how we manage chief executive officers, because you were an absolute disgrace when it came to chief executive officers—the way you treated them and, importantly, the way you tolerated them.

There would have been a few less ministerial resignations under your government if you had had the courage to get rid of a few of those CEOs, because they came back to undermine you and to bite you—and the member for Davenport, as well as a few others, knows exactly what I am talking about. Members opposite showed an appalling lack of strength in government. They did very well in divisive behaviour but they showed a very, very strong and significant lack of leadership and direction of their Public Service.

I made it very, very clear that I had an issue with Anne Howe and the department's lack of explanation to cabinet. I also said on the public record that, in fairness to Anne Howe and SA Water, they assumed that cabinet understood fully the billing system. We did not, just like the former cabinet did not, and we take responsibility. Anne Howe is a fine CEO, and she has done a very good job, and I said from the outset that there did not need to be any resignations or sackings over this. The government has taken responsibility, unlike members opposite. The leader of the opposition sat—

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Did you understand the billing system, leader? Martin, did you understand the billing system?

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Ah, he did. Mr Speaker, yet again, the Leader of the Opposition tells untruths. He just chops and swings and says whatever he wants, because on Friday he said that this was some conspiracy, this was some secret grab for cash. He has just said now that when he was around the cabinet table he understood the billing system. So, if he understood it—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You did not tell your treasurer on the day he put out his release, and you did not know it on Friday, and why? Because what you just said then was an untruth—

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: It was an untruth, because you will say anything and you will do anything to suit the day.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The minister is debating the issue. Mr Speaker, you frequently pull us up for interjecting. He invites interjections. It is unparliamentary—

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

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. I just make the point that this leader will say anything on any day to suit any—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier will take his seat.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: He is a fraud of a leader.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier will take his seat.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You are a fraud.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Deputy Premier.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I rise on point of order, Mr Speaker. I take objection to the term 'fraud'. The government is involved in a program of abuse—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: —and I ask that it be withdrawn.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do think that 'fraud' is a reflection on the Leader of the Opposition, and I do ask the Deputy Premier to withdraw.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: On a point of order, sir: just remember what the Leader of the Opposition has just said. He said he knew the billing system, which means that his government—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will take his seat. I do uphold that 'fraud' is a reflection upon the Leader of the Opposition. The Deputy Premier's comment 'You are a fraud' is a reflection, and I ask him to withdraw.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I apologise and withdraw, sir, unreservedly. He knows exactly what he is.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Point of order, Mr Speaker. The Treasurer just added to his apology, 'He knows exactly what he is.' He virtually repeated the offence. I ask you again to get him to withdraw it without qualification.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. Foley: You are weak.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier is trying my patience. I did not hear the remark made by the Deputy Premier. I think it is best for everyone if we simply move on. The Deputy Premier has withdrawn and apologised as I directed him to. The member for MacKillop.

WATER BILLING

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (14:52): My question is to the Treasurer. Has SA Water engaged contractors in the past week to upgrade the computer system to manage refunds for the SA Water overcharges? How long will this work take and what is the expected cost?

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (14:52): SA Water has undertaken to advise government on the method it will use to reimburse the overpayment of accounts as a consequence of the

misunderstanding between the starting date of these increases. It will be advising government and we will bring that information back to the house.

WATER BILLING

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (14:53): My question is to the Minister for Water Security. Was the decision to implement the new three-tiered pricing system made by cabinet before the minister went on ABC Radio on Friday 30 November 2007 advising South Australians that the government was 'still working on a review of water pricing', and, if so, were the minister's public remarks incorrect? Will she withdraw them and apologise to ABC Radio listeners? The Treasurer's transparency statement confirms that 'In November 2007 the government, through cabinet, approved the 2008-09 metropolitan and regional water and wastewater charges.'

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (14:54): The pricing and decisions do not come into effect until they are gazetted, and they were gazetted on 6 December.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Has the minister completed her answer?

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: Yes, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The member for MacKillop.

Members interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: She did.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: She did; caught red-handed.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will come to order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Mitchell will come to order and the member for MacKillop will come to order!

Mr HANNA: Sorry, sir!

The SPEAKER: My apologies to the member for Mitchell for confusing him with the member for MacKillop.

WATER BILLING

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (14:54): My question is to the Minister for Water Security. When did work commence in her department and within SA Water on plans to implement quarterly meter readings and quarterly water use billing, and when and by whom was the minister first briefed on such plans? Plans for more efficient billing and meter readings are canvassed in the Essential Services Commission Review of Annual Water Pricing Statements in both 2006 and 2007. In the 2005-06 transparency statement, an amount of \$19.3 million is allocated for a major upgrade of SA Water's computerised customer information and billing system, but only yesterday on the radio the Treasurer said:

What I am doing is I've instructed SA Water yesterday and the minister to give us a quarterly billing system as soon as physically possible and that will take a few months to implement.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (14:55): I answered this question in answer to an earlier question today, where I referred to an overall review of the Waterworks Act 1932 that is currently being undertaken. On Monday we instructed SA Water to pull out the components that relate to the quarterly billing and to fast track that.

WATER BILLING

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (14:56): My question is to the minister for administrative services. Minister, did you, during your term as minister responsible for SA Water, understand that water billing is retrospective, and did you know that this was still the case when the current minister brought her water pricing submission to cabinet last November?

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (14:56): Firstly, there is not a minister for administrative services, and the member knows full well that you can only ask ministers questions about those areas that they are responsible for.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Chapman interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: Exactly, as the Treasurer points out, because he cannot be responsible for what the minister for administrative services may or may not have known when he was the appropriate minister—because we know what he knew.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am not sure whether the Deputy Premier was answering the question or drawing a point of order. As he rightly points out, there is no longer a minister for administrative services. The member for Hammond.

WATER BILLING

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:57): My question is to the Minister for Water Security. As the owner of a property has the minister ever read the water bills which she has paid?

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (14:57): Yes.

RECREATION AND SPORT FUNDING

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (14:57): My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. What funding support does the state government provide to peak active recreation and support organisations in South Australia?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Lee—Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Finance, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:58): The state government provides funding support to peak active recreation and sport organisations in South Australia through the Statewide Enhancement Program. I am pleased to advise the house that I have already recently approved funding for the 2008-09 round of this program.

The Statewide Enhancement Program, or StEP as it is known, is the government's biggest active recreation and sport grants program and is a triennial funding program that provides approximately \$20 million over three years. Funding is provided to state active recreation and sport organisations to assist in core business activities and to organisations for projects that enhance active recreation and sport programs and services. Sports such as swimming, athletics and soccer are represented, right through to active recreation and sporting programs for homeless adults and at risk young people.

StEP is important in providing a broad range of active recreation and sport opportunities for all South Australians. StEP assists peak industry bodies and state active recreation and sport associations to implement programs and initiatives which support South Australia's Strategic Plan target to exceed the Australian average for participation in sport and physical activity by 2014. The success of StEP, since its implementation in 2004, has been the result of a partnering approach that the state government has taken to working with the active recreation and sporting industry for the benefit of the South Australian community.

WELLINGTON WEIR

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:00): My question is to the Minister for Water Security. Is the government planning to announce the building of a weir at Wellington to allow for the inundation of sea water into the Lower Lakes, and has the water level trigger for building the weir changed from around minus 1.5 AHD to another water level trigger linked to the ecological survival of the Lower Lakes?

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (15:00): I thank the member for Hammond for his question, and I understand his sincere concern for the communities of the Lower Lakes, as this government shares that concern. There are some serious issues in the Lower Lakes that we have to deal with. A huge body of work is being undertaken by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission at the request of the ministerial council to determine the medium and long-term management options for the Lower Lakes.

There are some serious issues emerging in relation to acid sulphate soils. Some work is being undertaken by various organisations, which is being fed into that process. We are expecting the draft report to be concluded in the not too distant future, and it will be considered by commissioners and, shortly afterwards, by ministers. Once that information has been presented to ministers, I will certainly be working with those communities on what we need to do to deal with the longer term and short-term issues of the Lower Lakes.

ECOTOURISM

Ms BREUER (Giles) (15:01): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. What is the state government doing to develop and market nature-based tourism and ecotourism experiences?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Adelaide—Minister for Education and Children's Services, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (15:01): I am really delighted to answer a question about nature-based tourism. The member knows that her electorate is the home of some of the most exciting nature-based tourism in our state, ranging—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Ranging from those fornicating cuttlefish.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Yes, ranging from those cuttlefish. I was very pleased to see the weekend newspapers talking in glowing terms about what is for me the most exciting experience I have ever had in South Australia. I do not think anything can quite come anywhere near the excitement of swimming with copulating cuttlefish. It seriously is extraordinarily exciting. There are up to 100,000 of the beasts together off Point Lowly. It is an extraordinary opportunity to get up close to animals that are really unusual in terms of their morphology.

However, that is just one of the experiences in the member for Giles' electorate, which also includes some extraordinary ecotourism destinations. It is widely recognised that Australia attracts one million nature-based tourists each year. South Australia, with the SATC, has been in partnership with the Department for Environment and Heritage to market a whole range of activities around our inaugural national Conference on Green Travel in 2008. It will include climate change and ecotourism. We have contributed \$40,000 towards the conference bid. The conference will be held in Adelaide in November, with regional visits to the Adelaide Hills, the Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island. For anyone interested, of course, the cuttlefish are off Point Lowly only until the end of August, so there are only a few weeks left during which these animals can be seen in our waters.

The conference will also use some of the images that it used through the National Landscapes promotion. This is a federal government initiative, which will identify 20 superlative iconic sites around the country and which can be used in future marketing offshore. The first eight Australian landscapes include the Flinders Ranges, and they were launched at a recent ATE event in Perth that was attended by the member for Finnis.

South Australia has been a pioneer in promoting and acknowledging sustainable tourism practices since the implementation of our own inaugural sustainable tourism award in 2005. This concept has now been adopted at a national level, and we are delighted that Qantas is now the sponsor for the Qantas Award for Excellence in Sustainable Tourism, with much of the criteria identical to those we originally developed in South Australia.

In 2007-08 the SATC is working with DEH to facilitate the national parks representation at ATE, including the development of materials for distribution to international wholesalers. The SATC contributed funding towards an advertisement promoting SA ecotourism operators, and encouraged ecotourism operators to achieve eco-accreditation.

I am proud to tell the house that South Australia now has 71 eco-certified products. Amazingly, for a country of our size, with so much ecotourism for international visitors, we account for 12 per cent of the national eco-accredited business and punch well above our weight. In addition, of course, we can promote South Australia as being the most aware in terms of climate change, with our climate change legislation and our high level of grid-connected wind and solar power, as well as the fact that our food and wine have to travel less miles to market within our state than food from other places.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Fewer miles.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Yes—fewer miles. In 2008-09, we will continue to work in ways that promote nature-based tourism—ecotourism, dive tourism, wildlife, birdwatching and national parks—as well as the emerging market around fossil tourism. I am very keen to promote more fossil tourism. Of course, we have some of the iconic—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: You can laugh, but I remind the house that we have not only the Flinders Chase National Park, with megasaurs, but we also have the world heritage listed Naracoorte Caves, with a whole range of—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Yes. Of course, we are one of the few places in the world that can claim the creation of a new era—the Ediacara era—based on some of our fossils in the Far North. These achievements mark us out. In the South-East, around Mount Gambier, there is an increasing drive to promote geo-parks and geological tourism, and that geo-park area crosses over the Victorian border.

We are well placed to target this growing number of eco-tourists from around the world, and we wish to maximise our competitive advantage by promoting our green credentials politically as a state, as well as our products, which are second to none and well renowned in terms of ecotourism accreditation.

WATER BILLING

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:07): As the owner of residential property, has the Treasurer ever read, understood and compared the water bills he has paid?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (15:07): Can I say that my ex-wife, the beautiful woman that she is, looked after all our accounts very well. She did not trust the Treasurer with the house accounts. Since I have been a single bloke, I now sign my bills without even looking at them. I get the final warning that I have not paid them, and I just write a cheque. I am a shocker!

ACTIVE8 PREMIER'S YOUTH CHALLENGE

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson) (15:08): My question is to the Minister for Youth. What is the government doing to support young people to engage with their community?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Youth, Minister for Gambling) (15:08): I thank the member for Mawson for his question and, in responding, I take the opportunity to draw members' attention to the active8 Premier's Youth Challenge program. Active8 is one of many outstanding programs supported by the Office for Youth. It aims to provide secondary school students with a range of challenging activities that promote self-reliance and self-confidence and engender a spirit of community service.

A few weeks ago, I was very pleased to announce that \$2 million had been allocated for the next four years for this highly successful program. The grants per participant have also been increased this year by \$50 to \$450 or up to \$225 for Australian Defence Force cadets.

Over the next four years, this funding will enable up to 4,000 South Australian secondary school students to be active in their community and present them with exciting challenges that can bring out their talents and teach them new skills.

The key to the success of active8 has been the partnerships formed between community organisations, government and non-government secondary schools and other host organisations. Some of the community organisations include Greening Australia, the Royal Life Saving Society, St John Ambulance, Ausmusic SA, Girl Guides SA and Scouts Australia, amongst others. Through their support, active8 participants have contributed almost 10,000 volunteering hours to South Australian communities over the past year.

The active8 program provides all participants with first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation training. Participants are also required to complete eight hours of volunteering. Depending on the level of their activity, they can also receive accreditation towards their SSABSA school curriculum. On completion of the program, they each receive a certificate of recognition from the Premier of South Australia—something that I know they treasure.

In keeping with the government's social inclusion priorities, the program will continue to encourage the involvement of young people who may otherwise not have access to these opportunities. This includes young Aboriginal people, those who are at risk of disengaging from learning, those who may have become marginalised from their communities, those in the juvenile justice system, or those who have other special needs.

Some examples of the active8 program include assisting newly arrived young migrants to learn practical skills, such as swimming and water safety; young people being supported to contribute to their local community through conservation and emergency services volunteering; and young people with special needs being provided with outdoor education and exploration opportunities, thereby promoting their sense of independence. Active8 is an important government initiative aimed at building on and extending the range of skills, talents and abilities of young South Australians, and I know that every member of this chamber supports the activities that are undertaken by our young people in the active8 program.

TOUR DOWN UNDER

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (15:11): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. What advice did the minister receive about the conflict between organisers of cycling's Grand Tour events, including the Tour de France, and the organisers of the new UCI ProTour series, and was that advice considered before she signed up to buy a ProTour licence?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Adelaide—Minister for Education and Children's Services, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (15:12): The member is confused. I think we have explained that we have not bought a licence.

TOUR DOWN UNDER

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (15:12): My question is again to the Minister for Tourism. How much state government money was paid last year to the International Cycling Federation and the UCI?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Adelaide—Minister for Education and Children's Services, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (15:12): The member for Finniss is determined to talk down our cycling event. There has been a constant barrage of attacks on the quality of the cyclists and the decision to invest extra money, and I will explain again, as I said in answer to the first question—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Are you listening? It is the same answer: we have not paid for a licence or given them money in advance.

TOURISM EVENTS

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (15:13): Once again my question is to the Minister for Tourism. Which of the following events would the minister classify as her most successful achievement: (1) the former hard court tennis championships, axed in 2007; (2) the Jacob's Creek golf open, which was axed in 2006; (3) the International Horse Trials, which had its funding slashed from \$300,000 to \$20,000; (4) The International Guitar Festival, which dropped \$1 million; (5) the World Food Exchange—

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Sir, I rise on a point of order.

Mr PENGILLY: —which was—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order. The member for Finnis will take his seat.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: This is clearly not a question—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! It is a rather irregular question.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am not sure that I can rule it out of order. Does the member have anything else to add to his list?

Mr PENGILLY: Yes, sir; two final points. The World Food Exchange, which was postponed and still could be cancelled altogether; or horse racing at Victoria Park, which finished last December? Which one?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Adelaide—Minister for Education and Children's Services, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (15:14): I think that this is a facetious question. Some of these events have no bearing on my portfolio, but I will point out, for those events related to my portfolio (which were not the entire list of those the honourable member discussed) the ones that were at some stage funded by AME (Major Events). I have to say that being in government requires one to take decisions. I know it is very difficult for the member opposite—

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Finnis.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: —to understand that, when you spend other people's money, you have responsibilities. My attitude to spending other people's money is much as I would have for my own money. My view is that you make sure you understand the facts, you get the information and you put the money where it has the best effect. I think if those opposite would rather fund underperforming events that produce few tourists coming to Adelaide, then they should admit it and say that they believe that tourism as a portfolio is a fun community-building portfolio which just gives money willy-nilly to any event. Government is tough: it is about making decisions, looking at return on investment and spending other people's money as carefully as you would spend your own.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (15:16): I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended so as to allow me to move a motion without notice to bring on a debate on the River Murray and the failure of both federal Labor and state Labor governments to protect South Australia's interests through its intergovernmental agreement on the Murray-Darling Basin signed on 3 July 2008.

The SPEAKER: There being an absolute majority of members present, I accept the motion. Does the leader wish to speak to the suspension motion?

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Yes, sir. Two weeks ago, I challenged the Premier to debate me in any place at any time, but in particular on Adelaidenow, about the crisis besetting the River Murray and our water security. The Premier refused to debate me in the media. He refused to debate me publicly. He refused to stand up for his government's record on its intergovernmental agreement. At the time, he said, 'I will debate this issue in parliament.' He said, 'If Mr Hamilton-Smith as Leader of the Opposition wants to bring this to the house, I will accommodate the debate. We will hold the debate. Parliament was the place; parliament was the time.' I am doing what the Premier asked.

Not only that, I am glancing at the daily program, and I note that the government has no business whatsoever scheduled for this afternoon. The last item appearing on the *Notice Paper* is a grievance debate. They have run out of things to do. They have run out of bills; they have run out of things to discuss. I put to the house that this is the time and this is the place. I remind the house that, in seeking its support for this debate, this is the No. 1 issue on the agenda for South Australians at the moment.

I think it is pretty evident from the last few days that they are worried about their water security, desalination plants, stormwater plants, wastewater recycling, but, most importantly of all, they are worried about the River Murray from which, at the moment, over 90 per cent of the city's water is being drawn. This is the time and this is the place to debate this issue.

If the government does not support this motion, it is running away from its commitment to the people of South Australia, and the Premier will be running away from his public undertaking to have a debate. If the government is concerned about a lack of notice, I make this point. I spoke to the Premier before the commencement of question time today (over an hour ago) and signalled to him that I would be seeking to suspend.

I made public statements two to three hours ago, indicating to the government that we would be seeking to make this debate today. It was notified in the morning press. This should come as no surprise to the Premier or the government. This is the time, this is the place and this is the issue. The house has time available to it. The Premier has agreed to hold the debate. I say to the house: let us do it now and let us get this matter addressed.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (15:21): The Leader of the Opposition approached the Premier at the beginning of question time to say that he would be seeking a suspension of standing orders. Let us see it for what it is: it is a stunt.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Of course, the leader did so well in New South Wales the other week that Barry O'Farrell told him to nick off. He is around the place saying that we should bang heads together, tell the commonwealth, tell New South Wales. What do we find? Barry O'Farrell sent him out of his office with his tail between his legs. Get real for once! We will not change the order of business, sir.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier has the call.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The government will not change the order of business.

Ms Chapman: I thought you all wanted to go home.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I have no intention of making a further contribution if I am going to be shouted at. Do you want to hear my response and then decide how you will react to it?

Mr Williams interjecting:

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

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The government is the controller of business in this place. The Leader of the House or, in my case, the Acting Leader of the House will decide when we will do business. We are more than happy to allow the opposition to have its 30 minutes of debate at the conclusion of today's business.

Ms Chapman: Well, do it now.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We will do grievances—because that is the order of business—then, if there is no other legislative material, we will allow the opposition to have its half hour. That is a fair response from the government.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition) (Waite) (15:23): I will exercise my right of reply.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Well, sir, read standing order 401.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Thank you, Mr Speaker; you should read the standing orders. Mr Speaker, there is no business after grieves today. There is no business. In fact, we are set to go. This is nothing but a sham from the government. This matter must be discussed now. It must

be debated now. There is no need to proceed with grieves. The Deputy Premier knows it. He should agree to the suspension, otherwise be exposed as running away from the debate.

No government business is scheduled. We want to debate the Murray. If the government is serious about it, let us get on with it, but let us not prevaricate or delay further. No-one on this side of the house wants to grieve, sir. I would be surprised if there is anyone opposite whose grieve is more important than the crisis facing the River Murray. If the government thinks that there is, let it be judged accordingly.

There is no issue that could be grieved that is more important than the issue I am putting to the house today. The government should accept the debate. We should get on with it and go ahead with the debate—otherwise, the government will be judged accordingly.

The house divided on the motion:

AYES (13)

Chapman, V.A.
Griffiths, S.P.
Hanna, K.
Penfold, E.M.
Williams, M.R.

Evans, I.F.
Gunn, G.M.
McFetridge, D.
Pengilly, M.

Goldsworthy, M.R.
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J. (teller)
Pederick, A.S.
Redmond, I.M.

NOES (22)

Atkinson, M.J.
Breuer, L.R.
Fox, C.C.
Koutsantonis, T.
McEwen, R.J.
Rankine, J.M.
Stevens, L.
Wright, M.J.

Bedford, F.E.
Caica, P.
Geraghty, R.K.
Lomax-Smith, J.D.
O'Brien, M.F.
Rann, M.D.
Thompson, M.G.

Bignell, L.W.
Foley, K.O. (teller)
Key, S.W.
Maywald, K.A.
Piccolo, T.
Simmons, L.A.
White, P.L.

PAIRS (6)

Venning, I.H.
Pisoni, D.G.
Kerin, R.G.

Conlon, P.F.
Hill, J.D.
Weatherill, J.W.

Majority of 9 for the noes.

Motion thus negatived.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (15:30): I move:

That the house suspend standing orders at the completion of grievances to allow a half an hour debate in accordance with the Leader of the Opposition's requirements.

The SPEAKER: As there is an absolute majority of members present, I accept the motion.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: As I said, in the view of the government, this is a stunt. Had it wanted to make the River Murray the priority of the day, the opposition could have approached the government at 12 noon today—in line with normal procedures of the house—and requested that we not have a question time. It could have said that the most important priority of the day was, indeed, a debate on the Murray. It did not do that. It preferred to ask questions in question time because that was a higher priority.

This government will not be dictated to by the opposition as to when we have debates. We are a fair government, and, had we been approached at midday today, we would have been more than happy to suspend standing orders to allow question time to be put to one side to allow the opposition to have a fair dinkum debate over the Murray—if, indeed, as it says, that is its highest priority. Clearly, it is not: it is a stunt. We are happy. We have backbenchers who have issues they want to raise, as we know members opposite do. If the opposition does not want to use its grievances, we will do six grievances on this side.

Backbenchers get very limited opportunity to participate in a free and open debate on matters that affect their electorates. This government does have a care and concern for its backbenchers and we want them to have their moment, given that this is the last—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Finniss will come to order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: This is the last sitting week before the break, and it is only appropriate that backbenchers be given a chance to get issues that concern them and their electorate on the record. At the end of that we are more than happy for the Leader of the Opposition to have his half an hour. That is a sensible procedure and orderly behaviour and program for the house. I look forward to the leader participating in that debate.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (15:32): The government has had its opportunity to vote in favour of a debate on the River Murray, and the Premier and the Treasurer have debated against it. I will tell you how the opposition will deal with this matter. We will grieve—

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: It will not wait until 4.30. We will have ours right now. We will get up and speak right now as part of the grievance process. If you want to participate in the debate by having three grievors address the issue of the Murray, we can have our debate—five minutes, five, five, five and five. If you want to play games, push it off until after 4.30, or thereabouts, to suit you to make some odd point. I just say to the Premier that, if he is serious about meeting his commitment to debate me, stay here now and be first griever. Come on. Let's have the debate.

They can do whatever they like. We're going to get up and speak about the River Murray right now. We will use grieves to do it, and we will argue our case with three speakers right now. If you want to be part of the debate, do so. If you want to get up and talk about arboretums at Salisbury, or the condition of the footpaths in Salisbury or some other stupidity then go right ahead. Just signal to the people of South Australia whether or not you are serious about the River Murray. You can do so now by getting your three speakers—five, five and five. Let's debate the Murray. It is too important to wait until whenever you decide that orders of the day are over.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (15:34): I have a right of reply. Standing orders provide that I get a right of reply.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I do. Fair dinkum, the Leader of the Opposition really does make an embarrassment of himself. He is now saying that he does not want a half hour debate, and he has accused us of playing games because we are allotting him a half an hour. It just happens to be half an hour later than the half hour he wanted. Give me a break! What land am I in? Am I in some sort of twilight zone? I mean, where is this guy coming from? Tactically, he is no genius.

As I said, if the most important, pressing, urgent order of the day was the debate on the River Murray, he could have approached the Acting Leader of Government Business (me) or the Premier and said, 'Get rid of question time, give us an hour to debate it,' and we would have agreed. So, clearly, debating the Murray for him today was not the most important priority of the day. Secondly, for him to deride and to be derisive of local members wanting to make contributions about their local electorates is offensive; not just to local members, but to constituents and to residents who want issues raised. I would not think the member for Flinders would agree with what you just said, given that she quite effectively uses grievances to raise issues of passion and importance for her electorate.

Seriously, if you were fair dinkum and not about playing games, you would have come to us at midday and you could have had an hour. You do not come to the Premier, as question time is about to begin, and say, 'Hey, I'm going to suspend standing orders, this is what I want to do.' This is a parliament where the government of the day has the majority. We are a fair government when it comes to giving opposition exposure to debates. We have done more for an opposition to give you access to parliament than any other government. I was in opposition for eight years. We

guarantee ten questions a day. When I was in opposition we never got that. We would be lucky to get four or five questions. All I say to the Leader of the Opposition and his three stooges sitting up there in the gallery, who love to laugh and carry on, is get your tactics right, then you might be in a position to show that you have some political smarts.

As for today, we intend to have the debate at 10 past 4, or whenever it is. If the opposition chooses not to turn up, that will show how big a sham it was and how much of a non-priority this issue is for you.

Motion carried.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (15:37): The Murray-Darling Basin is in crisis from its most northern extremities to the Murray Mouth. Only national control and management of the river can save it. There they all go. I challenged the Premier to a debate on this. He has just voted against it. He is running off, so are all the ministers; they are not interested. If they were they would be here right now and we would be working through the issues.

Mr Rann, our Premier, and Mr Rudd have signed a COAG agreement that is a pup, that is fundamentally flawed, and which has literally sold South Australians down the river. One of the chief architects of it is the leader of the National Party. They have sold out to country South Australians on health and they have sold out to country South Australians on water. We all know that over years various governments of all political persuasions have over-allocated water within the system and neglected the environment, each other and the national interests.

A great opportunity was lost with the Howard National Water Initiative to bring all political parties in all states together behind the Murray, but instead, the leader of the National Party and the leader of the Labor Party in this state have signed up to a COAG agreement that sells South Australians down the river. What is wrong with that COAG agreement? In their agreement, the states will no longer be required to refer their powers to the commonwealth and the commonwealth will not acquire them. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority has been weakened as a result of powers being retained by the states through a ministerial council.

The implementation of a national plan to manage the Murray has been deferred until 2011. That is when their solution kicks in, after respective state and federal elections. State water plans remain in place in Victoria's case until 2019 and state water shares will remain in place and can only be changed subject to the unanimous approval of all basin states.

Labor's COAG agreement is not an enforceable contract. It has neither penalties nor remedies against recalcitrant parties. The states, as I have said, have not referred their powers. It is full of nonsense. Just look at clause 2.4.6: there is to be a separate inter-government agreement yet to be agreed upon. Clause 3.2.7: state water shares prevail. Clause 3.2.8 states that state water shares can only be changed by the unanimous decision of a ministerial council. Clause 3.2.10 provides:

The parties agree that South Australia will have access to storage capacity in the Hume and Dartmouth dams for the purpose of private carryover subject to this not affecting upstream states' water availability and storage access.

What a load of nonsense! Adelaidenow subscribers want some questions answered. Rob of Houghton asks:

Why are you dragging out the development of the desal plant described by Treasurer Foley as being off the shelf by building only a pilot scale plant, for instance?

Rob of Millswood asks the question:

What plans does the government have to divert stormwater going into the gulf from Glenelg, West Beach and other stormwater systems into wetlands for reuse?

Craig of Hindmarsh asks:

Why did Victoria get a 10-year moratorium before they have to make any changes to their upstream water use?

Mary Smith of Adelaide asks:

What is the ratio between the current economic growth of SA and sustainable and reliable water supply for future construction and housing developments planned over the next five years?

These questions deserve answers.

I can tell the house that the state Liberals today announced their plan for the River Murray. We want four things: throw out his COAG agreement, rip it up and put it in the bin; start again with a new agreement; constitutional powers must be acquired by the commonwealth so there is one government in charge; and we then need a strong, independent authority to use those powers to make all of the states comply. No state government, Liberal, Labor, National, or whatever, in New South Wales or Victoria will put us ahead of their own states. Then get on with desal, get on with stormwater and get on with wastewater. Only in this way can we get a result. We must start again. When we create that plan, it must be in place by 2009, not 2011. We believe we need to start on the compulsory buyback of licences. We have called for a 6.1 per cent buyback of those allocations, releasing 750 gigalitres. Labor has got it wrong; we have got it right. The need for action is now, and it must come from our Prime Minister, it must come from our state Premier, it must come from the Labor Party—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition, your time has expired.

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson) (15:42): Before I begin my grievance today, I would like to pay tribute to Carmel Moriarty, who has been in this place since 1962, mainly with Hansard. I really take offence at what the opposition leader said, having a go at me for recognising one of the great workers in Parliament House, someone who has been here doing a fantastic job for years. Carmel began here when Thomas Playford was premier, and she then worked through the governments of Frank Walsh, Don Dunstan, Steele Hall, back to Don Dunstan and Des Corcoran, and on to the Tonkin government. Then there was John Bannon, Lynn Arnold, Dean Brown, John Olsen, Rob Kerin and the present Rann government.

I pay tribute to Carmel and thank her very much for all the great work she has done for us here. She has outlasted everyone who was here when she commenced employment at Parliament House, and she has seen a lot of changes and recorded a lot of historic moments. It has been good to see her smiling face so often. She has always been so helpful to us, chasing rushed proofs and things like that. I thank her very much for the great work that she has given everyone who has served in this house over the past 40 years.

Today I want to speak about science. We were talking about the River Murray this afternoon. Part of the answer will be political, and a big part also will be from the science community. Next month we recognise science with National Science Week. It makes me think about the great work being done in South Australia. It largely goes unrecognised, but, hopefully, next month during Science Week we will stop to think about the fantastic achievements that have been made here.

Last week, I visited SARDI and saw the work it is doing. Scientists are growing algae that we can eventually use as biofuels. I think it is fantastic that we can capture carbon that is being emitted from big polluters and whack it into the algae, which promotes its growth, and then convert it into biodiesel down the track. With the price of fuel going the way it is, I think that that really is the future and that we need to support these scientists in every way we possibly can.

At Glynde, the company Green and Gold is doing some great work on the SunCube. It has fantastic technology and is really leading the world, and I first visited it earlier this year. This week, I was talking with some very high-ranking executives from Hitachi in Japan and Emcore, a very important American company based in Albuquerque. They have developed solar cells for not just the terrestrial market but also to send into space, and these cells power satellites that go as far away as Mercury. These companies from the US and Japan are interested in what is happening here in Adelaide because we have some very smart people working on some great scientific solutions for a sustainable environment and, in turn, those benefits will flow on into the Murray.

While I was at SARDI I saw the mulloway, the kingfish and the tuna swimming around in their tanks. Just a couple of days later, I was at Arno Bay looking at the hatchery—and there is another success story in this state. In February this year, for the very first time in history, the company Clean Seas was able to close the breeding cycle, and I sat with the scientists and saw the painstaking work they have done over years and years.

They have lifted tuna by helicopter out of the sea and put them into an indoor pen, where they drop the temperature to what it would be around Tasmania in winter, and slowly, day by day, they gradually increase the temperature to what it would be off Indonesia, where the tuna go to breed. In February this year, for the first time, they had a successful breeding session in those pens in Arno Bay.

You can appreciate what a great moment that would have been for all those scientists and company directors who were involved. The birth of any child is very important but, having spent that many years and invested that much money into closing the breeding cycle, that was a miraculous moment. I pay tribute to all the scientists in South Australia for all the work they are doing because, for a sustainable society, we need them to continue that work.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (15:47): Never in the history of this state would I think that a government has been so gutless and so disgusted with its own performance that it would run away from a debate. After the Premier of this state told the people of South Australia on the pages of the morning newspaper, *The Advertiser*, that he would debate with the leader and the opposition—

Mr Pengilly: Shonk.

Mr WILLIAMS: Yes, he is a shonk—his efforts on behalf of the state in regard to the River Murray, he refused to have a worthwhile debate in this house. He runs away from it. I can well understand why the Premier would run away from it, and I will illustrate what this Premier has done on behalf of this state.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BIGNELL: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for MacKillop is saying that the Premier has run away from the opportunity to debate: he has not at all.

Mr WILLIAMS: No—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for MacKillop! Take your seat.

Mr BIGNELL: The debate has been agreed to. The debate will go ahead. The member for MacKillop knows that what he is saying is a lie.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has some point of order. The member for MacKillop was disorderly in mentioning whether persons were in the chamber or not in the chamber. The other comments are on the record.

Mr WILLIAMS: I understand that the member for Mawson has just said that I am a liar. I ask him to withdraw and apologise unreservedly. I also ask, according to standing orders, that the clerks reset the clock, because I believe that his point of order was frivolous.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The chair has control of the clock, not the clerks. There is no point of order. I did not hear the member for Mawson's comments in the way that the member for MacKillop has suggested and—

Mr WILLIAMS: Madam Deputy Speaker, if I may have your indulgence for a moment. My understanding is that the normal procedure is that, if the chair did not hear what was said, they invite the member, if the member did say what it was alleged they said, to withdraw and apologise unreservedly, because I can assure you that every member on this side did hear the member for Mawson and his unparliamentary performance.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member's point was not in order. The member for MacKillop may resume his comments.

Mr WILLIAMS: Madam Deputy Speaker, are you saying that your ruling is that you did not hear the member for Mawson call me a liar and, therefore, you are not going to give him the opportunity to withdraw and apologise? Is that your ruling?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for MacKillop will take his seat. There is no debate with the chair's ruling, and your interpretation of my comments was not correct. I did not say that I had not heard the member for Mawson use the word 'liar'. I said that that was not, indeed, what I had heard. Your point of order was that the member for Mawson had called you a liar. I did not hear the member for Mawson use that term. I distinctly heard the member for Mawson use another phrase. You may resume your comments.

Mr WILLIAMS: Madam Deputy Speaker, can you please explain to me what your ruling is?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sit down.

Mr WILLIAMS: Because I am of a mind to move to disagree with it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The words I heard the member for Mawson use were that the member for MacKillop had told a lie. The member for MacKillop raised the point of order that he had been called a liar. The two points are different, and my ruling was based on the difference between those two points. If the member for MacKillop wishes to crave the indulgence of the withdrawal of that comment he may, but it is not disorderly. Calling someone a liar is disorderly. He did not. What I heard the member for Mawson say was that—

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The leader will keep silent. The time for the member's grievance has now expired. I will invite the member to speak for two minutes on his grievance.

Mr WILLIAMS: Madam Deputy Speaker, you are suggesting that you heard the member for Mawson say that what I said was a lie. I am alleging that I heard the member for Mawson say that I was a liar. He at least intimated that I was a liar or that what I said was a lie, and I call on you to invite the member—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: —to withdraw—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: —and I seek that you make a ruling on that. I want you to make a ruling, which will then give me the opportunity to accept your ruling or to disagree with it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for MacKillop, I have explained my ruling on more than one occasion. I heard the member for Mawson quite clearly say that the member for MacKillop had told a lie.

Mr WILLIAMS: And you are saying that that is not unparliamentary?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am. If you would like, I will consult—

Mr WILLIAMS: Madam Deputy Speaker—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for MacKillop will resume his seat while the chair is speaking. I am offering to consult with the Clerk. However, my advice so far is that my ruling has been in keeping with the traditions of the parliament. I have consulted with the Clerk, and he has indicated that it is appropriate for me to invite the member for Mawson to withdraw, but that is as far as it goes. Member for Mawson, would you like to withdraw?

Mr BIGNELL: Madam Deputy Speaker, I think, with the perilous state of the Murray and the way this state government and the federal government are getting on with the job of fixing the Murray, for someone from the opposition to ask me to withdraw and argue for five minutes over whether I called him a 'liar' or whether I told a lie—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members on my left have had—

Mr BIGNELL: —or whether I said that he had come in here and told a lie—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Mawson, do not the repeat the issue. I simply ask you whether you are prepared to withdraw whatever comments caused offence to the member for MacKillop.

Mr BIGNELL: No; if it is not unparliamentary, I will not withdraw. He came into this place and said that the Premier was—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: You sit down. You have set the precedent.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: Mark my words, this word will appear again and again.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for MacKillop, take your seat. The Speaker will resume control of the chair.

The SPEAKER: I think the best thing is simply for the member for Mawson to withdraw his remark, and I direct him to do so.

Mr BIGNELL: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, and that ends the matter. Member for MacKillop, we will resume the clock at three minutes.

Mr WILLIAMS: Mr Speaker, may I crave your indulgence? I had began my comments. I had definitely spoken for less than a minute. The clock was still on four. I would contend, with what I have had to put up with, that the clock should start from five and I should start my comments from the beginning, and I would crave your indulgence.

The SPEAKER: I was not here at the time. My advice is that it was about three minutes. I am not going to stay here arguing over one bloody minute. If four minutes makes the member for MacKillop happy and allows us to progress things, I am happy to give him four minutes.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am not too sure that I am happy with four. The reality is that today we have seen a gutless government which will not stand up for its own record. Month after month for over 12 months, we have heard the Premier of this state say that he wants an independent authority. He has been telling everyone that he has an independent authority, but I refer members to the intergovernmental agreement that he signed on behalf of the people of South Australia.

I direct members to page 41, appendix A, which talks about the amendments that will have to be made to the Water Act; that is, the commonwealth act that was already passed by the federal government. They have to make amending provisions relating to the development of the basin plan to provide for a review by basin state ministers. The independent authority will have to change the commonwealth act, which has already been passed, to allow for a review by basin state ministers. We are going backwards.

I can understand why the Premier does not want to debate this. His record is paper thin: it is a tissue. I refrain from using the language that the member for Mawson used, but his language does remind me of some people in this place. The Premier is very flexible with the truth. When he was questioned about Menindee Lakes, he said, 'No, that water is for critical human needs for South Australia's future needs.' Wrong. Read the intergovernmental agreement. When you get to the section on critical human needs, it does not provide for critical human needs water for South Australia or anyone else: it does provide for what is known in today's parlance as dilution flows.

There is no change. That is what we already get. The worst thing about this agreement is that South Australia is the laughing stock of Australia. Why is that so? It is because this government has done nothing to help itself.

My father taught me when I was a small boy that God helps those who look after themselves. This state has done nothing. The minister keeps claiming that we recycle 20 per cent of our wastewater. We do that, but not one extra drop has been recycled since this government came to power. I am sure, when Morris lemma read that we recycle all this water and we are so good, that he said to some of his bureaucrats, 'Find out more detail about this. South Australia is performing well.'

When they were nutting out this intergovernmental agreement, Morris lemma would have said to Mike Rann, 'Thank God the Liberals are not still in power because I would have had some sympathy for South Australia. It would have had a desal plant and it would be recycling a lot more water and it would have done something about stormwater capture and its clean up and storage. The government would have done something to look after the people. But you, Mike Rann, and your government have done nothing for seven years yet you come over here craving our sympathy.'

That is the problem. We talk about the Victorians and the food bowl project. Well, the intergovernmental agreement is the pièce de résistance. When I keep asking the Premier about page 23 of the intergovernment agreement, he says that due diligence will be done. Clause 14.12.5 states:

Should due diligence of priority projects conclude that the priority project is not economically, environmentally, financially, socially or technically viable or feasible, the parties agree to enter into discussions about possible reconfiguration.

Time expired.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I have a point of order, sir, in relation to standing order 23 and the powers of the deputy. I draw your attention to the ruling made by the deputy in your absence, prior to your return to the chair. If my understanding is correct, the deputy ruled that the use of the term 'liar' in regard to the member for MacKillop was in order.

The matter was not resolved by her before you returned to the chair but, in relation to standing order 23, which confers considerable power on the deputy, I ask you to consider the *Hansard* and look at the deputy's ruling in order to advise the house whether she has erred. I am concerned that a precedent may have been set, and I think it needs clarification if we are to trust the judgments of the deputy.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not appreciate what the Leader of the Opposition seems to be trying to do in trying to establish some conflict between us when in fact none exists. The member for MacKillop asked the member for Mawson to withdraw his remark—which the member for Mawson has done. That is the end of the matter as far as the chair is concerned.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: In relation to the same standing order, it is important for all members of the house to have confidence in the powers conferred upon the deputy under standing order 29.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is no point of order. If any member disagrees with a ruling made by either me or the Deputy Speaker, then there is an appropriate way of dealing with it. That is by motion of censure or no confidence in either of us. If those are the points that the Leader of the Opposition wishes to make, there is an appropriate way in which to do it, but raising points of order with me is not an appropriate way. I have dealt with the matter and it is closed.

COOPER, MS N.

Ms BREUER (Giles) (16:04): I am not sure what is happening here this afternoon. It is quite amazing—it must be a full moon. I have matters of great importance to me and my electorate I want to talk about today. I am somewhat upset that I have had to wait so long to get the opportunity to do so.

First, I pay tribute to one of Whyalla's citizens who passed away last week. Nancy Cooper lived in our city for around 30 years. I had known her since she first arrived in Whyalla. She worked extremely hard in our community. She was a social worker when she first came to Whyalla, then she became a lecturer at the University of South Australia where she trained and taught many social workers who are now working in many parts of the state, particularly country South Australia. She was a shining example.

I really liked Nancy. She never ever sought recognition for anything she did. She was a quiet worker who did not appreciate how valuable she was to our community. I pay tribute to her for her work with women in the community, as a result of her work at the women's shelter and other associated women's organisations, and her work with refugees at Baxter and Woomera. Her efforts were unsurpassed. She looked after and visited those people regularly, took things to them and worked with them in relation to their problems. She was a mentor and advocate. She did an incredible amount of work for the people at Baxter Detention Centre. I say farewell to Nancy, but to her family I pass on my sincerest sympathy. I want them to know how much the community of Whyalla appreciated her work over the years.

I also want to comment today about the proposed Point Lowly jetty, which is a huge issue for people in my community. Today when I asked the Minister for Tourism a question, I was interested to hear her mention the cuttlefish that aggregates at Point Lowly. They have become a unique worldwide tourism attraction. Film crews from all over the world visit the area. I was pleased to hear that the Minister for Tourism said it was the most exciting place she has ever visited in South Australia when she went there to dive and watch the cuttlefish.

My community and I are concerned about the proposal to build a jetty over the cuttlefish aggregation. As a community we believe other places are more appropriate for this facility. We do not want to hold back the mining industry. We believe it is important and we want to be part of it, but we do not particularly want that area to be decimated. We are at looking at shipping out copper, sulphur, iron ore and, potentially, uranium, and it seems to me to be totally inappropriate to be

looking at working in an area such as the cuttlefish area and, certainly, my community and I will be following it up with the state government.

The other issue I want to discuss today is country health. I have been to a couple of country health meetings in my electorate, and I have also been following very closely on the radio the debate that is going on in the community. I am amazed at the amount of misinformation that is being peddled by people, as well as the falsehoods being put out by people in various communities in South Australia. I am very concerned about the level of concern people have about this issue, when it is totally unnecessary.

Last week, I had a phone call from a very concerned old lady from Cowell. For many, many years she has worked for the hospital auxiliary raising money, and she and the other women in the hospital auxiliary have decided that they will not raise any more money because they believe they would have to give the money to the Whyalla Hospital. What absolute nonsense! There is no proposal to take money raised in that way and give it to the Whyalla Hospital and there is no proposal to close any hospital.

People should sit back and look at the reality of the situation, such as where we are going to get the staff in the future to run the same sort of system we are running now. We know the system is not working terribly well any more, and that improvements have to be made to it. If people sat back, looked at the Country Health Care Plan and listened to what the professionals and the minister are saying, we might get rid of the perception that is causing upset and grief to country people, and we would have a much better system. I think people opposite should be ashamed of themselves for the carry-on that has been occurring. I fully support the health plan, and I think it will work extremely well.

Time expired.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:10): I rise today to talk about the terrible situation in the Lower Murray and the Lower Lakes. We have a government that has been prepared to let people hang out to dry for 20 months, since the announcement of the proposed weir in November 2006. Recently, the federal government has come partially to the rescue of the state Labor government by putting up some money to assist in paying for some pipelines. The problem we already have is that the dairy industry at Narrung has gone. The government has been quite happy to write off that industry, quite happy to forgo the income, and quite happy to forgo that area as a dairy region.

Until the federal government said that, yes, it would pipe water to Langhorne Creek and Currency Creek, the government had also let go the Langhorne Creek region. Those proposals have been met with cautious optimism. The problem is that, because this state government has not done anything to provide the infrastructure and has done absolutely nothing to get one extra drop of water from across the border, Langhorne Creek will miss a vintage this summer.

Only because of the diligence of private people who realised they needed water and went ahead on their own and without government assistance, as I speak a 15 inch (or 375 millimetre) pipe is going in from Wellington to Langhorne Creek, and I salute those visionary performers from the wine industry. They will give some access to other people, but the pipeline will pump only about 4½ gegalitres of water. I guess this will be the only private line that goes in, with other proposals in the future. However, the problem is that we do not know whether these pipelines will materialise. The question is: if the private sector can do it, why can't the government do it?

Recently, I made a trip up along the River Murray and up to the Darling. We keep hearing excuses about why we cannot take water out of Lake Victoria, not that far north of Renmark. That lake has 300 gegalitres. That water could be taken out and substituted by water from Menindee Lakes. There is about 530 gegalitres in Menindee Lakes, and surely some of that could be accessed to back up what is taken out of Lake Victoria. But, no, we keep being told that there are constitutional problems and that we have to wait until they get to 640 gegalitres capacity before we can use that water. Well, the way they are using the lakes at the moment, that is never going to happen because the two lakes that are operating have a maximum surcharge capacity of 615 gegalitres.

I travelled further up the river system to Bourke and to Toorale Station, where they basically capture water from the Warrego. Once Toorale Station harvests all the water it wants from the Warrego River, it goes through an 18 inch pipe under a culvert, and that is the end of the Warrego. How bad is that? We then headed up further to St George, where there is at least

1,500 gigalitres of private storage between northern New South Wales and southern Queensland that could be compulsorily acquired and properly compensated for. Some of these irrigation properties are on the market as we speak. Toorale Station (91,000 hectares) could be bought out of the system, and it could provide water not just for South Australia but it could be managed to back up water taken out of the Menindee Lakes system and also for Lake Victoria.

The problem is that this government has trivialised the whole debate about water. It was mentioned to me only the other day that a remark was overhead at an interstate football match. The Victorian Premier allegedly made the comment that, if Mike Rann's team won, he would let South Australia have some more water. That is the whole attitude of these Labor premiers and the Labor Prime Minister. When they come down to visit the Lower Lakes it is under a shroud of secrecy so that they do not have to meet the people. However, we find out when they are coming, and we alert the people.

I also want to quote from a couple of people who have written to the Adelaidenow website and the questions they have asked. Leslie of Marion writes:

Why are we not being smarter with the water that goes down the Sturt Creek and the Torrens? This water could have been recycled for watering parklands or even market gardens or for domestic use.

Arnis Luks of Adelaide writes:

Is it possible for Lake Argyle overflow to be pumped to the head of the Darling to flush the entire MDBasin using Coal Seam Methane as the energy source for the pumps?

Jase of Adelaide also wrote in. These people at least have some imagination, which is something the government does not have.

Time expired.

ELIZABETH VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Little Para) (16:15): Last week the Select Committee on the Selection Process for the Principal at the Elizabeth Vale Primary School published its completed report, and I understand that report has now been tabled in another place. As the local member for the area in which Elizabeth Vale Primary School is situated, I want to make a brief response to the committee's report. The committee investigated six terms of reference. The motion to appoint a select committee into this matter was moved in the other place by the Hon. Nick Xenophon and supported by the majority of that house. It was interesting to note that the first five terms of reference all focused on the selection process for the principal of the school and the conduct of various officers and people involved in that.

The fifth term of reference related to establishing appropriate selection guidelines and processes for future appointments. I note that the select committee found no wrongdoing, no cause for concern, with any of those points. It made a few suggestions with respect to the fifth term of reference in terms of providing an honest appraisal of performances prior to selection processes, but, essentially, those first five terms of reference passed through the processes of the select committee without any problem at all, and this is not a surprise. In fact, it reflects the way in which those terms of reference were drawn up by the Hon. Nick Xenophon—someone who jumped on an issue raised on talk-back radio without really much knowledge of that school. However, I would like to draw to the attention of members Term of Reference (f), which is 'any other relevant matter'. This is the work of the committee that has been the most important, and I think this is the nub of the issue. In part, the committee's report states:

The committee considers that the Department for Education and Children's Services should have been aware of the alleged shortcomings of the school, its governance and its principal much earlier.

Earlier, the committee said that there were a number of compelling reasons why the previous principal had not been reappointed. I absolutely agree with those comments made by the select committee. I think that what happened at Elizabeth Vale Primary School over recent years was a significant detriment to its students and its community, and it did show glaring problems in terms of supervision and line management responsibility of the principal by officers of the department, and that is what the select committee has found.

The principal of a school is absolutely critical and pivotal to the success of a school and to positive outcomes for students. In this particular case, the issues that occurred at that school should have been picked up earlier, should have been dealt with and should have been corrected. I would like to say that I am very pleased with what is happening now at the school. I want to pay a

tribute to Ms Kathy Cotter who was placed in a very difficult position as acting principal in 2006. She is a very experienced principal. I knew her well in another school in the Elizabeth area where she did an outstanding job. She did an outstanding job in a very difficult situation.

The new principal, Grant Small, has been at the school since 2006, and the school has made tremendous improvements in a range of areas: many more students coming to the school; a new-arrivals program has been started; a robust curriculum; student behaviour management under control; and the school is going forward. It is a pity that the media picked up on the select committee's comments about the past and made it sound as if it was still happening. It is not. Elizabeth Vale Primary School has turned around. It is moving forward, and the minister, the government and I will be standing side by side with that community and that school to see that these improvements continue.

Time expired.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (16:20): I move:

That this house strongly supports the new national approach for the management of the Murray-Darling Basin, including the establishment of an independent authority to develop a basin-wide plan to deal with over-allocation of water and to get more water back into the river for a healthier river system.

Mr FEDERICK: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

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

That the time for the debate be 30 minutes with two speeches in support and two speeches in opposition.

Motion carried.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I do not intend to speak for long. The Minister for Water Security will be the lead speaker on this, or the main contributor. First, I say that we understand that the questions that have been read into *Hansard* today are questions that have been provided to the opposition from *The Advertiser*. We will take all of those questions on board and we will respond directly to *The Advertiser*, as that is where the questions have come from, and we will undertake to do that as soon as we are able to.

I think I put the position very clearly before that this was a political stunt, but more substantively I say that this highlights the Leader of the Opposition's approach to policy; that is, that he will say one thing one day and another thing another day. From memory (and I stand to be corrected), in April last year, he called on state Labor governments to sign the Howard deal. If we recall, the Howard deal, from my memory, did not have an independent body.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Williams: You're watering it down.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You're embarrassing yourself, because the Howard plan did not have an independent authority.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: You asked me to sign it without that.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The Premier—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: That was not the original position of the prime minister, was it? Am I wrong?

The Hon. M.D. Rann: I changed Howard's view.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Exactly. The first Howard announcement did not have an independent authority because the Premier made that the issue; that he would not sign unless he got an independent authority.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Now he's changing his position. Now you're changing your position. The original Howard position was not to have an independent document. That was the whole debate, you Wally. You are a goose, you are a foolish goose.

Mr Williams: At least I have read the documentation.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: So, are you suggesting that the first Howard proposal had an independent authority?

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! This is not a healthy way for the debate to proceed.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Well, sir—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Speaker is on his feet. This is not a healthy way for the debate to proceed. The member for MacKillop and the Leader of the Opposition will both have an opportunity to participate in the debate, to make criticisms of anything that they disagree with that the Deputy Premier has said. That is the time to do it, in the course of their speech, not now. The Deputy Premier.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will let the Minister for Water Security elaborate, but I am more than relaxed and confident from my memory. I stand to be corrected, but my recollection quite clearly was that the then prime minister, John Howard, did not in his first proposal to the states include—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: That is what I just said. I said that from the beginning, that his first proposal—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You tell so many lies it's not funny.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Mr Speaker, this is ridiculous.

The SPEAKER: It's all right—

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

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier must withdraw. He has withdrawn. The Deputy Premier.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: But it's true.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Mr Speaker—

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No, about the Howard Government.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: No, Mr Speaker, he has just defied your ruling. He said, 'I apologise, but it's true.' Now, come on.

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier—

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: There he goes again, Mr Speaker. Look, he is just making a mockery of your ruling, sir. He just repeated it.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will take his seat. The Deputy Premier has withdrawn the remark, and I am satisfied with that. That is all I can make him do. The Deputy Premier.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I apologise and withdraw if I overused the word 'lie' when it relates to you. The fact of the matter is that the Howard proposal had no independent authority at all. The Premier fought for it. The Leader of the Opposition said, 'Sign it.' Now he is having a go at us for signing something that he told us a year ago that we should sign. It really simply matters what day it is and what is the best position that he can take at any given point in time.

The Leader of the Opposition has no policy substance, quite frankly because I do not think that he understands most of the policy that he has to deal with as Leader of the Opposition. His positions are so obscure and so all over the shop that he clearly has a limited capacity to understand policy depth. How this man could ever aspire to be the alternate premier is beyond me. But anyway—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Give me a break; the way you guys go on about me?

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Mr Bean over there.

Mr Pengilly: That's all right, you can call me what you want. It is nothing personal. Don't worry about it, get back to the issue, talk about what the major issue is. No water in South Australia; that's the issue.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Mr Speaker—

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Yes, it's just extraordinary. That is true. The great tragedy in this is that we are going through the most significant drought that this state and this nation has ever seen. It has put enormous stress and pressure on it and we are acting in good faith to the best of our ability. But as I said from the outset, if the leader were serious about a debate today, he would not have simply read in questions from *The Advertiser*. He would have put some substance into it and he would have done it at 2 o'clock. This is a sham debate, but if he wants it, he has got it.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (16:28): I will try to stay to the substance of the argument during my 10-minute contribution and ignore the insults from—oh, he's gone—the Treasurer. A man who dropped out of school in year 9—

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: I rise on a point of order. The leader's comments relating to the Treasurer's position were out of order.

The SPEAKER: Yes, it is a discourtesy to refer a member's absence from the chamber. It is not strictly disorderly, but it is a discourtesy. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The opposition will be opposing this motion because it is fundamentally flawed. The COAG agreement is a nonsense—a plain and patent nonsense. The opposition understands that the Murray-Darling Basin is in crisis from its most northern extremities to the Murray Mouth and that only national control and management of the river can save it. A rescue will require strong leadership from Prime Minister Rudd and both federal and state Labor governments. The vested interest of the states must be overruled. The states must relinquish and refer their constitutional powers in respect of the river to the commonwealth, or the commonwealth must acquire them by whatever means available. Prime minister Hawke did this with the Franklin River in Tasmania. Why can't Prime Minister Rudd?

The states will squabble over the river irrespective of which political party governs in respective states. Hello, breaking news! I am here to tell you that, even if we get a Liberal

government in New South Wales, or a National Party government in Victoria, they will stick up for New South Wales and Victorian irrigators and food producers ahead of South Australians. They will bat for their own people. This is a constitutional crisis.

Successive state governments have ruined the river and they will continue to do so. That is why a national approach, comprised of the referral of powers or their acquisition, the establishment of a strong independent authority to take control of the river, and a national plan, are vital. Our national government must provide for critical human needs, the river environment and the sustainability of the system, and the needs of irrigators and river uses. The house will not need reminding that 93 per cent of the river's water is used upstream of the South Australian border. We can only lose from the status quo. There must be change.

The Treasurer's pathetic contribution a moment ago, which had no substance and nothing but personal vitriol and abuse, accusing people of being liars, and personal invective—the pattern of this government—did not address the substance of the issue and failed to grasp that the national water initiative put forward by prime minister Howard did provide for a strong independent authority; in fact, there was considerable debate about it. The minute he was sprung in his own ignorance of the issues, he went back to words such as, 'Oh, well, the Prime Minister's first utterances of the matter didn't have a strong, independent authority.' He got caught out again. He has not done his homework, and, frankly, where was the Premier? I challenged the Premier to a debate on Adelaidenow. He refused, and he has run away from this debate, having made his party agree to it. That is how keen he is on the River Murray.

The states will fight over the rain when it comes. It will be held in storages such as Menindee, Lake Victoria and the Hume weir, and it will not be released to South Australians. The government's defence of, 'Well, we can't make it rain' will be exposed when it does rain, because this problem will not go away. There are diversions all the way up the river, as we heard a moment ago from the member for Hammond. This is a crisis of the federation. Labor's corporate federalism will not solve it. A new set of governance arrangements and a new plan are needed. Once set, there can be no going back.

In January 2007, the Howard Liberal government announced a national plan for water security to save the Murray-Darling. In March 2008, the Water Act 2007 was enacted. The act provided for the referral of state powers to the commonwealth and the establishment of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, the very thing that the Treasurer a moment ago did not even realise was in the Howard plan. On the condition that the states—

The Hon. K.A. Maywald interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: The Minister for Water Security will get her go in a minute. She came in here a few days ago and tabled 2,300 signatures complaining about her own health plan—that is how good she is. On the condition that the states gave up their powers, Howard said the commonwealth would act decisively. The Howard plan provided \$10 billion. And, do you know what he did? The brilliance of that plan was this: he not only got every opposition and every Labor government around the country to agree, except Victoria. He harnessed the nation behind that plan but for Victoria. That was quite an achievement. Although an agreement was never signed by state premiers, except for Victoria they all agreed to sign up, even our Premier. The Liberal opposition criticised Premier Rann at the time for not doing enough to ensure that the Victorian Premier signed. Had he done so, there would now be rescue plans for the Murray in place and under way. There would now be a strong authority.

What is wrong with the MOU and the current COAG agreement signed by this government, for which this motion seeks our support? COAG meetings were held on 20 December 2007, 13 April 2007, 26 March 2008 and 3 July 2008. Water was put on the agenda only on the eve of the March 2008 meeting after intense public pressure and pressure from this side of the house—the state Liberals. In March 2008, COAG signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the Murray-Darling, which made significant changes to the Howard plan. In July 2008, the MOU became this COAG intergovernmental agreement. Labor's July COAG agreement weakens the Howard government proposal in several significant ways. Let me run through them. The states will no longer be required to refer their powers to the commonwealth. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority has been weakened as a result of the powers retained by the states through a ministerial council. This is the ignorance demonstrated by the Treasurer. He does not even realise that the Water Act passed by the previous Howard government established the very authority he said did not even exist. He has not even read up on the matter. He does not understand—

The Hon. K.A. Maywald interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: It did; it's a fact. The implementation of a national plan to manage the Murray was deferred in this COAG agreement until 2011, after respective state and federal elections. State water plans remain in place, in Victoria's case until 2019. COAG's agreement is not enforceable. There are stacks of problems with it, and I mentioned some of them earlier during grieves. Four things must be done. I can tell the house today that the state Liberals have posted their plan for the Murray-Darling Basin today, and I recommend that members opposite read it.

We need to tear up this agreement and start again. We need to ensure that the constitutional powers needed to take control are referred to the commonwealth. We need an independent authority then to use those powers to govern in the best interests of all; if states need to be overruled—whether they be Labor or Liberal governments, it does not matter—so be it. The state government needs to get on with stormwater, wastewater and desalination. I can tell you that no Victorian, Queensland or New South Wales politician of any political party will put us ahead of their own constituents. It must be done, and it needs to be done.

Earlier I read into *Hansard* questions from *The Advertiser's* Adelaidenow readers, such as that from Marilyn Williams of South Australia who asked when work will begin on the second ferry at Mannum. My colleagues have done the same. The fact is that these questions deserve answers.

The Murray is in crisis. This COAG agreement, however the Labor Party attempts to dress it up, is a status quo agreement. It is an agreement to disagree. It is an agreement for every state to do its own thing. It takes away the strong constitutional powers that will be needed to solve this crisis, and it leaves us, at the end of the river, with nowhere to go.

I urge this government: go back to the drawing board and start again—and this time get it right. You will be damned if you do not, because Riverland food producers (and they are the Minister for Water Security's constituents) deserve better.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (16:39): I make quite clear that I am absolutely appalled by the closing statement made by the Leader of the Opposition in that he is now asking us to scrap the progress that has been made on the national plan in favour of another 100 years of negotiations. This has been debated for 100 years: it was the main issue of debate at Federation.

We have made substantial progress in getting a national approach to the management of the River Murray and the Murray-Darling Basin, but all the opposition wants to do is scrap it and go back to the drawing board. How much longer do you think the River Murray has? It does not have the time to put aside the progress we have made, wait, go back and renegotiate for another 100 years.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: We simply do not have that time, and it is a nonsensical position for the opposition to take. The COAG agreement that was signed on 3 July was an historic agreement in that it actually brought together for the first time a truly national approach to the management of the Murray-Darling Basin system. It establishes for the first time an independent authority to manage the basin and a basin-wide plan that will set new caps on surface water and groundwater.

This plan will be developed by an independent authority with one minister responsible for the implementation of that plan—that is, the federal minister. I will compare that with what the Howard government proposed in January 2007. First, I need to say that I commend Malcolm Turnbull for the work he undertook to convince Howard that we needed to move on this issue. We needed leadership at the national level to deal with the Murray-Darling Basin issues; before that, we had no leadership federally in relation to this matter. The states' squabbling has resulted in the situation we face right now.

Malcolm Turnbull was the start of the process. Penny Wong is the conclusion to the process. We now have a truly national approach. I will correct what the leader said in regard to the Howard/Turnbull proposition. The National Plan for Water Security of 25 January 2007 states:

We propose to reconstitute the Murray-Darling Basin Commission as a Commonwealth Government agency, reporting to a single minister.

That was the new governance that was being proposed. We refused, quite rightly, to sign up to that. We hung out and said, 'We will not sign up to this unless there is an independent authority.' We made quite clear that we would not stand by and allow this issue to go from one set of politicians, with communities with a vested interest, to another bunch of politicians, with communities with a vested interest. We demanded an independent authority to manage the Murray-Darling Basin.

Our Premier went to Queensland and got its support. He went to New South Wales and got its support. He then went to Turnbull and got him to support it as well. Brumby supported an independent authority. Victoria has supported an independent authority. That was driven by this state. This state has achieved that, and it is absolutely substantial.

I can assure you that, when we were being called to sign up, and we were holding back, there was no agreement on the independent authority. I can assure you that, when those opposite were making their statements that we should just sign away South Australia to the whim of politicians at the federal level (which, I might add, has more politicians from Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria than from South Australia), you were sorely mistaken. We could not sell out South Australia, and we did not sell out South Australia.

What we have achieved is substantial reform. The alternative was to do nothing. The COAG agreement we have achieved provides for that independent authority to be established. I announce today that the acting chair and CEO of that authority until new legislation is introduced is Mr Robert Freeman. He is currently the Chief Executive of the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation. Originally, he comes from Queensland, and he has a great depth of knowledge of the Murray-Darling Basin and, in particular, of the issues facing South Australia. This is an exceptional and excellent appointment.

I can also say that, had we a coalition government in place now, we would not have a South Australian minister for water. I can assure you of that, and I can also assure you that we would still be fighting the interests of Victoria and New South Wales in this regard. We now have a South Australian federal minister. We have driven home a negotiated position that gives us an independent authority and a new way forward in relation to the national management of the Murray-Darling Basin that we would never have had under the previous government.

The previous government negotiated. It negotiated with Victoria on a bilateral basis, and I will tell members what it agreed to during that process. It agreed to allow the Victorian plans to continue through to 2019. Malcolm Turnbull ticked off on that. He said to Victoria, 'Yes, we will agree to that. Your statewide shares can stay in place.' But guess what? Statewide shares do not mean volume of water; they mean share of available water. So, when the new plan comes into place and it is determined how much is sustainable to take out of the river, each state will have a share of that sustainable yield according to the existing sharing arrangements. It is not the same amount of water: it is a share of the available resource. It also includes for the first time groundwater.

The intergovernmental agreement also provides for the very first time critical human needs to be set aside as a priority. Critical human needs will be included in the basin-wide plan as a priority for supply. South Australia also achieved access to the storages of Hume and Dartmouth not only for critical human needs but also for private diversion carryover. That is a substantial step forward. Yes, there is a provision in there that says if the dams start to spill then the first water that would be spilling would be South Australia's. I can assure members that I would love to be in that position. Give me a spill any day. If it is spilling we do not have a problem here in South Australia.

We also have the opportunity to re-regulate that water into Lake Victoria where we can and also into the Mount Lofty Ranges. That is why it is crucial that, as part of our securing Adelaide's water supply for the future, we will be expanding the capacity in the Adelaide Hills, so we can have more flexibility in the management of our water.

I can assure members that this is what this government is about. It is about action now for the future. That is exactly what we are doing. We are not playing the blame game. We are not sitting here as a government and saying, 'Let's go back 20 years and try and say that they did it wrong.' We are looking at what is happening now and what we can do now and for the future. We have a four-way strategy for water security that includes desalination: a \$1.1 billion desalination plant, interconnecting the pipelines between the north and the south of the system.

We are investing in stormwater reuse. We are investing in effluent treatment and reuse. We are leading the nation in these areas. We have established the stormwater authority, which will

bring in local government, which has the responsibility for stormwater management, to work in partnership with the state government to ensure that we can fast-track and utilise stormwater where it is practically possible. We are working cooperatively in partnership with the federal government, the state government, local government and our communities to achieve that. That is what this state needs in this crisis.

We are in the most severe drought this nation has ever seen in recorded history. It deserves a bipartisan approach and that the opposition get together and work for our communities instead of against our communities. I believe it is an absolute disgrace that this parliament is used for crass political point scoring rather than undertaking the necessary work to ensure that we have an appropriate approach and a national approach.

Mr PEDERICK: Sir, I rise on a point of order. I note the time, and I believe our member has the five minutes that are left.

The SPEAKER: It is about 4½ minutes, I am told. But the minister should wind up.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: In conclusion, I would like to say that it is an absolute disgrace that this opposition would now be calling for the scrapping of the progress that has been made for a national approach to the River Murray. It is an absolute disgrace that they would send us back to 100 years of negotiations. The river does not have that time, they do not have that time and it is an absolute disgrace that they would even think that that is something this community deserves.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (16:48): I learnt from the Treasurer today what the problem is. The Treasurer said: 'This government is acting in good faith to the best of our abilities.' Hear, hear—and therein lies the problem: 'the best of our abilities'. In answer to what we have just heard from the minister, when she tried to suggest that we are going forward, if one reads the document that our Premier signed off on a couple of weeks ago, one will see that at page 41, appendix A it talks about the changes that will need to be made to the federal legislation. This legislation, the Water Act (and I invite all the backbenchers in the government to read this), which was passed by the Howard government, which is current law—

The Hon. K.A. Maywald interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: You had your chance. Point D, which occurs for the first time on page 41, states: 'There will be amending provisions relating to the development of the basin plan to provide for review by basin state ministers.' I might be a bit thick, but that says to me that we have got the politicians with their dirty, stinking fingers in it again, and we all know that South Australia will be the loser. So, when the minister said that we are going forward, actually, we are going backward.

Unfortunately, we have missed the one opportunity that we have had in over 100 years, when we have had the coming together of a number of factors. We have had a very severe drought; everyone understands that. We have the political will to do something positive about it, and we have \$10 billion plus of federal funding, and yet our Premier and our water minister failed to take advantage of those three factors and obtain an agreement that would benefit South Australia. That is the problem we have, because they worked to the best of their ability and unfortunately, to be quite honest, their abilities are just not good enough.

I mentioned to the house a few minutes ago the sorts of things that have happened. They rolled over to John Brumby, and we see a new clause in the new agreement to say, 'Whoops, if the due diligence finds us out'—when Mike Young says that the Victorians are going to take 200 gegalitres of water out and put only 100 back, when we are found out by the due diligence, there is a new clause that says: 'What do we do? Oh, we go back and renegotiate.'

I will bet London to a brick that the Victorians will get their billion dollars and less water will flow down the river as a consequence. And the minister knows that, because she has been on radio expressing concern. She knows that what Mike Young has been saying about the Victorian plans is right. However, she is quite happy to stand up and suggest that we are playing politics. Minister, you have got this very wrong.

Can I give the minister some groundbreaking news—because I have heard her many times say, 'We can't make it rain.' Groundbreaking news, minister: in Queensland it rained once, twice, thrice. There were floodwaters in Queensland. How much of it came down the Darling? Not a drop. We are sitting down here waiting for a trigger to be achieved for 640 gegalitres in the Menindee Lakes. Do members know what? The Menindee Lakes, the two lakes that are being operated, will not even hold 640 gegalitres at surcharge. That is a fact. None of that water will ever come to South

Australia. This is why we believe we need strong federal intervention to get the states together, to bang their heads together and to take over the management.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The house divided on the motion:

AYES (21)

Atkinson, M.J.	Bedford, F.E.	Bignell, L.W.
Breuer, L.R.	Caica, P.	Foley, K.O. (teller)
Fox, C.C.	Geraghty, R.K.	Key, S.W.
Lomax-Smith, J.D.	Maywald, K.A.	McEwen, R.J.
O'Brien, M.F.	Piccolo, T.	Rankine, J.M.
Rann, M.D.	Simmons, L.A.	Stevens, L.
Thompson, M.G.	White, P.L.	Wright, M.J.

NOES (9)

Goldsworthy, M.R.	Griffiths, S.P.	Gunn, G.M.
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.	Pederick, A.S.	Penfold, E.M.
Pengilly, M.	Redmond, I.M.	Williams, M.R. (teller)

PAIRS (12)

Weatherill, J.W.	Kerin, R.G.
Conlon, P.F.	Evans, I.F.
Hill, J.D.	Pisoni, D.G.
Kenyon, T.R.	Venning, I.H.
Rau, J.R.	McFetridge, D.
Ciccarello, V.	Chapman, V.A.

Majority of 12 for the ayes.

Motion thus carried.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: I move:

That the house do now adjourn.

WATER TECHNOLOGY

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders) (16:59): As members would be aware, I have a keen interest in water and water technologies. In my endeavours to source solutions and opportunities for South Australia, I came into contact with Terry Spragg, an American proponent of 'waterbag' technology and his Australian associate, Robert Tulip. I gave a speech in parliament on 5 March 2008 giving an overview of what may be possible utilising this technology and indicated how we could help to reduce our dependence on the River Murray and improve our environment.

As a result of our contact, Mr Spragg has offered South Australia the exclusive right to be the first Australian state authorised to demonstrate his waterbag technology. More significantly, he has offered us the first right of refusal to use his waterbag technology to ship water from Tasmania to South Australia before his technology is used to transport water to any other Australian state.

Recently, a significant amount of media has been discussing the possibility of bringing water from Tasmania to the mainland. On 18 July 2008 an article was printed in *Adelaidenow* entitled, 'Bid to pipe in Tasmanian water', followed by 'Debate flows over rivers of gold' on 19 July 2008 in Tasmania's newspaper, the *Mercury*.

These articles state that a MOU has been submitted by a Melbourne consortium to Hydro Tasmania, with the Tasmanian government proposing to buy water from Tasmania in order to resell it at an undisclosed rate. The consortium has offered to build and finance a pipeline from Burnie to Victoria and charge Tasmania an annual delivery fee in return for a 30-year contract.

I believe that Tasmania can better protect its interests by using waterbag technology rather than supporting an undersea fixed pipeline. Waterbag technology requires far less capital cost

investment than an undersea pipeline, and the flexibility of the system allows waterbags to be taken out of service and moved to other locations within Australia or throughout the world if the water is not required.

South Australia at this time has a unique opportunity to control Spragg bag technology in Australia. Accordingly, South Australia could be in the position of offering Tasmania the flexibility of controlling shipments of water to wherever it is needed, whenever it is needed, including to other locations in Tasmania itself.

The waterbag solution has several advantages. First, the waterbags do not have to remain in one fixed position to deliver water only between two points. Secondly, it does not have to be operating at 100 per cent capacity in one location in order to pay off its fixed capital cost debt.

From one Tasmanian loading location waterbags could be used to deliver water to a variety of Australian locations simply by disconnecting the required number of waterbags at various locations along its delivery route. The bags themselves are the reservoirs, thereby preventing considerable infrastructure cost. An undersea pipeline cannot offer this physical and financial flexibility.

If South Australia could control the most economical method of transporting Tasmanian water to the mainland by working to implement waterbag technology with the Tasmanian government and Hydro Tasmania, South Australia could have some control over its water supplies.

I believe that South Australia would regret it for the rest of its history if Victoria and/or the Victorian pipeline consortium mentioned in these news stories become the first to negotiate initial rights for Tasmanian water.

South Australia will have only a subordinate right to the Melbourne consortium and Victoria's Tasmanian water interests. South Australia must begin to act for itself, and negotiate with Tasmania and Hydro Tasmania for the first rights to transport Tasmanian water to South Australia.

Spragg bag water technology is simply an economical and environmentally benign flexible fabric modular pipeline that has been developed for moving large quantities (up to one gigalitre at a time) of water through the oceans in large waterbags connected in trains, using a patented zipper connection system that floats the fresh water on the seawater pulled along by a barge to its destination.

One of the major advantages offered by the flexibility of the Spragg bag system is the ability to suit the number of bags to the amount of water required at the time that can be expanded in increments. Waterbag capital costs do not have to be incurred all at once, as is required in the development of an undersea pipeline system or a desalination plant.

Once a waterbag delivery system of five or 10 gigalitres has proven its reliability, it will be a matter of simply adding more waterbags to the train and more trains to the system in order to incrementally increase the volume of water to be delivered to where it is needed.

The Spragg bag water delivery system can be implemented to deliver 350 gigalitres per year for a capital cost of less than \$1 billion—a saving of over \$1 billion compared with the Melbourne consortium's \$2 billion capital cost estimate and a saving of over \$7 billion to \$11 billion compared with the Victorian government's estimate.

South Australia has been offered what I believe is a zero risk opportunity to test waterbag technology by implementing a waterbag demonstration voyage from Tasmania to South Australia. The first Australian state to successfully demonstrate waterbag technology will control this method of transportation.

Advantages of Spragg bag water delivery are:

- The Spragg bag has patented loading and off-loading systems that can unload a 4.5 million gallon waterbag in a matter of minutes.
- The waterbag system could begin to deliver water by 2009, depending on the volume of water required. Volumes of water to be delivered can be increased or decreased as demand and weather dictates.
- The undersea pipeline would not be able to begin to deliver water until 2010 (at the earliest).

Another advantageous way in which waterbag technology could be used to immediately help to reduce the state's dependency on the River Murray is to harness and transport the 70 gigalitres of treated effluent and 160 gigalitres of stormwater (which currently is discharged or flows into Gulf St Vincent every year) to areas where it could be used for horticulture, agriculture or beautification purposes.

Alternatively, it could be towed out to deeper, more turbulent water for dispersion. This method would be more flexible and economical than building kilometres of fixed piping systems and would help to prevent the continuing degradation of the environment off the coast of Adelaide.

The biggest challenge in maximising the use of urban stormwater is the availability of space to capture, treat and store large volumes of water. The Spragg bag system could be used to collect and transport stormwater to regional areas where it could be stored in the bags to be treated, if necessary, before being utilised.

The discharge of stormwater and recycled water over the years has resulted in an increasing loss of seagrass in the gulf. The discharge clouds the water and the nutrient contamination levels have contributed to the massive damage that has occurred. Stormwater and/or recycled water could be transported in the waterbags and pumped across sand dunes to the Coorong and Lower Lakes to help offset dropping water levels and rising salinity.

Mr Spragg is not requesting any payment from South Australia for the first right to use his technology in Australia and to control the use of a fabric water pipeline from Tasmania. He is asking for support for a demonstration of his technology and has presented South Australia with a sponsorship marketing plan that should result in zero financial risk to South Australia in order to implement his waterbag demonstration voyage plan from Tasmania to South Australia.

South Australia is in a dire water supply situation, and it is predicted by some experts that it will get even worse. I therefore ask that the government support a trial of the Spragg bag technology as possibly part of the solution to our water crisis and as a necessary step before we can begin to rehabilitate the marine environment off Adelaide.

WATER SECURITY

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (17:08): I rise to contribute to the grievance debate and to talk about the issues that are facing South Australia in relation to water security.

Currently, South Australia is facing an extremely critical situation in relation to a shortage of water right across the Murray-Darling Basin. We are heading into another year of dry inflows into the River Murray. In fact, in June this year we recorded again a new minimum low inflow to the River Murray. That is the lowest June on record; the next lowest prior to that was in June 2006. This is quite an extraordinary event to have occurred, and it is creating an enormous amount of angst and anguish for our regional communities.

The Riverland, in my electorate of Chaffey, is one of the communities that has been hardest hit as a consequence of this severe and unprecedented drought. Currently, irrigation allocations are sitting at only 2 per cent, and the impact on my electorate is horrendous. We have seen a situation where, over the last two years, the irrigation allocations have been set at 60 per cent and in the following year 32 per cent, and this year the opening allocations have begun at 2 per cent. The water in the system available to South Australia is just not enough to meet all the competing needs. We are seeing an extraordinary situation evolving in the Lower Lakes in that we are unable to get enough water across the border to be able to maintain the lakes at a level to prevent some serious issues from occurring.

These issues are being dealt with by the government in a number of areas, and the government is working hard with the Murray-Darling Basin Commission and partners to determine what are the appropriate medium and long-term management issues we need to implement to ensure that the lakes can be managed in the absence of significant rainfall. For our regional communities, we are working with the federal government to try to implement a range of measures that will certainly assist our communities through this period, and this will inevitably lead to significant change.

As part of the federal government's national plan, Water for the Future, there is a \$10 billion investment in Australia's Water for the Future, particularly in the Murray-Darling Basin area, and South Australia has been successful in securing \$610 million. A very large component of

that (\$190 million) is earmarked for industry renewal and industry assistance to assist our irrigation communities through this very difficult time. It includes significant amounts of money (\$80 million) towards the purchase of water, and we will be working with the irrigation communities that are most affected by this drought to develop the most appropriate response and use for that money. We will be rolling out very shortly a communications and consultation process, and we have appointed project managers to manage this project. It is absolutely crucial that these communities are involved in determining how this money is invested to ensure that they can deal with the many challenges that are facing us.

I live in the Riverland, and many of the people affected by this are my friends. It is not easy. It is not easy for anyone facing a very uncertain future. I believe it is vitally important that this state takes an approach to this issue that is responsible. The government is taking a responsible approach to it; the opposition is playing politics with it. I think it is absolutely appalling that we do not have a bipartisan approach to it, as we would with other national disasters. If we had a disaster such as a bushfire, we would all rally around our communities; if we had a flood, we would all manage to rally around our communities; and if we had a severe drought, we would rally around our dryland farming communities.

The reason we are not seeing that in this particular instance is that the opposition has its sights set firmly on the seat of Chaffey, and it will use any means within its power to undermine the political process rather than pull together as a state to fight to get a better deal. We are not seeing that from the opposition. We are not seeing the opposition do anything to assist our communities. We are not seeing the opposition put forward any constructive approach to this management issue. We are not seeing the opposition working with the communities to try to find a way forward. Rather, we are seeing constant, destructive actions by the opposition, and I find it absolutely appalling.

At a time like this, our communities need strong leadership, and they need strong leadership that will deliver a bipartisan approach to how we deal with these issues. I am calling on the opposition to put away this nonsense and this squabbling, and to put away its approach to attacking our own, instead of working together to get things better and to get a better deal at the national level. This is what we have been doing. I have been working with Malcolm Turnbull; I have been working with Penny Wong; and I have been working with our communities. I have been working with the Murray-Darling Basin partners to get rules that provide for a better outcome for our irrigators.

This water year, we have an extreme shortage of water in the system. We had an extreme shortage of water in the system last year, and we negotiated to bring forward allocations to South Australia to enable South Australian irrigators to receive 32 per cent of their allocations this year.

Mr Pederick interjecting:

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: If we had not negotiated that position, our irrigators would have finished the water year on 18 per cent—18 per cent is all that would have been achieved if we had not renegotiated the water sharing arrangements. I can assure the member for Hammond, who says that was only after we told them that they were going to get only 16 per cent. What a load of rot!

What a load of spin and what a load of rot! What happened was that, back in November, it rained. It actually rained in November last year, and that water was made available to irrigators as soon as it was applied to South Australia for consumptive purposes. We made it available. Back at the beginning of November we were advised by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission to prepare our communities for the fact that there may not be any more water available for allocation. That is what we were advised.

Mr Pederick interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: Now, I know that the member for Hammond does not want to know this. I know that the member for Hammond does not want to know the truth. I know that the member for Hammond does not even want to have briefings on this. The member for Hammond would prefer—

Mr PEDERICK: I rise on a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The comment that I will not have briefings on this is completely untrue. It is over—

The Hon. K.A. Maywald interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: The point of order is that I have asked for briefings on various things to do with water policy that have not—

The Hon. K.A. Maywald interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Because you are basically telling an untruth.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Hammond!

The Hon. K.A. Maywald interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Try No. 101. Who cares!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Hammond, if you have a point of order you make it clearly and direct it to the chair. We have already had enough problems today with debate during points of order. Can the honourable member indicate whether he believes that he has been misrepresented and whether he wishes the minister to withdraw? This is how one does it.

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I do believe I have been misrepresented, because I have received briefings from the minister and the minister is well aware of that. Only recently—

The Hon. K.A. Maywald: That's debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sounds like it should be a personal explanation. The member for Hammond can seek the opportunity to make a personal explanation at the conclusion of the minister's remarks.

Mr PEDERICK: Okay, no problem. I will seek leave to do that later.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: I reiterate that I have made the offer to the member for Hammond to have a briefing whenever he chooses. I do not believe he has actually made a phone call to my office in the last six months for a briefing.

Mr Pederick interjecting:

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: If he has, I am unaware of it, but I am certain that he has not—

Mr Pederick: It might not have been in the last six months.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: 'Might not have been in the last six months'—did you hear that? 'It might not have been in the last six months'—okay, all right, well maybe it's five months, but it has not been in recent times. I have not had a question or an invitation from the member for Hammond to brief him on this in several months, and I think it goes back beyond six months since I last briefed him. I am not certain. We can check on that. I can assure you, however, that I would be, as a local member, seeking a briefing every single month. I would want to be up-to-date. I would want to know what is going on. I would be wanting to get my point across on a regular basis to the minister. I would be wanting to ensure that I had accurate information to take back to my community. That has not occurred.

Motion carried.

WATER BRIEFINGS

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (17:17): I seek leave to make a personal explanation, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Leave granted.

Mr PEDERICK: On a couple of points about seeking briefings, over 12 months ago—and I do not have the—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must state the way in which he believes he has been misrepresented. There is no debate: it is simply an explanation of the way in which he has been misrepresented.

Mr PEDERICK: Okay. I seek leave to explain why I believe I have been misrepresented today, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I seek leave to further my remarks.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no furthering of remarks. We will get advice on how far the honourable member can go.

Mr PEDERICK: Okay.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Hammond, if you believe the minister has put incorrect information on the record, it is your opportunity to correct the record, and it is confined to that.

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I wish to correct the record now. I can recall right now that there were a couple of times when I have had briefings or asked for briefings or been offered briefings by the minister herself. One would be in regard to water storage and the fact that, when the Mount Bold policy was part of the Labor Party plan—

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker: I believe that the member is debating rather than giving a personal explanation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. I am sorry, member for Hammond, it is a very restricted opportunity you have. You have the opportunity tomorrow to expand in grievances, but at the moment you can simply correct the record if you believe anything the minister has said is incorrect.

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for that advice. I would like to correct the record and advise the house that, within the last six months, I have asked for a briefing on the pipelines to the Narrung peninsula, and I did receive that briefing from the minister and Chris Marles from SA Water. So I would like to put that on the record.

At 17:20 the house adjourned until Thursday 24 July 2008 at 10:30.