

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 11 September 2008

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.J. Snelling)** took the chair at 10:30 and read prayers.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Ms SIMMONS (Morialta) (10:32): I move:

That the following Address in Reply to His Excellency the Governor's opening speech be adopted.

May it please Your Excellency—

1. Through Your Excellency, we the members of the House of Assembly, thank Your Excellency the Governor for the speech with which you have been pleased to open parliament.
2. We assure Your Excellency that we will give our best attention to all matters placed before us.
3. We earnestly pray for the Divine blessing on the proceedings of this session.

It is with great pleasure that I move the adoption of the Address in Reply. I commence by thanking His Excellency the Governor for attending parliament yesterday and his excellent speech to both houses of parliament. I also thank Kurna elder, Lewis O'Brien, for his 'welcome to country' and his reminder that this parliament meets on the land of the Kurna people. Uncle Lewis is always an inspiration to all who are privileged to know him. On behalf of the government, I offer him our sincere condolences on the recent death of his son, Stephen.

His Excellency quite rightly reflected on the achievements of this last session of parliament before looking to the exciting plans that this government has for this upcoming session. I would like to reflect and project on just some of those policies in the same manner.

In 2006, this government embarked on a bold, four-year program of reform using the South Australian Strategic Plan as its vision. Our aim was to foster confidence, jobs and opportunity, especially among our young people. While we continue to strive for economic growth we (the Labor Party) have committed to drawing a social dividend from that wealth. Underpinning this plan has been the government's ability to maintain fiscal discipline, retaining the state's AAA credit rating, which we regained in 2004 and have held ever since.

For the seventh consecutive year this government, through our Treasurer, Kevin Foley, returned a surplus budget which highlights the strong economic growth currently enjoyed in this state. I believe that these are exciting times for South Australia. We are well on the road to delivering greater opportunities and sustained prosperity for generations of South Australians and, importantly for this government, we will ensure that disadvantaged and marginalised people in our community can share the benefits of this economic dividend. Recent employment data shows that the South Australian job scene remains the best that we have seen in 30 years. Following 16 months of employment growth, 778,400 people were in work in July 2008, with 541,500 of these in full-time positions.

Unemployment is at a near record low and the labour force participation rate stands at 63 per cent, the highest in 17 years and just 0.1 per cent below the highest ever recorded. Since March 2002, when the first Rann government was elected, more than 90,000 new jobs have been created.

However, this government knows that it needs to build on this economic growth. Currently, South Australia has almost \$45 billion worth of major projects either underway or in the pipeline, but we will need an extra 133,000 new workers between now and 2018 to fill positions in new projects and, as a state, we will also need another 206,000 workers to replace those who will leave the workforce.

Many of these new jobs will be in our mineral resources and defence sectors and depend on our meeting the challenges of new skills, strong training and workforce development systems. This government introduced the new Training and Skills Development Act in 2008 which enshrined the new Training and Skills Commission. This will underpin our response to these new industry needs and propel this state forward even further into the future.

However, the government knows that education does not start at the top end, and we remain committed to ensuring that all South Australian children have access to high quality early childhood care, preschool child care, education and health for children from birth to school. In

2007, we announced that 20 new children's centres would be established across the state including one in my own electorate of Morialta, at Il Nido Childcare Centre in Campbelltown.

Coming from the education and disability sectors before entering parliament, I know that the early detection of health or learning concerns is vital to ensure intervention programs are put in place to assist in a child's development. Not only will these children's centres provide positive environments for our children to learn and safely develop their social skills, but also they will become friendly places for families to learn more about their child's wellbeing and gain advice and information on parenting to support them in this vital role.

The Early Years Literacy Program has been another important initiative aimed at our reception to year 3s. The Rann government has put a huge emphasis on the number of children reading at an age-appropriate level. The Premier initiated his own Premier's Reading Challenge for our primary school children which has been so successful that we have had to extend the program to secondary schools and increase the levels of participation to create champions, legends and a hall of fame. That is an amazing expansion, which has been at the request of the children themselves.

Next year, this government will introduce a new South Australian certificate of education (SACE) and laws will come into force on 18 January 2009 to ensure that all young people are in school or training until they are 17 or they achieve their SACE or an equivalent qualification. This government is strongly committed to education and to lifting the skills of young people so that they can obtain a good, secure and satisfying job, so that they are skilled to compete in the global economy and so that we can build a stronger community.

We have invested \$29.5 million in 10 new trade schools of the future and \$84 million in school-to-work strategies aimed at assisting those children who previously fell through the gaps and were no longer engaged in their learning. In 2007, the Rann government achieved the best school retention rates in 12 years, at 74.5 per cent.

However, if our children are not healthy, they will not achieve their true potential. According to disturbing South Australian data, 20 per cent of four year olds are overweight or obese. I am a member of the parliament's Social Development Committee that led an inquiry into this subject in 2007. From this inquiry, the Right Bite program became mandatory in school canteens at the beginning of 2008, banning the sale of junk food in school canteens. We believe that by putting a major focus on healthy eating and physical activity in schools, we are fulfilling an important role in enabling students to develop their capacity for healthy growth and development into adulthood and healthier futures.

Obesity plus other new century illnesses in adults continue to put huge pressure on the South Australian health system. Currently, one in six people in this state are over the age of 65. As I have said in a previous speech in this place:

Older people have very different health care needs from the rest of the population. The numbers suffering from chronic diseases is growing dramatically, and will grow exponentially as the baby boomers reach 70.

That is why this government, on the advice of John Menadue's acclaimed Generational Health Review, is taking urgent steps to refocus the culture of health care in this state.

Our reform places an emphasis on preventative measures, lifestyle change and in engaging the community in making healthy choices for themselves. We know that we need to take the pressure off our hospital emergency departments and use acute hospital beds for those who really need them. The introduction of GP Plus health centres across the state will provide the community with a holistic and integrated approach to care. These centres, together with the expansion of rehabilitation services in the home, will better support the health needs of families and particularly older people with chronic rather than acute care needs.

This government also recognised that the governance of our health care system was in need of major reform and passed the health care bill in 2007 to ensure a greater capacity for the health system in this state and to act as a coordinated, strategic and integrated system to help meet the challenges of health pressures into the future.

Under the South Australian health care plan, the new Marjorie Jackson-Nelson Hospital remains the centrepiece of this government's decade-long reform of the health care system because, as well as changing the way we manage chronic illness and primary health care, we also need to transform how we deliver acute care.

The 'Marj' will become the major acute hospital in the state, taking the most complex cases from across our system. Frankly, I am personally fed up with the continuing debate about the redevelopment of the Royal Adelaide Hospital as an alternative way forward. Redeveloping the RAH would mean retrofitting an existing shell which is on a small site.

Let us be quite clear about what these nay-sayers are proposing, because it would mean that health care delivery would be seriously disrupted and staff and patients inconvenienced for more than a decade. Patients would have to receive care in temporary facilities during the redevelopment. To rebuild the RAH would take until 2021, while the 'Marj' will be finished—be bigger, have more beds, more room and be more accessible by public transport—in 2016. I say: let the debate end now.

To complement this new hospital, this government has also committed \$153.68 million to the redevelopment of the Flinders Medical Centre as the major tertiary hospital for the south. We will continue the redevelopment of the QEH at a cost of \$27 million, as well as the Women's and Children's Hospital and the Noarlunga Hospital. We will spend a further \$201 million to complete the redevelopment of the Lyell McEwin Hospital as the major referral centre for the north; this is on top of the \$92.4 million already spent on the Lyell McEwin redevelopment up to June 2005.

The Rann government is also reforming the mental health system. Following the release of the 'Stepping Up' report by Monsignor David Cappo and the Social Inclusion Board, we have committed \$94.1 million to build an integrated community-based system of care, comprising community care and support, 24-hour supported accommodation, community recovery centres and intermediate, acute and secure care beds. We will commence construction next year on the redevelopment of the Glenside campus, providing a 129-bed hospital, 40 supported accommodation places and 15 intermediate care beds, which will complement the other new services being developed throughout the state.

This Rann government is committed to making things happen to improve all aspects of the quality of our lives. So, given the escalating world price of oil and petrol, we recognise that public transport will play an even more important and significant role into the future for South Australians.

In this year's budget we announced an exciting \$2 billion investment in public transport, including an extended coast-to-coast tram service and the electrification of our train network. This is the biggest single investment ever in the public transport system in this state's history. It will also include, as the Governor pointed out, 80 additional buses and a new ticketing system. The 10-year program will deliver 50 new electric trains and, for the first time in Australia, 15 new hybrid tram/trains and additional light rail vehicles.

If we are to continue to expand our industry, our road transport infrastructure must also expand. Currently, 18 major road infrastructure projects are on the go throughout the state; some, such as the Bakewell Bridge underpass, were completed ahead of time. Work on the Northern Expressway started in July, and it is expected to be completed and open to traffic by December 2010.

In accordance with the State Strategic Plan, the Minister for Road Safety is working hard to reduce the death toll on our roads to 90 deaths per year by 2010. In this third session of the 51st parliament, major legislative initiatives will occur to amend the Road Traffic Act and the Motor Vehicles Act 1959 to introduce a mandatory alcohol interlock scheme for drink driving offenders. It will also become mandatory for all drivers to carry their driver's licence with them when behind the wheel.

This government introduced roadside drug driver testing in July 2006 because medical tests show that, between 2002 and 2006, 23 per cent of drivers who died on South Australian roads had detectable levels of cannabis, speed or ecstasy in their blood at the time of their crash. Up to March this year, 9,562 drivers have been tested; 205 have had a positive reading, with 176 readings confirmed by further forensic evidence. That is a strike rate of one in 50 drivers tested. In this sitting of parliament we will implement a number of changes to strengthen this drug driving legislation.

Before the last election the Rann government made a commitment to building safer communities right across South Australia and to ensuring that we increase the number of police on the beat by 700 above the natural attrition rate and that they also have the resources they need to carry out their important work. Another part of this commitment was the creation of four new police shopfronts, one of which is at Newton in my electorate. Being highly visible, they act as a deterrent to crime and allow a rapid response rate to crime reports in the area.

We have taken the To Break the Cycle report from the Social Inclusion Board very seriously and introduced the new Statutes Amendment (Young Offenders) Act 2007 as a result. The report identified that there is a hard core of young, serious repeat offenders responsible for a disproportionate amount of crime in this state. These young people fail to respond to the cautionary and diversionary measures which characterise the youth justice system and which work, it must be said, for most young offenders.

We consider that these young repeat offenders who continue offending heedless of warnings and consequences and who present a serious risk to public safety should face the far harsher penalties that can be handed down by an adult court. However, SAPOL has told us that much of the organised crime in South Australia can be attributed to the criminal activities of motorcycle gangs such as the Hell's Angels, Finks, Rebels and Gypsy Jokers.

The first Rann government led the way in Australia in clamping down on these gangs by passing the anti-fortification legislation and tightening up the licensing of the security and crowd controller industry, which was run by the gangs. Although South Australia Police has had some success in tackling the activities of the gangs, SAPOL came to government subsequently and asked for new powers to tackle the activities and influence of the gangs head-on.

These crimes range from the organised theft and re-identification of motor vehicles and motorcycles through to drug manufacture, importation and distribution; murder; vice; fraud; blackmail; assaults; public disorder; intimidation; firearms offences; and money laundering.

Let us not be mistaken here. These are crimes that have the potential to affect all of us, our families and our children. This government has tackled these criminal operations, giving the police more powers by passing the Serious and Organised Crime (Control) Bill, the Statutes Amendment (Public Order Offences) Bill, the Firearms (Prohibition Orders) Amendment Bill, and made amendments to the Liquor Licensing Act. This government has also taken a very serious view on the issue of rape and sexual offences, introducing law reforms that give better protection for victims and witnesses giving evidence in court, but also giving clearer direction to the courts about what can be admitted as evidence.

Perhaps, for me personally, the most significant reports handed down this year have been the reports of the Children in State Care Commission of Inquiry and the Inquiry into Child Abuse on the APY Lands, both conducted by Commissioner Ted Mullighan. As I said in my speech on 19 June this year, the Mullighan inquiry report is one of the most shocking documents I have read in my life, despite having worked in the welfare sector for over 30 years.

The apology given by this government for past abuse was given in the spirit of reconciliation. It was the right thing to do because the survivors, as children, suffered in our care. It was the start of the healing process. We, as a responsible government, needed to acknowledge their bravery in coming forward, and now we need to implement the recommendations from the Mullighan Report so that we change practices in our system to ensure that we always provide the best care to children who need it. Currently, we have 1,750 children in care in South Australia. This figure is atrocious.

This government has committed \$28.2 million for early intervention support for families where the children are at risk of abuse or neglect and another \$13.2 million for families with severe problems to help them stay together or be reunified. But I personally believe that it takes a whole community to bring up a child. Parenting was never an easy job; it will never be an easy job. We all have a responsibility to help and support the families we know to do the best they can to raise their children. We need to provide practical support and practical help, not judgment.

Discussions relating to securing Adelaide's water supply have dominated the last sitting of parliament and will, as the Governor highlighted, continue to be a major topic in this session. The Premier has successfully lobbied the commonwealth government to establish a new federal authority with unprecedented powers to manage the Murray-Darling Basin in the national interest. The new authority will set a cap to limit the amount of water that can be taken from the basin. The Rann government secured more than \$610 million in federal funding from the COAG meeting in July to restore the health of the River Murray and secure future water supplies for towns and irrigators.

In this year's budget we invested \$96 million towards the \$1.4 billion desalination plant and pipeline. The plant will ensure access to high-quality drinking water even when rainfall is low, and it will reduce our reliance on the River Murray. The plant will produce 5 billion litres of water a year, which is about a quarter of Adelaide's needs. We are also building a new north-south pipeline to

connect reservoirs north and south of the city and improve water access, as well as doubling the storage capacity of water in the Mount Lofty Ranges.

We realise that the community is still learning about saving water and recycling, so we have introduced a raft of rebates to encourage people to save water around their homes. South Australia currently leads the nation in water recycling at 29 per cent, but as the driest city in the driest state we know that we need to increase the level of waste water recycled to 45 per cent.

I am very pleased that this state will lead the nation in the banning of one-use-only paper bags from 1 January 2009. It is really important that the number of fills and dumps currently crowded with these bags, which take between 15 and 1,000 years to decompose, is reduced considerably.

We are a resource-rich state and, as His Excellency so articulately pointed out, we are now enjoying international recognition of our state's outstanding mineral prospectivity. The government's Plan for Accelerating Exploration (PACE) is playing a key role in attracting and securing major national and international mineral exploration investment in South Australia.

The value of minerals exploration has skyrocketed, increasing tenfold in the last five years and reaching \$344.1 million in March 2008. South Australia now has 10 operating mines and is a leader in uranium, copper-gold and mineral sands exploration activity. We are host to the development of BHP Billiton's multibillion-dollar Olympic Dam operation, and we have an expectation that more major discoveries and mining developments are to come. In fact, the Fraser Institute in Canada ranks South Australia as the fourth most prospective place in the world out of 65 jurisdictions—up from 30th place a few years ago.

Through my involvement with the South Australian Business Ambassadors Network, I see a state that has an energy about it, an optimism and a growing belief that we can achieve great success in the world. Business investment is 129 per cent higher this decade, our annual exports are 66 per cent higher, and retail sales are 42 per cent higher. In addition, private new capital investment increased \$5 billion in the year to March 2008, which is the highest level since records began in September 1989.

Through the hard work of the South Australian Economic Development Board, created in 2002, South Australia is now on the crest of an export wave, with almost half our exports going to the Asia Pacific, which is the world's fastest growing region. South Australia is a strategically positioned export base and destined to enjoy new-found export wealth.

I took a punt 22 years ago and decided that, after travelling the world for over 30 years, South Australia was where I wanted to raise my children, Katie and Matthew. I still believe that I was right. I still believe that, by remaining committed to sustainable business, ever mindful of managing environmental challenges and forever vigilant to ensure that all South Australians enjoy the fruits of our state's success, we will provide a safe, prosperous and secure state for future generations of South Australians. I am very proud to be part of a government that is committed to achieving these ends.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (10:58): It is my pleasure, on behalf of the opposition, to second the motion moved by the member for Morialta and indicate to the house that I am the lead speaker on behalf of the opposition. In seconding the motion, I congratulate our Governor on the work he does for South Australia and thank him for coming across the road to open this session of the 51st parliament.

It was my intention today to talk about water and the dire consequences this state faces into the future, irrespective of what the Governor said in the opening remarks of his address. As it so happens, he spent a fair bit of time yesterday speaking about water, so I am delighted that I will indeed be responding to the Governor's address in quite a significant way.

I start by giving a little background on where we are at and how we got there. The Premier, who obviously wrote the Governor's speech, made certain claims yesterday and then came into the house and made a ministerial statement. The reality is that, after 6½ years of this government—

An honourable member: Long years.

Mr WILLIAMS: Six and a half long years of this government—the people of South Australia and certainly those who work in the media have at last seen the reality of what this Premier is all about: long on rhetoric, short on action. The Premier had the Governor make certain statements. When we spoke to people in the media, they brushed them aside and said, 'Oh, we've

heard all that before. Nothing there.' The Premier came into the house yesterday and made certain statements, and I will come back to them later in my address. We went to the people in the media and said, 'Notwithstanding what the Premier has said, this is the reality,' and their reaction was, 'No; we fully understand.'

The Premier's credibility is at an all-time low—and nowhere is it lower than on matters pertaining to water and the issues of water security in South Australia, and that point will be reinforced continually as I go through my remarks. Time after time after time we see that the Premier's wont is to make grandiose statements but, in reality, his achievements and the achievements of his government are abysmally small.

I will start off by acknowledging that this problem has been around for quite a while. In fact, the drought that is now besetting our nation has been with us at least since 2002, and I have made that remark a number of times in this place. I will quote to the house something that the Premier said on 28 August 2002. He said:

Mr Speaker, in the past six months rainfall in South Australia has been 60 to 80 per cent below the 30-year average across a large area of the state.

So, in August 2002, not long after he became Premier, the Premier acknowledged to the house that we were in a drought in South Australia. On 21 January 2003, Premier Rann issued a press release saying that the river was in dire straits. He said:

Normally South Australia's part of the River Murray receives flows of around 5,000 gigalitres but, following three years of unusually dry conditions, we have only been receiving 1,850 gigalitres of entitlement flow since December 2001.

So, already the flows in the River Murray were down to minimum entitlement flows as of December 2001, and the Premier acknowledged that. Do I need to remind the house that that is seven long years ago?

I have heard the Premier and his various water ministers—because he has had more than one—say, 'We can't make it rain,' or, 'Oh, we didn't know we were going to have a drought,' or 'Whoops! This came up behind us and caught us out.' The reality is that for at least seven long years the Premier has known. In fact, I have previously quoted parts of a speech he made to the National Press Club in February 2003, I think it was if my memory serves me well, where the Premier talked about reducing our reliance on the River Murray, harvesting stormwater and recycling water. That was February 2003, and none of that has occurred. All the Premier has done in those 5½ years since February 2003 is talk and talk. We understand that he has some plans. This is the problem we have with the Premier and the government.

It would be remiss of me to suggest to the house that the government acts this way only with regard to water. The reality is that the government acts this way right across all the portfolio areas: very long on rhetoric, very short on action. But I will restrict my comments to water.

During the week prior to the winter break, on 23 July, we were talking about water. Prior to that, the Premier had just come back from a COAG meeting on 3 July where he signed off on a new Intergovernmental Agreement. The opposition rightfully raised some concerns about the Intergovernmental Agreement, and we still have those concerns. The Leader of the Opposition challenged the Premier to a debate. He challenged him to a debate anywhere—on radio or in front of a TV camera, and the Premier's reaction was, 'I will debate it in the house.' However, come 23 July when the opposition leader moved to suspend standing orders to allow for such debate, the government refused to be party to that.

On that day, the opposition used its grievance time to debate some of the concerns it had about the Intergovernmental Agreement. Of course, the government realised how embarrassing it was going to be so it moved to have a half hour debate at the end of the day's session, remembering that there was no government business on the *Notice Paper* after the grievance debate.

I made the statement that the Premier was gutless. I said that the Premier was refusing to debate the matter, and I was called a liar. The member for Mawson stood up and said, 'That's a lie. You're going to get your debate later on.' Well, I am here today to tell the house that the Premier never debated the matter. We did have that half an hour later in the day, but the Premier never got to his feet and he never tried to debate the concerns raised by the opposition.

Never has the Premier been willing to stand up toe to toe with the opposition and debate these issues. He will come in here and abuse question time by having Dorothy Dixers asked from

the backbench or railing against opposition questions, irrespective of what we ask. He will say what he likes to say, knowing that the opposition cannot answer during question time. The Premier will not stand up and have a toe-to-toe debate on this, but I am not surprised—and I will reveal why as I proceed with my contribution.

The member for Mawson was proved wrong on 28 July and my statement was vindicated. Before we start to find a solution, I think we need to determine the problem. If the problem is not determined, it is most difficult to find a solution. This is part of the reason why the current government is struggling to find solutions to our water security problems. The government continually says that this is the worst drought in recorded history. I would contend that that is a questionable statement. It is a severe drought—I am not walking away from that—but to say that it is the worst drought in our recorded history is somewhat questionable. I would like the minister to go onto the Bureau of Meteorology site and look at some of the historical data. I invite him to do that, because the drought—

The Hon. J.W. Weatherill: You're the expert.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am not saying I am an expert. What I am saying is that, when you are in denial and you blame the wrong causes, you create difficulties for yourself in finding a solution. I do not deny that it is a severe drought, but I question whether it is the worst drought in recorded history. I am questioning whether this is—as the Premier has said—the one in a thousand year drought when we have only a bit over a hundred years of records. The Bureau of Meteorology statistics suggest that in the late 1930s, early 1940s, we had a drought of grave significance across the Murray-Darling Basin. I just put that forward for members to contemplate. I suggest that, if any member seriously questions what I am putting, they go to the Bureau of Meteorology site and trawl through some of the data there. It is not that difficult, to be quite honest.

The government also says that we have accelerating climate change. Again, the Bureau of Meteorology site will show that we have some increase in temperatures across the basin but there is no evidence that climate change has caused a change in the rainfall trends across Australia. I am not suggesting that climate change is not a factor but, when the government suggests that climate change is a very important factor and, therefore, extrapolates that there is not much that it can do about it until we get carbon emissions under control (and it might be a 50, 100 or 200-year project), I would contend that, again, it misses the point and walks away from the solutions that it should be working on. That is the problem when using that sort of language and that sort of process.

Is the drought that we are suffering caused by anthropogenic factors? It is questionable. Again, that suggests to me that the government is somewhat in denial about its ability to do something, and to do something positive. The evidence that I have been able to collect, when looking to see what has caused the significant problem that we are facing here in South Australia, relates to the diversions from the river systems.

I have downloaded a graph from the Murray-Darling Commission's website which shows that the average natural flow out to sea (according to this graph) is something like 14,000 gigalitres. So, about 14,000 gigalitres was the estimated average natural flow before any intervention following white settlement of this country. The total diversions out of the system today—we will call them allocations: obviously, this amount of water is not being diverted today because it is just not there—amount to something like 13,000 gigalitres; so, under normal flow conditions, about 1,000 gigalitres would run into the sea.

That may be a reasonable figure, in some circumstances, where you have a very reliable climate. It might be enough to keep the mouth of a significant river open. It might be enough to support the ecosystems along a significant river in a part of the world where rainfall was very regular and very reliable. However, that is not what we have in Australia. We have an irregular, unreliable rainfall and a huge discrepancy between high-flow years and low-flow years.

The problem is that we have over-allocated the river. When I say 'we', I think South Australia has largely been an innocent party in this. The problem the opposition argues is that the state government has given away opportunities to have this matter addressed quickly and dramatically, for the benefit of South Australia. That is the problem we have here. The Premier does acknowledge that over-allocation is a big problem. Again, he has had plenty of time but has done very little.

I remind the house that in the mid-1990s the basin states noted that there was an impact on wetlands; that red gum forests were going into decline; that there was an impact on the native

fish population; and, all of a sudden, we saw blue-green algal blooms occurring. I think it was in 1990 in the Darling River and through the '90s in parts of the River Murray. In June 1995 the basin states agreed to a cap, but what they did was agree to a cap on surface flows—on surface water diversions. It was agreed to put that at 1993-94 levels. Referring again to the graph that I downloaded from the Murray-Darling Basin Commission website, it is obvious that the increase in diversions has not abated since that time. We have continued to see a rise in diversions from the 1993-94 levels, of the order of some 2,000 gigalitres. So, in that period since 1994 to today we have seen the total diversions increase from about 11,000 gigalitres to about 13,000 gigalitres (it is a little under that, but it is of that order). So, we have to ask ourselves: what has caused this?

I do not believe that the figures in the graph I am using reflect what has happened in the Darling River (particularly in the upper reaches) and its tributaries in the last water year (earlier this calendar year), when we saw huge diversions. We read just recently that, in Queensland alone, the diversions reached record levels. I do not believe that is reflected in the graph that I am quoting from.

The government has failed, in a lot of cases, to recognise the impact of surface water and groundwater interaction. It has certainly done so with respect to its agreement that the federal government give \$1 billion of taxpayers' money to the Victorian government for its Food Bowl project (and I might come back to that). Every water expert that I have heard talk on that subject says that the net benefit to the river will probably turn out to be a disbenefit because of the connection between surface water and groundwater flows. If you reduce leakage out of earthen drains that run back into the river you will not get a net saving of water. If you reallocate that water, which you think you have saved, you are giving a disbenefit to the stream flows. The fact that South Australia signed off \$1 billion of taxpayers' money to see that happen, I think, just shows up how far off the mark we are.

The Murray-Darling Basin Commission has produced a very good report on the connection between surface water and groundwater systems. It talks about disconnected and connected streams (that is, connected and disconnected to the groundwater system), bank storage and gaining and losing streams. A losing stream is one where the groundwater system is lower than the surface water system: obviously, gravity dictates that the water will flow from the surface water system into the groundwater system. It talks about gaining streams where the opposite occurs; where the groundwater system in the banks of the stream is, in fact, above the surface of the water in the creek, stream or river, and water will infiltrate into that surface water stream from the groundwater system.

However, the problem we have had is that, when that cap that I talked about a few minutes ago was put on in the mid 1990s, at 1993-94 stream flow diversions (or surface water diversions), there was no cap on groundwater diversions. So, allocations kept being issued for people to place bores almost on the river bank, in some cases, and further away from the river, in other cases, and allow that water to be extracted, or pumped out from groundwater.

Whether it is a directly connected system or a system where there is a gaining or a losing impact on the stream, by lowering the groundwater through pumping we exacerbate, or accelerate, those impacts. If it is a gaining stream, and groundwater is flowing from the groundwater system into the stream and you pump the water out and use it for irrigation, less water will go into the stream. So, you have a negative impact. If it is a losing stream, where water is naturally flowing out of the stream into the groundwater system, if you lower the groundwater system again through pumping, more water will flow out of the stream and it will flow at a greater rate. It is not rocket science: it is quite simple physics. Most people can understand it.

The interesting thing about this is that in the report that was prepared by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission (I think Sinclair Knight Merz was involved in the preparation of the document) they estimated that way back in the year 2000 those groundwater diversions were having a deleterious effect on stream flow to the rate of about 186 gigalitres per year, by 2000.

I do not know what the figure is today. I have not been able to find any updated figures. They did estimate in the same document that without more groundwater diversions by 2050 that would be 700 gigalitres a year. I ask members to contemplate that. As a nation we are talking about purchasing back about 1,500 gigalitres of licence from irrigators in order to provide environmental flows. Even if we put in no more groundwater extraction bores from 2000, by 2050 we will need at least another 700 gigalitres—almost half of that we are talking about buying back now. Why has there been inaction for the last seven years? Why has nothing been done?

I attended a function recently where a CSIRO scientist gave some figures and a talk on this subject. In his presentation he had a graph which showed the amount of increasing groundwater extractions. Unfortunately, the figures that he had to hand were from 1983-84 to 1996-97, but they indicate what has been happening. In New South Wales there was a 217 per cent increase in the amount of groundwater extraction. In Victoria there was a 202 per cent increase. In Queensland there was a decrease of 26 per cent over that period. Western Australia is not relevant to our discussion. In South Australia there was a 22 per cent decrease. That is the sort of thing that has been happening since the surface water cap was put on.

But inaction is the problem. The report to which I refer is a 2003 report. The first recommendation indicates that the state should reduce groundwater allocations and consequently groundwater use to sustainable levels. The recommendation goes on about matters which do not add or detract from the argument. Bearing in mind there are probably 30 or 40 recommendations altogether, the second recommendation states that in the short term—and I am not sure what 'short term' means; this government seems to think it means 11 years—groundwater should be accounted for within the spirit of the cap. That is the cap of 1993-94 to which I have referred already. In the long term, groundwater should be included in an expanded cap—so a new cap should be set, including groundwater. Hear, Hear! The government will say, 'That is exactly what we are doing.' The problem is that that recommendation was made in 2003. The government will achieve that, hopefully, by 2011. That is eight years. It is another eight years of damage and we are living it right now.

I contend that the evidence which I have produced so far on what is happening in the river suggests that mismanagement or lack of management is the major cause—which has been exacerbated by drought. I wish that the Premier and the government would recognise that. John Howard recognised it when he called on the states to get together. He said, 'The reality is that after 100 years you keep getting it wrong. We need a national plan.' John Howard deserves a big tick for that. He is the first prime minister of this country to suggest that we need a national plan. Unfortunately, politics intervened in the run-up to the election on 24 November 2007. He was never going to get that plan off the ground because Labor premiers around Australia—the Labor governments around Australia—obviously conspired to ensure that the plan never got off the ground.

We can blame the Victorians as much as we like, but I suggest that the other premiers were just as culpable. On 28 July the Minister for Water Security told the house that the Premier of South Australia went to Queensland to talk to the Queensland government and went to New South Wales to talk to the New South Wales government and got agreement in both those states. She failed to tell us that he went to Victoria. Why did she fail to tell us that? Because the Premier never went to Victoria, and that is part of the problem.

The Governor's address yesterday was a regurgitation of old news. With regard to water, I did not pick one new policy. I did not pick that the government had thought, in any way, shape or form, that its strategies so far were either working or working fast enough. It just said, 'Business as usual', and went through and listed all the things that we have all been talking about. In some cases, the Premier has been talking about them since 2003, at least. If we examine his speech to the National Press Club, he mentioned all the things that were in the Governor's speech yesterday. We have been talking about them for five years and we are still talking about them. Urgency is required.

One of the pieces of old news that arose again was the \$610 million for the Murray Futures program; that is, the money that has come from the \$10 billion that John Howard put together to address the problems on the River Murray. I will not argue that some of the projects that have been identified and will be identified are not very worthwhile projects and will not be very welcomed by constituents such as mine and some of my colleagues in regional South Australia. The reality is that I am really concerned about what will happen around the Lower Lakes because we are putting in a pipe network. I am wondering whether, instead of finding a cure, we are giving the people in that area a crutch. Instead of curing the cripple, we are throwing a crutch to them and saying, 'Well, hobble on'. As a state we should be demanding that the Lower Lakes are saved from sea water inundation. We should be doing everything to save them from sea water inundation.

In his ministerial statement yesterday, the Premier said that a number of the options which the federal department put to the federal minister for getting water to the Lower Lakes are already unavailable. The reality is that, out of the eight options that I have been through, I do not think any one of them can solve the problem. Maybe we can take bits out of each of them or bits out of those

which are practical, or maybe there is a ninth, tenth or eleventh option which puts together a combination of those options, but, however we do it, we should be leaving no stone unturned in an effort to save the Lower Lakes. Having spent money to build a pipeline network throughout the lakes, we should not then feel comfortable that we can abandon the Lower Lakes.

This government and Labor governments across this nation have always stated that they are much more attune to the environment than the Liberal Party. I would contend in this instance the fallacy of that is proven. The Liberal Party is fighting tooth and nail to save the Lower Lakes. The Labor government in South Australia is fighting tooth and nail to save its own backside—and there is a large difference. I cannot believe that the government of South Australia is willing to walk away from the Lower Lakes as this government appears that it might do.

Yesterday, the Governor also talked about desalination in South Australia. This is one of the projects that has been put forward by the government as being one of our saviours. Again I believe it is essential, but again it is one of those crutch type solutions to a problem. Having gone down the path of creating desalinated water for use in Adelaide, we should not then say that we can abandon the environment of the River Murray. They go hand in hand. We have to maintain them both. But I will briefly talk about desalination.

As we know, the Liberal Party proposed that we had come to the point in time when we needed desalination in South Australia. We proposed that in January 2007 following a visit in November 2006 by my colleague who was then leader of the party (Iain Evans) and the Hon. David Ridgway, in the other place, to the Kwinana desalination plant. Before that visit, I think we had already come to the conclusion that we had to do something and desalination was most likely the solution. We visited that plant, gathered information, and came up with a policy that was released in January 2007 stating that, in government, a Liberal Party would be committed to building a desalination plant in South Australia.

What was the government's reaction? It was exactly the same as the government's reaction to everything we say. It derided it and denigrated it. It said it would not work, would cost too much and we cannot afford it. (The reality is that we cannot afford anything in South Australia with the Treasurer and government that we have.) That is what they said, and they said that month after month. Then, eventually, they came to the realisation that we were right and we are in a significant drought, it might not rain tomorrow, next week or next month, and we had to do something. Eventually the government came to understand the importance.

But, how does the government react when it does come to the realisation that we have to do something? I will quote from *The Advertiser* of Wednesday 12 September last year, 12 months ago. *The Advertiser* stated:

Premier Mike Rann yesterday described as 'inevitable' the building of two desalination plants, one for Adelaide and another to service the Olympic Dam mine, Whyalla and the Eyre Peninsula.

On 18 October, in this house the Premier said:

I am delighted to announce to the house today that we will have two desal plants, one near Whyalla to service the giant Olympic Dam expansion, with a South Australian government and a federal government component which will be there to supply desalinated water to Whyalla, Port Pirie, Port Augusta and parts of Eyre Peninsula; it will probably be the biggest desal plant in the Southern Hemisphere. There will be a second desal plant for Adelaide.

That was in September/October last year—almost a year after we proposed that we needed to build a desalination plant. Then, as recently as May this year—on 20 May—the water minister on ABC 639 radio said:

...we're building two desalination plants—there's the desalination plant in Adelaide and, of course, we're working with BHP on the possibility of developing extra capacity for the Upper Spencer Gulf and the Upper Eyre Peninsula from that plant.

So desalination was not the answer, but now we are going to have two. The reality is that 12 months down the track it looks like we will be back to one desalination plant.

How much homework had the government done? Very little. The government would have us believe it had been working hand in glove with BHP Billiton but, apparently, they had not been doing very much work at all. It turns out that the quality of water that BHP Billiton was going to produce from its proposed plant in the Upper Spencer Gulf would not be suitable for SA Water and SA Water has advised the government that the cost of reprocessing that water would be too costly and it should not go ahead with it. The opposition's understanding is that is where we find ourselves now.

Then what happens? The Prime Minister blows into town and says, 'If you double the size of the plant at Port Stanvac I will give you another \$100 million.' Where does he get the \$100 million from? My understanding is that the federal government was going to put \$160 million into the proposal in the Upper Spencer Gulf, so the federal government has walked away with \$60 million in its pocket, and \$160 million in its pocket if we do not double the size to 100 gegalitres.

One of the problems with the proposal to build a desal plant at Port Stanvac is that the community and, certainly, the opposition—all South Australians—have not been brought into the thinking behind the site selection. We have not been given the information that the government has received on the site selection, and this is important because a significant part of this project is a \$300 million pipe connecting Happy Valley and Hope Valley—connecting the northern and southern parts of our water distribution.

The water that is pumped from the River Murray to the southern part of the network at Mount Bold is significantly less than the desal plant is proposed to produce—it is about 24 gegalitres a year, whereas the desal plant is proposed to produce at least double that. So, what do you do with the water if you are not consuming it down there? Well, you have then got to spend another \$300 million to pipe it northwards. Also, that \$300 million would be very handy if you did double the size of the Mount Bold reservoir to which, of course, the government was committed a little over 12 months ago but to which now, again, it is not committed.

The theme keeps recurring. The government keeps committing to things, saying that this is what it will do and, whoops, six months later, 12 months later, 18 months later, nothing is happening and the commitment has disappeared. I implore the government to release the advice it was given regarding the site selection for Port Stanvac. I implore the government to do that, because I do not know whether the government has got this right. There are so many things the government has got wrong that I really suspect it might have got that one wrong as well. Let me turn to wastewater and stormwater. Here are a couple of rippers.

We have the Minister for Water Security continually going around this state and going interstate—whenever she can get on the media—saying, 'We recycle more of our wastewater than any other capital city in Australia. We are doing a better job than anyone else in Australia. Aren't we good!' Not one extra drop of water has been recycled in South Australia since this government came to office in 2002. The water that has been recycled from Bolivar out to Virginia was all done in a project of the previous government. The water being recycled from Christies Beach, which is being piped down to Willunga, was done under a project of the previous government—done by private enterprise, in fact.

What has this government done? Well, it inherited some upgrades to the Glenelg Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is producing A-class water as opposed to when it used to be producing B-class water. That allowed the government then to sell A-class water to Adelaide Airport Limited for its use in its new terminal buildings, and that is happening and that is commendable. I commend the government. But what has happened in that process is that the government has set a price on that A-class water which is significantly above what, say, the people at Virginia are paying for their A-class water from Bolivar—probably 14¢ a kilolitre, I have been advised, as opposed to something like 41¢ a kilolitre.

You might ask, 'Well, so what if they are paying for it?' The 'so what' is that, before they started producing A-class water, a lot of the water from the Glenelg Wastewater Treatment Plant was being used by golf courses, and a number of them are along the dunes near the beaches. They were using B-class water from Glenelg. I am not sure of the figure but they were paying probably around that 13¢-14¢ a kilolitre. As soon as the water was provided to Adelaide Airport Limited there was only one rising main to pump the water through, and SA Water and the government have said to those golf courses, 'Sorry, you have to pay the 41¢ a kilolitre for that water.'

The reality is that the golf courses said, 'No, thanks. We can provide our own water more cheaply by putting a bore in the ground and pumping it.' Some of the golf courses, through federal government funding, have put in some stormwater recycling. They are actually capturing stormwater and getting it down into the aquifer for their later use in the summer time instead of using that treated wastewater from Glenelg.

It is arguable that there is now more water being disposed of from the Glenelg Wastewater Treatment Plant into the Gulf St Vincent than there was several years ago resulting from that, because the government does not have the smarts to work out a pricing scheme; it does not have

the smarts to send the right pricing signals to encourage people to use recycled water. It is easier to dump it into the gulf. We have all seen the Adelaide Coastal Waters Study and we know the impact that that is having. I think only this week we saw an announcement from the government that it is going to build a pipeline to pump sand up and down the beaches. Why do we pump sand up and down the beaches? One of the reasons is that we are losing our seagrass beds. Why are we losing those? Because we are dumping effluent into the gulf.

It is cause and effect. It is not rocket science: it is just keeping an eye on the ball, and if we correctly priced the wastewater from Glenelg we would see a lot more of it being used. 'Ah,' says the government, 'but we've got another scheme. We're spending \$30 million-odd to build a pipeline to bring it to the city of Adelaide. We're going to use it in the Parklands.' Commendable; great; I thoroughly support it; however, I argue that the pipeline should be of one metre internal diameter—not 700 millimetres as has been designed—so that the capacity of the pipeline is doubled and the number of people who will use that water is expanded. It is aimed principally at the city of Adelaide, but there are a lot of open spaces around the city of Adelaide (at schools and other institutions), that would love to use some of that water, if it was available and if it was properly priced.

By building a 700 millimetre pipeline we may not have the capacity to do that. I think we should be ensuring that we build it so that the capacity is such that we do not have to dispose of wastewater effluent from Glenelg into the gulf. That is a problem that the government does not seem to be very concerned about. It thinks that we can get rid of a little bit more, that we will pump it up to the city of Adelaide, and that what they cannot use there we will dump into the sea.

That brings me to the big one: stormwater. Only yesterday on FIVEaa the Minister for Water Security was saying how wonderful the government is, 'We've contributed \$16 million to stormwater harvesting and recycling, aquifer storage and recovery.' When you look into it you will see that most of that money was in the form of a gift of land. This government has done diddly-squat with regard to stormwater harvesting and recycling.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: My colleague says that it has done less than that, and that is probably right. Stormwater harvesting and recycling is one of the big opportunities for South Australia and it has been missed by this government. Why? I really do not understand. Salisbury City Council has been working on it for 20 years. It has proved the concept and has it happening. The CSIRO has been working on and completed a four-year study into the project at Parafield Airport. It has proved that stormwater can be cleaned up in a simple way by putting it through a simple reed bed filter system, injected into the aquifer and extracted at a later date, and it is of good enough quality to put straight into our reticulated water supply.

One of the problems with recycling water is getting it to that quality so that we do not have to duplicate the water distribution network, because that comes at a huge cost. It has been proved, it is working and it is happening, yet the government refuses to go there. In fact, we had the Treasurer saying only this week that, 'We've looked at that; it doesn't work; it costs too much; it's not worth doing.'

Then we had the Minister for Water Security yesterday trying to tell Leon Byner on FIVEaa that, 'No; that's not what the Treasurer said. No; we've done this and this and this.' She used the royal 'we'. The Salisbury City Council has done it and a number of other councils are working on it. There is a sleeper coming towards this government because, as we know, about \$250 million to \$300 million—it varies a little year to year—goes directly from SA Water profits into the coffers of the state Treasury.

What will happen if the councils across South Australia manage to harvest and inject 80 or 90 gigalitres of stormwater into the aquifers and then sell it to householders and businesses, schools etc., who are the very client base of SA Water? That will have an impact on the state budget. Even if the Treasurer thinks it is a dumb idea; even if the Treasurer cannot get his mind around it, he should consider the impact of what the local councils are working on and the impact that that will have on SA Water's budget. He should consider it for that reason if no other, even if he is not interested in water security for this city. That is a doozy.

It took us nearly 12 months to make the government understand that desalination was necessary for Adelaide. It has not been quite that long since we have been highlighting stormwater, but it is getting that way. Hopefully, the government will understand the error of its ways and it will move to recycling of stormwater, albeit much later than it should but, hopefully, the government will get off its hands and start doing the sort of thing that governments should be doing.

What is this government doing? Lo and behold, I was watching television on Sunday night and I saw the Premier's face on the screen. I was somewhat overjoyed. Here again, as I said much earlier, he is proclaiming that it is the worst drought ever, that it is accelerating climate change. He acknowledged that there had been decades of overuse, but he blamed the other states and he omitted to talk about the lack of action in South Australia. He omitted to tell the people in South Australia that he has known about this since 2001-02—2002 at least—and made that significant speech to the National Press Club in 2003 in which he said all the things he would do.

He admitted in his TV campaign that he has known about this ever since he has been in government and has failed to act. He has failed to do any of the things that I have been talking about. The Premier goes on in the advert to claim that he was successful in fighting for an independent authority. Let me just refer to the Intergovernmental Agreement in schedule A—I think it is on page 41—where it talks about the amendments required to the water act. Clause 1 states:

- d. amending provisions relating to the development of the Basin Plan to provide for review by Basin State Ministers;

The coup de grace here is having an independent authority to develop a whole of basin plan—and I remember the Premier saying that he would not hand control from one set of politicians to another; that is what he has claimed he has achieved—but the Intergovernmental Agreement that he signed states that one of the amendments that he would have to make to the federal water act (and this will be upheld and the provisions will be made by legislation which we believe will be introduced in this parliament later this month) is, and I quote:

- d. amending provisions relating to the development of the Basin Plan to provide for review by Basin State Ministers;

It sounds to me as if the politicians will still be there; basin state ministers, last time I thought about it, were politicians. So, we are not really getting anywhere. Then the Premier concludes by looking to camera and saying, 'There are no magic bullets, but working together we will save our river.'

Well, I sincerely hope that we can save our river. The reality is that I have no confidence relying on this government to save our river. I have a suggestion. Remember that this is the Premier who said that, when you see a politician on a taxpayer-funded television advertisement, it is really a taxpayer-funded party political advertisement; that is one of the few things that the Premier has said that I totally agree with.

Mr Pengilly: Hang on! What's been on the last couple of nights?

Mr WILLIAMS: Yes; he has got these ads running, which are nothing more than self-promotion at the taxpayers' expense. I say that if the Premier is going to spend taxpayers' money on advertising to benefit the river, to benefit the lakes here in South Australia, how about spending the money in Victoria?

How about spending the money in Melbourne and Sydney? I say that, because one of the benefits of handing over the power to the federal government is that the federal water minister sits around the cabinet table with the federal environment minister, and when the federal water minister makes a decision the federal environment minister will ensure that the environment has a place and is looked after.

Why is the federal environment minister going to do that? Because the people in Sydney and Melbourne are going to insist that that is what happens. That is the only chance that we have. That is the only political clout that we have. That is why, if we are going to spend some money on advertising, let us not spend it on self-promotion, Premier; spend it in Sydney and Melbourne where it might have an impact on those people who are going to force a future federal environment minister and a future federal water minister to look after the environment of the river, the Lower Lakes and the Murray Mouth, because that is what we need.

Yesterday the Premier made a ministerial statement which was headed, 'Referral of powers', and said, 'We are going to introduce legislation and we are going to refer powers.' The Premier did that because, ever since the MOU was signed off on back in March, the opposition has been calling for a genuine referral of powers from all states, so that we do not have a sham independent body: we have a genuine independent body to advise the federal minister, and set up in a way that the federal minister will be obliged to take that advice and act on it. We said that the only way we will achieve that is if the states have to refer all their decision-making powers.

The Premier comes in here in an attempt to pull the wool over our eyes, and the eyes of South Australians, by heading his ministerial statement 'Referral of powers'. The only powers that

have been referred are the ones that will allow for the administrative changes to form the new Murray-Darling Basin authority from the existing organisations. That is the referral of powers that he is talking about, the ones that are in the IGA, the ones that do not deliver what he would have us believe it will deliver. The premier goes on and states:

Importantly, the new arrangements recognise critical human water needs as the highest priority water use.

When I hear the Minister for Water Security and the Premier say things like that, I think, 'Wow! Critical human water needs are going to be guaranteed by the basin states.' Of course, as shadow minister I go and actually read the document. Let me read page 31 of the Intergovernmental Agreement that our Premier signed off on. Paragraph 7.4 states:

The parties agree that the provisions of conveyance water to enable provision of critical human needs will be addressed in the basin plan, together with the arrangements to support jurisdictions to accumulate and store critical human needs.

So, the plan will say, 'Yes, we are going to have enough water; the river is still flowing. So, if somebody owns water in a dam somewhere they can deliver it to where they want it.' That is not unusual, but it then goes on and states:

However, responsibility for securing and providing the volume of water required for critical human needs rests with the respective jurisdictions.

Boom, boom! Good one, Premier! Yet again, the Premier's statement to the house yesterday is all spin and rhetoric, and it belies the reality of the agreement that he signed on 3 July. The reality is that South Australia is still responsible for finding critical human needs water out of its allocation. That is the reality. That is what he signed off on on 3 July. Why does he come in here and tell this place that the new agreement guarantees critical human needs water? It clearly does not. I will leave members to draw their own conclusions on that matter.

We have talked about the Lakes, and we have talked about Adelaide's water supply. In the few minutes left to me I will talk about the biggest disaster facing this state, in my opinion, and that is what will befall growers of horticultural crops in the Riverland, the Murraylands and around the Lower Lakes over the next summer. We have something like 70,000 hectares of irrigated agriculture. About 85 per cent of that is irrigated out of the River Murray, of which about 85 per cent is permanent plantings—grapevines, nut trees, avocados, olives—

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Citrus.

Mr WILLIAMS: A huge area of citrus. We are going to see a disaster in that industry this year. Last year those irrigators had to spend money to buy water. *The Advertiser* suggested in the past week or so that they spent \$55 million. My best information is that they spent somewhere between \$80 million and \$100 million buying in temporary water.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: 200.

Mr WILLIAMS: The minister for agriculture says \$200 million, and he probably knows more than I do. The reality of the impact that had on individual growers is that most of those businesses that went through that exercise last year, whether they be companies or partnerships—and remember the impact that government announcements had on the price of water; I will not go over that area again, as I have told the house number of times about that—was that they dipped into their equity. As I predicted quite a while ago, it turns out that most of them dipped into their equity to an extent that they cannot do it again, so we have hundreds and hundreds of growers across the Riverland, Murraylands and the Lower Lakes who face ruin.

That is bad enough in itself but, when they face ruin, the water will be switched off to their crops, their permanent plantings—something like 60,000 hectares of permanent plantings—and, if they are valued at \$20,000 a hectare, that is \$1.2 billion worth of capital asset that is under threat. I believe that to save that, it would need a minimum intervention by the state government of probably \$30 million to \$50 million. That would save it. That would not grow a crop: that would save that capital asset. I think that the state government should be out there telling those growers that that is what it is going to do. I think the state government should be at least as generous to those hundreds of growers as it was to the workers at Mitsubishi.

Bear in mind that I believe this is a state asset. Those crops do not only provide for the individual growers: they provide a huge amount of economic benefit to the state. They underpin those communities along the river. If we allow that to fail, it will be a very dark day for this state. Last year I called on the government to intervene in the market to buy water with the growers'

money on their behalf to iron out the market fluctuations that were being caused by market failure. The government said, 'No, we are not going to intervene'. The market did fail last year; the market will fail again this year; but, more importantly, those growers do not have the equity to do what is necessary to save those crops. South Australia stands to lose a significant proportion. We lost about 10 per cent of the citrus last year. We will lose a lot more than that this year, and it will not be just citrus: it will be right across the board. It is a dark day for South Australia.

Mr RAU (Enfield) (11:59): I join with other members in congratulating the Governor on his speech and I look forward to the many matters that he raised in his speech being the subject of further discussion and activity over the balance of this term of parliament. I want to talk briefly about a couple of issues, the first one being the matter of water.

Obviously, I was listening with some interest to the member for MacKillop. The issue about the River Murray basin and the implications of the water shortage presently is a very serious matter for people in South Australia, but I am not sure that everybody appreciates that it is a serious matter for people all over the country. I am very disappointed that, from time to time, uninformed or ill-informed or fairly unhelpful comments have been put into the media by people which have the effect of pumping up the expectations of individuals who are in genuine crisis and hardship, as has been described by the member for MacKillop, or even worse than pumping up their expectations unfairly, identifying villains and demons elsewhere at whom they can direct their anger.

I have been fortunate enough, as a part of my activities with the Natural Resources Committee, to be able to travel to many parts of the Murray-Darling Basin with a number of my parliamentary colleagues in both chambers and from both of the major parties; and, indeed, the Australian Democrats are members of that committee. I have to say that in every community we have visited we have been very well received, because they have been pleased that people from South Australia have bothered to come to have a look at their circumstances. Not only that, every place we have visited has been to a varying degree suffering the same thing that we are suffering here.

There are regional towns and communities all over the Murray-Darling Basin where people do not have jobs, where seasonal work opportunities do not exist, where the towns are contracting in terms of their population and business activity, and where farmers are finding that they are unable to secure water for their activities. This economic squeeze is not something which begins at the South Australian border. It is going on through the length and breadth of the River Murray Basin and the Darling, for that matter.

I think it is important in relation to this discussion to understand a couple of things. First, across the basin essentially two different kinds of water are available. There is high security water, which is the water upon which most of our people in the Riverland are dependent, and there is low security water, which tends to be for water allocations, particularly in New South Wales. The difference is basically this: historically, a person with a high security water licence has been able to fairly expect to get 100 per cent of their allocation, year in and year out. A person with that sort of allocation is able to make a very different investment decision in relation to the type of crop that they will grow than can a person who has low security water, who will have no guarantee that they will have water every year. Indeed, they might budget on having water only every second or third year, depending on their particular business model or what particular water licence they might hold.

The basic equation is very simple. You require two elements: land and water. You combine the two, you add a farmer, who puts in a crop, and you get productivity. That productivity produces wealth and it feeds communities and it feeds our nation, and it means that we produce products here which we did not have to import. All of that is very good, but I think people need to appreciate that, if your particular mix of land and water as a farmer is low security water with your land, you can not invest in a citrus grove, for example. You cannot invest in grapevines, pecan nuts, or anything else for that matter, because you do not know whether you are going to get water in any particular year and, if you are not going to get it in any particular year, you do not know how many years you will have to wait to get it. So those farmers invest in annual crops. They could be anything—corn, cotton, rice or wheat.

This really brings me to one of the many furrphies that I think are floating around the place at the moment, which is that all of our problems are caused by cotton farmers and rice farmers. I say that it is a furrphy because of this: each farmer has a certain amount of water and a certain amount of land. The farmer also has access to the prices, at any given time, of different grains and fibres. The farmer makes a decision—looking at the prices, looking at the land and looking at the water—'What can I plant on this land to get the biggest return for the amount of water that I've got?'

Sometimes, when they go through that equation the answer will be cotton. Sometimes, when they go through that equation the answer will be rice. Sometimes, it might surprise people (it certainly surprised me) that at Cubbie Station this year it is irrigated wheat—12,000 hectares of irrigated wheat.

In fact, 0.1 per cent of Australia's whole wheat crop will be harvested within the next few weeks at Cubbie Station, where they are now building containing silos that are so vast that they are using earthmoving equipment to build them. They will hold the 100,000 tonnes of wheat they are growing there at the moment.

Everybody seems to think Cubbie Station is a cotton farm. It is not necessarily a cotton farm: it is an irrigation farm, and it grows whatever is the most profitable crop at the time the water happens to be available. This can get down to even the time of year the water arrives. One must remember that this is low-security water and that they do not know when or if they will get water at any time.

If they get a flood event in June or July, it might mean that the appropriate crop to plant in August or September is sorghum, for instance, but I do not know, as I am not an agricultural scientist; the minister may know better than I do. The time line might mean that the crop has to be sorghum. If they get the rain in November, the time line might mean that the crop should be cotton, wheat or something else.

These people are opportunistic farmers. I do not mean that in a pejorative sense but in the sense that they take advantage of the water when it is there. The problem (if there is any problem with Cubbie Station and these other places) is not a farmer who makes the choice, 'I will do the best I can economically by combining my land with my water and producing a crop for sale.' That is not the problem. The problem is whether they should have had the water allocation in the first place, because it is the water allocation that is the essential ingredient in the equation.

It is no good blaming the farmer when they are given two of the three elements as static—that is, the water allocation and the land—for making the most intelligent decision about which crop to put in. That is not their fault. They are actually doing the right thing. It is a mistake to target cotton and rice per se as the villains of the piece: they are not, as such. The question is whether or not the water allocation for some of these properties is accurate, reasonable or sustainable. That is the question.

Climate change is a matter that continues to be the subject of debate. I ask members for a moment to assume, for the purpose of the argument, that there is no such thing as climate change. In those circumstances, we are at the moment obviously in a drought—a long and historically severe drought. There was probably one in the 1940s that compares with this, and the Federation drought probably compares with this, but in those times, of course, water usage out of the river system was nowhere near what it is now. It was completely different.

We are in a situation where we are having an historically bad episode. Even without climate change, this episode has demonstrated that we have unsustainable water allocations across the basin. We have now got to the point where, in one of these serious drought events, the water allocation policy and processes have failed the system. If it goes on much longer, it will fail the system more.

The water allocation policy has been the province of four separate jurisdictions: Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. To some extent, historically, each of them has dealt with this as though it were a river that began and ended at their border. That cannot continue and, hopefully, the new arrangements will ensure that it does not continue.

However, water allocation policy is the critical element here. If, contrary to the assumption I have just asked members to embrace, climate change is, in fact, occurring, it only makes the water allocation anomaly even more of a concern because it means that these climatic events we are experiencing now will be either more frequent or, when they occur, more prolonged, or the wet periods will be less frequent or less wet. Whichever way you look at it, there will be less water in the system over a long period, and this brings us back to the same point: the water allocation aspect is the key element in all this.

None of these answers will be easy, but I think it is important for everyone up and down the river to understand that the whole Murray-Darling Basin is actually a single community of interest, and they need to start seeing themselves as being in a community of interest. They are all people whose livelihood depends on the river system. They all live in towns where the prosperity of the

town is dependent upon the agriculture and other activities dependent on the river system. If they start looking at things in a more global fashion as communities, the chance of having an intelligent response to all of this, which will share the burden—and perhaps some of the benefits, and I will come to that in a minute—of this across the basin in an equitable way.

I would like to say in a positive light that members of the Natural Resources Committee, who have travelled interstate have spoken to people in their own communities, said to them, 'Would you be interested in coming to South Australia to see what is going on down there?' A group of them, when asked whether they are interested in doing that said, 'Yes, we will. We will pay our own way. We will come to South Australia and have a look at what's going on there'—and 30-odd people from New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria came down to South Australia last week.

I thank the member for Hammond, because he was extremely helpful in assisting me and the committee and those irrigators in understanding the issues in the lower part of the river, which is obviously his electorate. He did a tremendous job not only in answering questions from these people from interstate but also by being completely non-partisan, and I congratulate and applaud him for that; that was excellent.

Likewise, I thank the member for Finnis. Unfortunately, due to the time line (we enjoyed ourselves so much with the member for Hammond), we did not get to enjoy the member for Finnis quite as long as we might have. Equally, he did a tremendous job of showing these people what was going on in his part of the electorate, down at Goolwa, where they could see some of the implications of the current water shortages.

I have to say that I was very pleased that those people came down from interstate, and I was very pleased that they had an opportunity to see what was going on in that part of South Australia. I was very pleased with some of the dairy farmers and other irrigators that the member for Hammond was able to introduce to members of the committee and to members of the visiting irrigators group. All of them gave a very good, objective account of the difficulties they were experiencing. I think that was an important sharing exercise—for the people upstream to realise, 'Look, here's a real person; he's got a real business just like I have. He's having these difficulties; I understand where he's coming from.' I think that is very important.

From my point of view, unfortunately, a couple of the other people who addressed our visitors were a little more, shall I say, accusatory in their approach. Their message was not wrong; it was 'Look, we are passionately concerned about the lakes.' Everyone in this parliament and everyone in South Australia is concerned. However, I am a little sorry that they did not appreciate that they were talking to visitors who had come there with goodwill and who were interested in hearing about the problems, not being told that they were the cause of them. But, anyway, you have to take the rough with the smooth, and I think that, on balance, it was a good exercise. But it is an example of what I am saying. Here you have people from the far end of the basin coming down to talk to the other end of the basin. The more of that that goes on and the more that these people understand that they have common interests and that everything is interconnected, the more likely it is that we are going to have a sustainable and sensible outcome for all of this.

I pick up on the member for MacKillop's remarks about the people of the Riverland. Everyone is obviously deeply concerned about their position, but it comes back to the point about low and high security water. Their business model is based on the fact that they are going to have 100 per cent water allocation year in year out, they can afford to plant a tree, which is going to take five years before it bears any fruit at all and may be 15 years old before it is maximising its production and then run for another 20 years—and their business model is based on that particular projection. The only thing that can mess that up is not having water, because the plant dies.

They are in a terrible position, but we need to understand that they are not the only ones. There are people just across the border, in Mildura, in Victoria, who are having the same problems. In New South Wales, up around the Bourke area, grapevines are sitting in dust bowls; they are just sticks, because the allocations have been cut. These high security water allocations have been cut back 67 per cent. There are citrus trees around Bourke that are dead.

We can say from South Australia, 'Goodness me! What were they doing giving them a water allocation in Bourke in the first place?' That might be a fair question for us to ask with the benefit of hindsight. The point is that those farmers were given that allocation. They invested their time and their money based on that allocation. They planted trees, those permanent crops, using what was a rational business plan, namely, 'We are going to have permanent secure water

allocations here so that we can get on with doing this business.' They were not doing the wrong thing. They do not deserve what they are getting either.

I come back to the point that everybody is having a tough time. Any sort of snake oil solution to this will only lead to heartbreak and more tragedy for the people who are already suffering great difficulties. We need to be as objective as we possibly can, and we need to dispense with rubbish and try to focus on facts. Some of the rubbish is that somewhere up there—'up there' being an unknown place—there is a huge volume of water just waiting to pulse down here and change our lives.

I cannot claim to have looked in every nook and cranny up and down the Murray-Darling Basin, nor can any member of that committee, but I can tell you that we have had a pretty good look around. If there is a huge pile of water sitting up there somewhere, these towns are going to remarkable lengths to hide it. They are closing their Woolworths store because they do not have enough people in the town anymore to go shopping; they have more 'For sale' signs in the streets than you can possibly imagine; and they have cotton gins mothballed. It is the biggest deception since D-Day, if that is what is going on. The truth is that it is not going on. The government of New South Wales is not letting its rural towns and communities die so that it can hide water. It is not happening. We just need to be a bit realistic about this. Everybody has the problem.

Another one of these furrphies is, 'Let's buy Cubbie Station, because Cubbie Station has a 450 megalitre capacity.'

Mr Venning: Gig.

Mr RAU: I beg your pardon: it has a 450 gigitalitre capacity, which is the same as Sydney Harbour. Again, a couple of weeks ago, we were at Cubbie Station, and the owners were kind enough to take us around and show us what they are doing. The scale of that place is something that is difficult to comprehend until you see it, but they have about 20,000-odd hectares of laser-levelled land. At the moment they have 12,000 hectares under irrigated wheat, which is something I had never heard of.

They have storage capacities there for 450 gigitalitres, and the storage holders—the dams—have walls which are probably eight or nine metres high and wide enough to drive a four-wheel-drive comfortably across the top of them. These walls go for 10 kilometres in one direction and probably a kilometre and a half in another. They are cut up into cells. They have only two cells partially full at the moment. We drove along the narrow gap between those two cells and the owner, who was sitting next to me in the car, said, 'The cell on the left-hand side is 1,800 hectares, and the cell on the right-hand side is 1,500 hectares.' They are just the dams, and they are not all the dams: they are the two that are partly full at the moment. The trees are left inside the dams. The dams are full of trees, because the dead trees keep the waves down. They are so big they have two metre waves in there.

This an industrial-scale enterprise; it is not farming in any sense that I have previously comprehended it. But why is it there? Because, at some point in time, a state government sold or gave a water allocation to an individual or a group of individuals—in this case it is a group. The present Cubbie Station is an amalgam of 12 previously independent licences on that one big property, and they harvest according to their licences when they get water. They have not had any for years—although they got a bit because of some rain last summer.

You might say, 'What a terrible thing is Cubbie Station!' That may or may not be a reasonable comment to make, but do not blame the farmer who has bought the land, received the water entitlement and invested his own money to convert that into something which enables him to grow a product. Do not blame him for that: blame the water allocation, if you like, but do not blame the farmer.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

Mr RAU: The next point is: can you let it go from Cubbie? That is another interesting point. Cubbie is all gravity fed. The water comes into the storages by gravity feed out of the flood plain. It goes out of the storages onto the agricultural zones by gravity feed. There is no way it will go uphill. I do not know how you could get it out of there in any case but, leaving that aside, if you released that water you are talking about releasing something in South-East Queensland that would have to run the gauntlet of the whole Darling part of the Murray-Darling Basin, and that would involve dealing with all the transmission losses, all the evaporation losses and all the other people along the way who have a water entitlement and who would then, by virtue of that particular amount of

water coming past their door, be legitimately entitled, under their allocation, to take some of that water; and, by the time it got down here, you would be lucky to get a cupful. There is another furphy exploded: the idea of 'Buy Cubbie and the world will change'—that is nonsense.

I am not saying and I am not trying to say that Cubbie is a fantastic thing. It is probably an example of a foolish allocation of water. However, it brings you back to the same point, that the allocations are the real issue: are they sustainable allocations? If they are not sustainable allocations then something needs to be done about it.

The other furphy is when people ask, 'Why don't you go out and buy some water?' I come back to the issue of high and low-security licences, high and low-security water. If you are going to buy low-security water, you might as well buy fresh air. You are buying fresh air in a dam, because there is no low-security water. All you are doing is buying a futures contract; you are buying a contract which says, 'In the future, if it rains enough for this particular allocation to be activated, you will get it.' That is what it says; nothing more and nothing less. It will not deliver one drop of water—not one. If you buy high-security water, the question is: who is going to sell it to you? Most of the high-security water people, who have any at all, desperately need it for their own purposes.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

Mr RAU: Exactly. Even those people do not have 100 per cent of their high-security allocation, depending on where you are buying from—whether you are buying from South Australia or from the Murrumbidgee area or wherever. Even if you get that percentage of low-security water, again, if it is released into the system how much of it is going to wind up down here? We need to wake up and face reality. This is a serious problem and there is no simple quick fix, unless somebody has a trunk line to the Almighty and can persuade Him to drop immense amounts of water from South-East Queensland, through New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia in a biblical-scale flood over the next few months. Let us have 1956 again; that would be a good thing. So, it will be difficult: it will not be easy.

The one thing I would say to members is please try to keep away from the glib stuff and focus on the facts; focus on the reality of this thing. It is very bad. Making up simple solutions reminds me of a few years ago, when Joh Bjelke-Petersen reckoned he had found a bloke who could run a car on water. Every few years another specialist who reckons he can cure cancer by some obscure method throws himself up, and all these poor individuals are tormented by those types of people. There is a similar sort of snake oil type atmosphere circling a bit around this. We have to get away from that and just get to the facts—and the facts are not very nice, but we ignore them at our peril. That is probably a little more than I wanted to say about water, but I think it is important that we try to get our feet on the ground about water.

The last thing I would like to say is that I was really pleased to see on the television a couple of weeks ago that the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister have embraced what strikes me as a very refreshing and positive view about education in our schools. I was particularly impressed, because I think it is important for the education system to have a focus that puts the students front and centre, gives due consideration to the wishes and aspirations of their parents and tries to focus on ensuring that the standard of education that an individual receives, whether they be in one of the more affluent electorates in South Australia or Sydney or anywhere else, or whether in an electorate like the member for Napier's or mine, is exactly the same. I think that aspiration is a very important and positive one.

For my part, if that ruffles a few feathers along the way, maybe those feathers need to be ruffled. Those students and families deserve and need the best possible outcomes they can have, because I think history has shown that the only way there is any real chance of people breaking out of the cycles of poverty or real social difficulty is for them to have a decent educational opportunity. I applaud the federal government for that, and I look forward to those initiatives working their way through the system.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (12:28): I also wish to place on record my congratulations to His Excellency for the way in which he delivered his speech during the opening of this session of parliament. I wish him well in his role as Governor. There is no doubt that the biggest issue facing South Australia and Australia is water. I do not intend to discuss that topic during my contribution. The members for MacKillop and Enfield have discussed it at some length, and I know that the members for Hammond and Finnis, whose electorates cover the Murray, will no doubt respond with far better local knowledge than mine.

I want to take more of a traditional approach to the Address in Reply and cover some of the portfolio areas for which I am currently the shadow minister, deal with some local electorate issues and then make a couple of comments about some other matters that are of interest to me. The portfolio issues will not take long, because I am the shadow minister for gambling, social inclusion, consumer affairs, government enterprises and volunteers.

Four of those five topics did not get mentioned in the Governor's speech. That is not a criticism of the Governor, because we all know that the speech is signed off by cabinet and delivered to His Excellency for him to give to the parliament. There is nothing to which to respond in relation to those issues as far as the speech is concerned.

I want to make a couple of comments in relation to consumer affairs. Frankly, consumer affairs is not a priority of this government. Everything is under review. I notice that the government has just changed the minister. The minister today has adopted an opposition policy in relation to the reintroduction of waivers for recreational groups. While we support the reintroduction of waivers for recreational groups, I cannot understand why the government has taken so long to act on this matter. The opposition introduced legislation four or five months ago. Groups were complaining to the minister well before that and, frankly, the disinterest of the minister and the government has done a disservice to South Australian recreational groups. It appears that the government, as a result of opposition pressure, has decided to reintroduce waivers—which will be a positive.

In relation to gambling, the parliament in the next few months will face the issue of the abolition of the price cap on the sale of pokies. Currently, there is a price cap of about \$50,000 on the sale of poker machines or their entitlements. The government is considering removing the cap. This will be a conscience vote for members of the Liberal Party, so every member will be able to express their own view. It will be interesting to see what the parliament thinks of the concept of removing the price cap. Common sense says that, if we remove the price cap, the price will find the market price, and that is more likely to be one which could be afforded by the big end of town (that is, Coles, Woolworths and the pokie barons) rather than the little end of town.

I have not seen the government's final proposition, so I am talking from a matter of principle rather than detail. If that is the case, then common sense would suggest that the big end of town would have more opportunity to buy the poker machines than the small end of town. That is likely to be the case. It is also likely to be the case that the poker machines that are sold will be the low performing, low profit machines. They will be purchased by those who can afford the market price and put into areas where, hopefully, for the business model—and I say business will think hopefully—they will go into high profit, high turnover areas.

This is a strategy to reduce problem gambling. According to the government, the low profit, low turnover machines will be purchased by the big end of town and put into areas where they become high turnover, high profit machines and, therefore, reduce problem gambling. I think there are issues with the argument that the government is putting forward. I look forward to receiving the final detail of the proposition in due course, but I have some concern about this principle of the abolition of the cap and what the real motive behind it might be.

In relation to my local electorate, the issues have not changed largely over the past couple of years when I have given this address, because the government simply has not invested any money into the issues which the electorate of Davenport has put before the parliament or the government. As I said yesterday in a grievance, the road infrastructure is poor and needs to be fixed for road safety and traffic management reasons and fire evacuation purposes. A number of schools need sports halls. Hawthorndene Primary School and Flagstaff Hill Primary School need an investment in decent sports halls.

The Eden Hills Primary School is currently in negotiations with the government about the placement of an extra classroom. The government wants to put it on one site; the school community wants to put it on a different site. There is about a \$40,000 to \$50,000 cost difference in that, and the government wants to charge the school the \$40,000 or \$50,000 to put it on the site of the school's choice. We are working through that issue with the Eden Hills Primary School.

I was pleased that the federal Labor Party adhered to its promise to commit \$3 million in relation to the rail freight bypass study which is about looking at moving the freight line north. I have been the strongest advocate of that particular study and proposal for four or five years, and I am pleased that the federal Labor Party has kept its promise and delivered that money. It looks as though the study will be completed in September 2009, which means both major parties can put to the 2010 federal election their commitments in relation to moving that freight line north of Adelaide.

Another issue is that of pensioners. Davenport has many pensioners. It seems to me that pensioners have been a somewhat forgotten group. As parliaments all around Australia continue to add regulation after regulation to business or the community generally, that has significantly increased costs to pensioner groups who are on fixed incomes and who really have very limited flexibility as to how they can cover extra costs. A good example of that will be the carbon tax that the federal government will impose through the carbon reduction program (or whatever its latest trendy name). Ultimately, that will increase the price of public transport, electricity and consumer goods because businesses will be paying a tax and that will be passed onto the consumer. That will all flow through to pensioners who are on fixed incomes.

The Rudd government, in what I think will be a pretty cynical exercise, will increase the pension in the next budget, there is no doubt about that. You do not get the federal Treasurer, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Prime Minister saying that they could not live on the single pension unless they are laying the groundwork to announce an increase in the single pension. The question is: will the increase in the single pension simply be an increase to cover the cost of the carbon tax or will it be an increase to cover the carbon tax plus CPI; that is, any actual real increase above the cost of living and the extra cost of the carbon tax? If it is only an increase to cover the carbon tax, then it is simply a cynical exercise, and again like the member for Enfield said, there is a bit of a snake oil salesman about that type of announcement, if that is what it ends up being. I will be watching that with some interest because many pensioners in Davenport are struggling with the cost of living: it is as simple as that.

I raise two other issues which have been brought to my attention over the past six months or so. One is Steve Burgess. I appeared on the *Stateline* program a few weeks ago in relation to Mr Burgess's case. An investigation was conducted into Mr Burgess by Families SA. Eventually he received a letter that was meant to be a letter of apology. However, the letter did not include the word 'apology' or 'sorry', but they tell him it is a letter of apology. He was cleared of an allegation of rape. The reason Mr Burgess can speak about this is that he did not sign a confidentiality agreement. He was offered his legal costs on the basis that he signed a confidentiality agreement and did not speak about it. The problem I have with this policy is: how many cases of sexual abuse that have not been sustained are covered up by the signing of a confidentiality agreement?

How many confidentiality agreements have been signed each year for the last 10 years, under Liberal and Labor governments? I am sure it went on under the Liberal government. This is not a Labor/Liberal thing, as far as I am concerned: it is simply a matter of what the parliament is allowed to know and what the parliament is not allowed to know.

If Mr Burgess did not have the courage not to sign the confidentiality agreement, the parliament would not know of this case. I do not know whether there is one other case out there, or a thousand; I have no idea. I do not know whether the parliament knows: I suspect it does not. I am not even sure the minister knows. So, I have written to the Auditor-General, bringing this matter of policy to his attention and seeking advice on whether there is some way of improving the system so that the parliament is better informed.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I recall a confidentiality agreement which you were the beneficiary of.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Let's talk about that. Let the parliament talk about that.

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

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I am not sure that I have ever signed a confidentiality agreement, Attorney.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Really?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I do not recall one. I have signed one?

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You are the beneficiary.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Attorney is on the record now as having said that. That is fine. All I am saying, Attorney, and to the house, is: can this area of the administration of the law in Families and Communities be better improved? I invite you to look at the Steve Burgess case and see whether you are comfortable with whether he was treated fairly.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: That is your point. I just want you to be consistent.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The other issue relates to the Easling matter, and I have raised the Easling matter publicly, so I will not go into great detail about it here. I did not really intend to use this Address in Reply debate today to talk about the Easling matter. To my mind, it is really quite simple. Every non-government MP now agrees there should be an inquiry into the Tom Easling matter. There are three or four key principles, I think, that drive me to the conclusion that there needs to be an inquiry.

Should investigators be required to take notes of investigations? If any of the Labor MPs or their family members are being investigated, I think they would say it is a fair thing that the investigator should take notes. If the investigators do take notes, I think most people would say that those notes should be kept and not shredded. I also think that when the people are being interviewed the tape recorder should be turned on for the whole of the interview. I think most people would think that fair.

I am standing before a banner put up in the parliament about women's suffrage, and there is a slogan at the bottom that says 'Equal before the law'. I encourage people to consider whether an investigation of that type really does make all of us equal before the law. Some people will say it does not matter because this was not a police investigation, but I question that. I think it fair that the tape recorder be turned on for the whole of the interview, and I think it fair that notes not be shredded, and I think it fair that notes should be taken during investigations.

If members opposite, in their consideration of my request for an inquiry, share that concern, I encourage them to make it known to those who matter that the inquiry should be held, because I do not think any South Australian should have to endure an inquiry that has those qualities about it.

I will not touch today on the comments of Mr Pallaras about my taking up this matter, particularly his comments about the morality of my taking up this particular matter, because we all know in this place that we are here to take up matters on behalf of our constituents. Whether that be easy or hard, at the end of the day we are their representatives and we need to take up the matter if we think that some matters were unfair. I say to members of this house that, regardless of their view of Mr Easling or the allegations against him, the court acquitted him.

I am sure that the Attorney will tell members that there were 20 counts: two counts were acquitted under instruction of the judge; 12 counts were acquitted unanimously; and six counts were acquitted by majority. The court made its decision about Mr Easling, and what I am simply asking the government to do is to make a judgment about the quality of the investigation. Anyone who is investigated by government, whether that be the native vegetation branch, or whatever (and there are plenty of inspectors out there in government), surely they have the right to see the notes of the interview, surely they have the right to know that the whole of the interview was taped and surely they have the right to know that notes were even taken during the interview.

Those sorts of issues, I think, are very serious matters. My view is that, if we allow that investigation to go past without an inquiry, there is a message to the investigating agencies in that, and the message is: 'It's okay.' Well, regardless of what Mr Pallaras thinks of Iain Evans, the member for Davenport, whether I am courageous indeed or whether I am a fool, the reality is that I do not accept that style of investigation. I simply do not think it is fair or just. At the end of the day, the government—and I am not saying the political wing of government here, I am saying the prosecution and its investigating agencies—threw everything it had at Mr Easling. They left no stone unturned, and he was acquitted.

However, I ask members of the Labor Party, the government (who I really sincerely hope come on board with this inquiry): if you or your family were being investigated, would you accept notes being shredded? Would you accept interviews not being fully taped? Would you accept notes simply not being taken? The answer is that I do not think you would. It is from a principled position that I take up this issue. If it does not make me popular in some areas of the government, so be it, but I think that some questions need to be asked about exactly what went on in that agency at that time. If the parliament does not ask the questions, then who do we expect to? Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (12:49): I also rise to congratulate His Excellency the Governor on his speech delivered yesterday to the joint sitting of the parliament, and I acknowledge very strongly that the experience and skill set that he brings to his very important role in South Australia is a key one for our future. The work he has already done in assisting to secure defence industries to be based in this state is acknowledged by all. I have no doubt that, during his period in office, he

will perform the role wonderfully to the expectations of all South Australians and carry on the fine tradition of those who have gone before him.

I have read through the speech delivered by the Governor yesterday. Obviously there are a few things that interest me in particular, but I also note that the Governor has strongly reinforced the fact that water is the key challenge facing South Australia in the future. Those who are in here and those who meet with communities all the time would appreciate that water is the top subject that people talk about. They are very concerned about where it is going to come from in future and they are very concerned about their own needs. If they are people who rely upon water to derive their income, it is of key concern.

I do not profess to have detailed knowledge about it. The community that I serve is supplied predominantly by pipes from the River Murray. Some communities access their water supply through SA Water mains which come from underground water supplies. Having spoken to people not only in the electorate that I serve but in other parts of the state (and I have had some quite detailed conversations with people from the Riverland), it is obvious to me that everybody is very concerned about it. It has become a national issue. It really has made people realise that what we have done traditionally in this great state over many years will probably have to change enormously. Will the industries that have grown up over the last 50 or 60 years in some areas be able to continue? There are so many uncertainties.

We talk about high security and low security water. I acknowledge that the member for MacKillop spoke at length in his address on water needs, as did the member for Enfield, who possesses detailed knowledge as chair of the Natural Resources Committee and the investigations that that committee has undertaken. The member for Hammond, from the opposition's side of the chamber, is very passionate and espouses the water issues that face SA and, indeed, the nation on a constant basis, as does the member for Finnis. Given that they serve communities that are affected by the River Murray in some way, they will ensure that our side of parliament is as aware as is humanly possible—from the information that they obtain from so many different sources—of the issues and what we as a party need to formulate as our policy position on these matters.

I note that, later in his speech, His Excellency the Governor referred to the desal plant. It is good that the government finally made an announcement on it; however, I find it frustrating that, when in January last year the member for Davenport, as leader of the opposition at that stage, announced that the Liberal Party wished to have a desalination plant built in Adelaide, it was criticised. We used the experience of Western Australia—where I believe a 45 gigalitre plant was constructed at a cost of \$320 million for the plant and \$67 million to connect it to the storage and pipe networks—as an example of what could be achieved in South Australia. My recollection is that that would have created the capacity to source approximately 23 per cent of metropolitan Adelaide's water supply (I could be wrong on that), but it is an example of the technology that exists.

Frustratingly, when we announced what was an obvious initiative, the government, through minister Wright who was responsible for the portfolio at the time, said it was not necessary and that we did not need to increase storage and we did not need a desal plant. Now the fact has come home to the government that our water supply really needs to be secured. We must ensure that we have water for the industry needs of the state. We must ensure that we have water for the residential needs of the people who live in this state. Importantly, we must ensure that we have water for the food production needs of this state and that we have water for the environment.

There is no doubt that managing that is an enormous task. It is an absolutely enormous task to try to bring together four states with different needs and very different positions. To reach agreement and have the federal government involved in the discussions really is an enormous challenge, but it has to be overcome. We have to ensure that not only South Australia but also Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland have access to a water supply that allows the communities to continue to flourish. That is what we want to do. We become members of parliament purely because we want to serve our communities. We want to ensure that our communities receive the best possible service from government, because government is the organisation that has the greatest amount of resources to provide those services. Challenges are not easy; I respect that and, the longer that I am in this role, the more I will probably come to appreciate that, but it is one that has to be overcome.

I am pleased to see that there is certainly an ongoing commitment to the effluent treatment and to stormwater use and capture also. Now, there is some diversity of comment. I have read some media releases that talk about the fact that the Treasurer and the Minister for Water Security

have somewhat different positions on that. I am not sure what the real situation, but it is important that we actually do use that water because it is a resource there waiting to be used.

Effluent water treatment comes at a cost; there is no doubt about that. For communities that have been in existence for some time, it is a very expensive exercise to suddenly retrofit a town with effluent collection, and I can certainly relate that to the fact that within my own electorate of Moonta, Moonta Bay and Port Hughes there is an enormous project being contemplated at the moment. The council, through funding that has been sourced, has managed to do the design. My recollection is that it is something like a \$30 million project. It will collect the effluent water from all of the properties within what is basically one big community now (but has three separate names) and treat that water and make it available for use on parks and reserves, including, as I understand it, part of the Dunes Golf Course development too.

A lot of people within those communities are very upset. As I understand it, the level of funding that is supplied to seed funding that is provided to these projects is not what it was. Whereas previously I think two-thirds of the project was supplied by a central fund handed by government to local government to administer, now it is something like only about 20 or 25 per cent.

That means that property owners actually have to pick up the slack on that. They are the ones that suddenly have to find, in the Moonta, Moonta Bay and Port Hughes situation, a connection cost at the moment of two and a half thousand dollars rising, I think, to \$4,500 within a few years and then subject to CPI increases after that, let alone the fact that they also have to be responsible for the cost of connecting from the connection point at the front of their property to wherever their current system might be based on their property.

Given that this community is made up of a lot of older people who have been there for many years and do not have this level of financial capacity to fund these sorts of works—and I have heard quotes given of, say \$10,000 or \$20,000 for a plumber to actually connect to the effluent scheme—it will be very hard. That said, though, I do support the fact that the project has actually to take place. Where communities are close to the marine environment, there can be no doubt at all that the effluent waste is actually discharging into the marine environment. Moonta, Moonta Bay and Port Hughes market themselves very strongly on the fact that they are water-based communities. They attract an enormous number of tourists. They want to make sure that they preserve that pristine environment that they have and the only way to do that is by ensuring that there is no effluent discharge.

We have had it in place for probably a hundred years, but there are a lot of challenges to making sure that that goes forward, so I would encourage the government to do all it can to actually support communities to a far greater degree than they are at the moment to allow these schemes to occur. It is an easy way. The water is being used but instead of actually letting it just soak away or go to waste, let us make sure that we actually collect it and that are we able to treat it and reuse it.

On stormwater use, that is where I mentioned earlier the diversity of opinion between the Treasurer and the Minister for Water Security. The Liberals have a very strong plan on this. We want to make sure that we collect as much as humanly possible. The plan that we released a few months ago allowed, from recollection, the collection of 80 gigalitres of stormwater per year, and 13 points were going to be established where the water could be treated, cleaned through natural methods, pumped into the aquifer and then recovered as required.

Aquifer storage and recharge is acknowledged technology: it works. The City of Salisbury has demonstrated as well as anybody in the world how it can work and they have commercial markets for the water that they collect and reuse. Let us hope that these sorts of things become a solution or part of the solution to South Australia's water needs. I believe that 80 gigalitres of water is equivalent to about 50 per cent of demands of the metropolitan area.

There is no doubt that the Murray is in crisis. The future capacity for us to use Murray water is an unknown. Let us hope this drought breaks soon, but it is an unknown. We have to ensure that we invest taxpayer funds in schemes that will ensure that we can access a water supply, and stormwater reuse is an important one, as is effluent, as is desal technology.

I also want to comment briefly on the fact that in the Governor's speech there was reference made to South Australia's health system but, interestingly though, I could not actually find any reference at all to the Country Health Care Plan. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

[Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00]

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY PRACTICE BILL

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the house the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the bill.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder): Presented a petition signed by 37 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to reconsider the proposed new funding model for South Australian schools and to put in place a proper and appropriate agreement on public schoolteachers' pay and conditions within a binding enterprise agreement.

CARBON POLLUTION REDUCTION SCHEME

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) (14:04): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Today I released the South Australian government's submission to the commonwealth government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme green paper. There is no doubt that the proposed scheme, a cap and trade emissions trading scheme, will be one of the most significant economic changes experienced by Australia. For the first time in this nation's history, there will be a limit and a price on carbon emissions.

In August 2006, I stood on Bondi Beach with the former premier of New South Wales and the former deputy premier of Victoria and released a paper with a design for a national emissions trading scheme.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yes, there have been a few Liberal leaders since then. Let me just tell you. The Howard government said it would ruin the economy and that it was doomed to fail.

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I think Iain Evans was the leader of the Liberal Party then; that was when you pledged him your support. The Howard government said it would ruin the economy and was doomed to fail. Now, just 10 months after the Rudd Labor government came to power, we are well on our way to implementing just such a scheme.

The scheme is expected to have a direct impact on about 1,000 companies nationwide, including about 40 South Australian companies, with a flow-on effect on the community and businesses broadly. For this reason, we need to ensure that all households and businesses are supported with the transition to a low-carbon economy.

The government has highlighted a number of areas in its submission to support this transition, including the importance of assisting households and emission-intensive industries, and addressing the impacts that the scheme will have on public transport. I have always argued that every cent paid into an emissions trading scheme must be used to assist Australian households and businesses to adjust to a carbon constrained world, as well as into research to reduce emissions.

No emissions trading scheme must ever be used as some kind of revenue raiser. The money has to go back to the Australian people and Australian businesses that are affected by their carbon content. As part of the process, I have met with many industry representatives in recent weeks from companies that are based in South Australia or that have operations in South Australia—including manufacturing, mining and energy—to listen to their views on the scheme. I have been meeting with companies such as AGL, Origin, and other companies such as OneSteel, to assess their response to the green paper.

Key features of the state government's submission include supporting South Australian households as they face higher costs for carbon-intensive products such as fuel and electricity. The

South Australian government welcomes the federal scheme's measures that would see households assisted with tax relief, increasing benefit payments and implementing energy efficiency measures. While it is crucial that we move to a lower emissions economy, households must be assisted with this transition. For its part, the South Australian government will assist low income households through the Residential Energy Efficiency Scheme due to commence on 1 January 2009.

Emission-intensive industries should not be disadvantaged by the lack of a global price on carbon. For this reason, the South Australian submission fully supports the provision of assistance to emissions-intensive trade-exposed industries. For those trade-exposed industries that are not eligible for assistance under the commonwealth's proposed criteria, such as the glass industry, the state government recommends that support be provided using the Climate Change Action Fund.

We want to see the cap and trade scheme see a transition to assist industries to adjust. We do not want to see South Australian industries being forced to close and to see that work being done offshore in countries that do not give a damn about climate change, so that is why transition and support are vitally important.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: We said that right from the start, and I know the Leader of the Opposition is carbon-confused. He does not understand. He is a climate change denier. We saw that when we had the greenhouse gas reduction legislation where in-step with my doppelgänger—

Mr WILLIAMS: A point of order.

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

Mr WILLIAMS: I thought debate was out of order.

The SPEAKER: No, it is not out of order in ministerial statements; it is in question time. The Premier has been given leave. The Premier.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I did not realise that after 23 years I am finally obeying standing orders. It is about time I read them. The key thing about that is that we saw the Leader of the Opposition come in and tell us that our greenhouse gas reduction legislation was not strong enough. It was about the strongest in the world but it was not strong enough. He was a bit green that day. He was much greener than David Suzuki, Tim Flannery or David Attenborough. Then the business community got on the phone and said, 'Hey, mate, do you realise what this will do?' The next day it was going to destroy the economy.' Now, apparently, he supports the new Howard position, which is the position that we had as CCAF, which he then opposed. So, that is the story of this Leader of the Opposition. He is the flip-flop man. He has no consistency, no memory that lasts longer than 24 hours. You cannot have a reckless premier in this state. People remember that those who bark loudest will lose longest.

For those trade-exposed industries that are not eligible for assistance under the commonwealth's proposed criteria, such as the glass industry, the state government recommends that support should be provided using the Climate Change Action Fund. The impacts of the scheme on public transport must also be considered. Public transport will be one of the solutions for reducing emissions from the transport sector and encouraging more sustainable transport strategies. The inclusion of diesel fuel and electricity in the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme could increase the cost of public transport. The South Australian government recommends that the commonwealth government avoids any negative effects on public transport, including electrified and diesel trains and trams.

For our part, the South Australian government is putting its money where its mouth is. The 2008-09 budget reflects the importance of public transport, with a 10-year, \$2 billion investment to upgrade, electrify and extend the metropolitan rail network, and to extend the tram to Port Adelaide, Semaphore and AAMI Stadium. We remember, of course, that trams were in the opposition's policy; when we announced it the opposition was opposed to it, so we get used to this.

The South Australian government will continue its leadership in tackling climate change by promoting renewable energy, encouraging energy efficiency and assisting adaptation measures. Despite being a relatively small state, we have more solar, wind and geothermal activity and investment than any other state. We have 8 per cent of the population of Australia, and we have 53 per cent of the nation's wind power, 40 per cent of the nation's grid connected solar power, as well as 80 per cent of the nation's geothermal investment—

Mr Hamilton-Smith: Thanks to the Liberal program.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The Leader of the Opposition said, 'Thanks to the Liberals.' There was not one single wind turbine, that I know of, operating in South Australia until we were elected to government, so it is totally dream world.

Climate change has significant consequences for our economy and environment. Government, business and the community must work collaboratively in adjusting to a carbon constrained world.

PAPERS

The following paper was laid on the table:

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

Leases of Properties held by the Commissioner for Highways—Report 2007-08

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Mr RAU (Enfield) (14:30): I bring up the 23rd report of the committee on Deep Creek Revisited: A Search for Straight Answers.

Report received and ordered to be published.

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I draw to honourable members' attention the presence in the gallery today of participants of the Business and Parliament Trust (my guests), students from the University of South Australia (guests of the member for member for Adelaide) and students from Mount Carmel College (guests of the member for Cheltenham).

QUESTION TIME

IRIS SYSTEMS

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Leader of the Opposition) (14:14): Can the Minister for Health confirm that the manager of information technology at the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science purchased for \$1 certain software called IRIS 2, which was developed by IMVS staff, and that the rights were subsequently assigned to the manager's domestic partner and the partners of two other IMVS employees, who sold it for \$770,000 with an annual maintenance fee of \$200,000 per annum over five years?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurana—Minister for Health, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (14:15): I am aware of issues associated with allegations along these lines at the IMVS. As I understand it, it is a police matter. I am not too sure at this stage where it is in the process. I will take some advice about what information I can provide to the house, given the sensitivities of the matter. However, I point out to the house that the IMVS operated as its own board, as a statutory authority. I introduced legislation to this parliament to change that so we have direct control over that organisation. That direct control came into place on 1 July. Members on the other side wanted to keep the arrangements in place, which created the circumstances that the member has now brought to our attention.

APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINEESHIP PROGRAM

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (14:16): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What indication is there that an increasing number of South Australians are taking up and completing apprenticeships and traineeships?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (14:16): I thank the member for his question and acknowledge his advocacy in his area on matters relating to training and education. I am very pleased to inform the house that some excellent news for our state has recently come to hand. Figures released today by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research for the March 2008 quarter show that South Australia has recorded a sharp increase in the number of people embarking on traineeships and apprenticeships, the largest quarterly rise in four years—and, I might add, at a rate almost three times the national increase.

These results recognise the high quality of our state's training system, the growing public awareness of the value of having work-ready skills and the tremendous opportunities that exist in South Australia to enter into rewarding and sustainable careers, especially given the job opportunities associated with our expanding industry sectors and the major projects underway.

The figures show that, in the quarter ending 31 March 2008, 7,500 apprentices and trainees commenced their training (16.4 per cent higher than for the same period 12 months earlier), compared to a national increase of 5.5 per cent over the same period. Not only has the number of people commencing an apprenticeship or traineeship increased but it is also very pleasing to note that the number of people completing their training over the 12 months to 31 March 2008 has shown an increase of 6.3 per cent, compared to 2 per cent nationally.

It is also very encouraging that the traditional trades recorded the highest level of training growth, with figures indicating that, at 31 March 2008, an estimated 13,000 people were training in traditional trades. That is an increase of 6.5 per cent on a year earlier. Traditional trades commencements were up by 21.7 per cent over the 12-month period compared to 9.5 per cent nationally, and completions are up 24.9 per cent on the previous year's figures, compared to 14.2 per cent nationally.

As the Minister for Youth, I am pleased to say that the figures also indicate that young people are completing their training at an increasing rate, with the NCVET data showing a 10.9 per cent increase over 12 months in the completion rate for under 24 year olds, almost double the 6.2 per cent national figure. The total number of people in training as at 31 March 2008 also increased slightly compared to 12 months ago, with approximately 33,900 apprentices and trainees in our system, which is approximately 500 more than 12 months earlier. Females accounted for 35 per cent of the state's total number of apprentices and trainees, which is 2.3 percentage points higher than the national average.

I know that the house as a whole will celebrate these figures today. These figures suggest that the government's message about people needing to equip themselves to take best advantage of future job demand, especially in the expanding minerals and defence sectors, is indeed hitting home.

IRIS SYSTEMS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:20): My question is to the Minister for Health. When was the minister first informed, and by whom, that an investigation into the government's dealings with IRIS 2 systems was being undertaken by the Attorney-General's Government Investigations Unit?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurua—Minister for Health, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (14:20): I would have to check my records, obviously, to get the detailed information. I am happy to do that for the honourable member. The issues relating to IMVS and the allegations are unsubstantiated. They are unproved at this stage. I understand these matters are being investigated by the fraud squad in the police department. I am happy to get a fuller briefing for the honourable member, but it is a matter for appropriate investigation at that level.

It would be very unwise for members and me to make accusations without a proper level of investigation. In any event, this matter is the subject of an ongoing investigation. I do not want the investigation compromised by statements which might make it difficult subsequently for the investigators. I am being cautious in relation to this matter, but I am happy to get a greater level of information for the honourable member. In relation to the particular time, I can say it is some time ago but I cannot recall exactly when. I will get that information for the honourable member.

TRADE SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

Mr KENYON (Newland) (14:21): My question is to the Minister for Education. How are local businesses and industry people being informed about the Trade Schools for the Future initiative?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Adelaide—Minister for Education, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (14:22): I know the honourable member is concerned about the opportunity in business and industry to employ well-trained and skilled professionals. He realises that with high employment levels and burgeoning economic growth there is a shortage of skilled personnel within our country and, in particular, within our state. There is a growing demand for a better skilled workforce within South

Australia, and the Rann government wants to ensure that young people are job ready and employable in order to take up those many opportunities.

Our investment of \$29.5 million in our Trade Schools for the Future initiative will do that. The trade schools form clusters between secondary schools, TAFE institutes, local industry and community leaders and deliver practical job and career opportunities to students in areas of particular skills shortages. I am delighted to say that this initiative has had significant support from industry and, in particular, Business SA has been one of our key partners throughout the implementation of this strategy.

Already 10 trade schools are operating and the initiative is proving a significant success. We have managed 400 school-based apprenticeships which previously have been difficult to market because employers and tradespeople have struggled to understand how they could manage a school-based apprenticeship within their workplace and train a student at the same time as they are engaged in senior secondary education. Indeed, a critical factor in the success of the trade schools has been building employers' understanding of how the system might work, importantly how it would benefit them, and how they can use it within their business to build a better skilled workforce.

Our series of trade schools briefings across the state have allowed us to speak to employers and the market in order to explain how the system is working and will work for them. Part of the success of the program has been in our apprenticeship brokers. Our 20 apprenticeship brokers—two in each trade school—are employed specifically to do the brokerage between the industry placements and jobs and the schools, and particularly ensure that the families and teachers, as well as the students involved, understand the implications and the opportunities so that they are job ready to take up those positions.

Our apprenticeship brokers have skills that we would not find in our normal teaching workforce. Our apprenticeship brokers come from the trades sector, industry and business and understand the issues involved in taking on part-time apprentices. I am pleased to inform the house that our apprenticeship brokers are now working at the show. At the Royal Show, there is a display of Trade Schools for the Future in Jubilee Hall which members might like to visit should any member not yet have been to the show—I am sure all of you have been or are going. They are explaining to families, students and employers, as well as employers on other stands, how this system works.

I particularly encourage business leaders to take up these opportunities because this will not just help their business and our state but it will provide real opportunities for young people who will be guaranteed a career in the future by taking up the many skilled job opportunities available in our burgeoning economic state of South Australia.

IRIS SYSTEMS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:25): My question again is to the Minister for Health. Will the minister explain why SA Pathology, the new state-owned pathology service, has entered into a \$300,000 a year contract with IRIS Systems International Pty Ltd when this company is still under investigation by the police department and the Attorney-General's Government Investigations Unit?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurana—Minister for Health, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (14:26): As I understand it, the IT company to which the honourable member refers provides a particular information service to SA Pathology and, as I understand it—and I am going from memory, I will certainly correct all this if I am wrong—the IT was developed within the IMVS—and this is part of the investigation—through some sort of process which then ended up being owned outside the service, but it is a bit of information technology that they require. I have very serious concerns about the way the IMVS was run and that is one of the reasons I introduced legislation in this place to get rid of the barriers between government and that body. We have now created a new service which is being run, I believe, in a much better fashion.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: You are making assumptions and slurring people on the basis of pieces of information which you stitch together in your usual fashion. It is a most unreasonable process that you go through. I am happy to provide the house with the information in relation to this

matter. I am telling the house what I recall, but I will have the question checked and I will get a fuller explanation.

MARBLE HILL

Ms SIMMONS (Morialta) (14:27): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. Will the minister outline to the house the state of negotiations surrounding the sale of Marble Hill in the electorate of Morialta?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Minister Assisting the Premier in Cabinet Business and Public Sector Management) (14:28): The planned sale of Marble Hill is on track and negotiations are continuing with Dr Patricia Bishop and Edwin Michell, two South Australians who have put up their hands to restore this old ruin. Let us be very clear: it is a ruin and has been since it was largely destroyed in the 1955 bushfires. No government of either persuasion has been prepared to invest the money which would have restored this heritage building. That cost is estimated to be something in the order of \$5 million to \$10 million.

Marble Hill has remained a ruin for all those years. We are very fortunate in South Australia to have in Edwin Michell and Dr Bishop people who are willing to spend their own money to restore this ruin and guarantee public access on an ongoing basis. They have entered into a heads of agreement that guarantees the restoration of this ruin in full cooperation with heritage experts from the Department for Environment and Heritage and it guarantees public access on seven days each year. It commits them to build, at their own expense, a small museum explaining to the visitors the heritage and history of the building. It guarantees that there can be no subdivision of the 22-hectare site. Most people would regard this as a win-win situation. Indeed, the former member for Mayo, Alexander Downer, did. On 20 May this year, he put out a media release saying 'Marble Hill restoration fantastic for the community'. It continues, 'Mr Michell and Dr Bishop's enthusiasm for our local history is simply inspiring.' But what do we get from those opposite? We get the Marble Hill Protection Bill, which has passed through the other house and I understand is destined here, but is not here yet.

I will read from a letter I received from Dr Bishop and Mr Michell on this issue, two people whose only concern has ever been the history and heritage of Marble Hill. They have obviously found themselves in a rather unedifying battle with the opposition party, but I will read some of the extracts from their letter to the house so that members are absolutely clear that, if the bill were to proceed and to be passed, the plan to preserve Marble Hill would be lost. They say this:

On May 16th 2008 we signed a heads of agreement...The debate in the upper house on July 23 did not reflect our position and there appears to be an ongoing misunderstanding with some members of the Liberal Party. We wish to make it clear that if this bill were passed, we would withdraw our proposal and this opportunity to rebuild Marble Hill would be lost...We are not developers. We come from long-established South Australian families, with close connections to the Marble Hill region of the Adelaide Hills. We are active supporters of our local community and have a history of preserving heritage properties...We have sought no change of rules, no special deals, no taxpayers' money. For us, this will be an expensive but rewarding project to preserve a special site.

They also say:

The bill is concerned with politics rather than heritage preservation. It guarantees only—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will tell you. The letter states:

It guarantees only increased red tape and ongoing political interference. When we submitted our proposal to the minister in April 2007, we were concerned that inappropriate development could easily destroy the heritage values of Marble Hill, so we offered a plan consistent with the 1998 Danvers Report and the Burra Charter.

They go on to say:

We thought anyone who valued the heritage of our state would welcome our proposal and we have asked the Liberal leader for bipartisan support.

Bipartisanship from this old Adelaide family. They go on to say this—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That is right. They go on to say this:

We believe that our proposal should be judged on its merits as a heritage matter and we are dismayed that it has been politicised.

These are honourable people who are seeking to do a good thing for this state and what we get from those opposite is some politics.

I do not pretend to understand the politics of the Adelaide Hills or, indeed, of old Adelaide families, but it does seem that there has been a falling out here. I think that the best possible thing that could happen is for the Liberal Party to quickly get on and withdraw this bill, so that certainty can be restored to both Mr Michell and Dr Bishop and we can get on with preserving this wonderful piece of South Australian heritage.

WORKCOVER CORPORATION

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (14:34): My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. What is the estimated annual cost to WorkCover in lost levies as a result of a successful appeal to the Levy Review Panel by a major employer? WorkCover's definition of secondary disabilities cases was challenged in the Levy Review Panel by Skycity Pty Ltd. The panel upheld the appeal and reduced the levies by \$100,000 per year. Industry sources advise us that the decision is likely to cost WorkCover \$30 million a year, or \$600 million in lost revenue over the period of unfunded liability calculations. The panel also criticised the performance of WorkCover in dealing with secondary disability issues.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (14:34): I thank the honourable member for his question. This matter was first raised by the opposition a month or so ago, as I recall, in a press release that was issued by the shadow spokesperson at that stage and, of course, my response at that stage was that the figures being plucked out of the air by the opposition were wildly inaccurate and ridiculous and, certainly, I stand by that comment today. This ruling has not impacted upon the WorkCover levy income and to suggest otherwise demonstrates really, I think, without being disrespectful, a misunderstanding—

Mr Williams: You'll be so, anyway!

The Hon. P. CAICA: No, I'm not that way, and you know that, Mitch—a misunderstanding of the WorkCover scheme. The opposition spokesperson detailed a little bit of the potted history and I will not go there but, certainly, in response to the points raised by the opposition in posing this question, it is critical to note that the panel actually did not uphold Skycity's appeal.

Of the 15 cases complained about by Skycity, the panel actually only decided two, and in both those cases confirmed WorkCover's decisions. In two other cases, the panel directed that a further investigation take place, and it was on one of these that the panel respectfully suggested that WorkCover should do some detective work in this matter. The 11 other cases were adjourned for further submissions from the parties. This could lead to any number of outcomes and it is utterly wrong to conclude that WorkCover lost its argument in these cases.

The point that I would make is that resolving disputes between WorkCover and employers is exactly what the panel's role is all about, and it is proper and expected that employers will win some matters and WorkCover will win others. The suggestion that the panel had criticisms of the standard of investigation in some of the matters was not a generalised finding. More importantly, I think, the context of the case was whether the 15 claims should be treated as secondary disabilities from the point of view of the employers' levies, and there was no suggestion by the panel that they had not been investigated adequately for the purpose of deciding whether workers were entitled to compensation. Again, I would reinforce the point that the ruling has not impacted upon WorkCover's levy income, and to suggest otherwise is not appropriate.

DRUGS, ILLICIT

Mr RAU (Enfield) (14:37): My question is to the Minister for Police. Has the government's tough stance on illicit drugs been successful in reducing the quantity of drugs in our community?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Lee—Minister for Police, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:38): South Australia Police, similar to other law enforcement agencies across Australia, has a critical and increasingly diverse role to play in reducing the quantity and the impact of drugs in our community. The latest edition of the Australian Crime Commission's illicit drug data report shows that the tough laws introduced by the government, coupled with SAPOL's strong focus on reducing the supply of illicit drugs, has been successful in reducing the quantity of drugs such as amphetamines, cannabis, heroin and cocaine in our community.

In particular, the report shows that there has been a massive reduction in the quantity of amphetamine-type stimulants seized. In 2005-06, 66 kilograms of amphetamine-type stimulants were seized in South Australia, with this figure falling to just seven kilograms in 2006-07. The quantity of cannabis seized has fallen by 99 kilograms, or 12.5 per cent, while the seizure of heroin and cocaine has dramatically fallen by 67.3 per cent and 96.7 per cent respectively. Disrupting the supply, trafficking, cultivation, manufacture, possession and use of illicit drugs continues to be a high priority for the government and South Australia Police.

We know that there is a very clear link between illicit drugs and other crime. At the last election, the government pledged to continue to resource the police to fight against crime. Now we are seeing that the pledge has achieved the results that South Australians want: drugs off the streets. Since coming to office, the Rann government has passed a number of significant laws that target illicit drugs. For example, we have increased to life imprisonment the potential penalty for trafficking, manufacturing or cultivating commercial quantities of illicit drugs. We have trebled the expiation penalties for possession of cannabis and made drug driving an offence under the Road Traffic Act. We have included driving under the influence of drugs as a trigger for an aggravated offence of causing death or injury by dangerous driving. This carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. We have outlawed the sale of drug paraphernalia, such as bongs, ice pipes and cocaine kits, and we have banned more than 30 items used in illegal drug-making operations. We do not intend to rest upon our laurels as there is always more to be done.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: We will continue to work with SAPOL and all relevant parties in an attempt to further reduce the supply of illicit drugs and continue to make it as difficult as possible for people to traffic, cultivate, manufacture and use illicit substances.

ERNABELLA EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (14:40): My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation. What was the \$500,000 grant to the Ernabella Early Childhood Centre for, which account is the money in right now, and has the money been there since 28 June 2008?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Minister Assisting the Premier in Cabinet Business and Public Sector Management) (14:41): The money was for probably about the worthiest cause you could imagine, that is, the early childhood development of Aboriginal people in one of the most deprived communities in our country, the APY lands, and in particular Ernabella, the largest of those communities. The details—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think those opposite should return to their usual strategy, that is, read what is in the press and then try to make something of that. When they try to make up a story themselves it always falls horribly flat.

Ms CHAPMAN: I rise on a point of order. The minister should answer the question—get on with it or sit down.

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

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am going to answer this at length so that you can get all the details. The amount of money is \$500,000, plus GST, so \$550,000. Payment was made by cheque on 25 June 2008. It was paid from DPC administered items, APY lands (shown as 'APY lands—Additional services' in the DPC portfolio statements within the budget papers). Payment was within the approved budget of the APY lands budget line. The payment was approved by the Executive Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, within her delegated authority. Financial authorisation for expenditure was made, once again, by the Executive Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (for 2007-08) for \$550,000.

An authority for the approval of the grant payment was provided by the existing expenditure delegation, and the expenditure was in compliance with the requirements of Treasurer's Instruction 8, financial authorisations. Payment of the grant was made subsequent to the execution of a formal grant agreement between the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (signed

on behalf of the minister by Joslene Mazel, according to her delegation) and the Ernabella Aboriginal school (attached) on 13 June 2008.

The agreement is of a standard type for a grant of this nature. The agreement provides for the grant recipient to provide full financial reporting to the government on the use of the grant, including the provision of audited financial statements (page 17 of the grant agreement). Accordingly, the provision of the grant was in accordance with the requirement of Treasurer's Instruction (TI) 15, grant funding. A copy of TI15 is available, if you would like to look at that.

The expenditure amount covering the grant was within the budgeted total expenditure of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, with a cash alignment policy as an administrative mechanism (not a Treasurer's Instruction) which provides for the return of all agency surplus cash to Consolidated Account subsequent to the end of each financial year. The payment of the grant did not result in any breach of the cash alignment policy. So, at every level the suggestion that there is something wrong here is without merit—at every single level. Once again—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That is right. And where is it being spent? It is being spent on the Ernabella school in the APY lands. And remember this was a part of South Australia that the previous government would not permit us to even visit through the Aboriginal Lands Standing Committee. It was a part of the state they were happy to excise because they did not want any attention on the complete lack of regard that was occurring to that part of South Australia.

Indeed, the mechanism that we are talking about here has been one of the central reasons for the success of our intervention in relation to the APY lands—that is, having the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division located within the Premier's department and, more importantly, having the money that was allocated to be spent in those areas centrally administered so that it could be accounted for on a detailed basis by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

This has been one of the great difficulties with investments in remote regions and, in particular, Aboriginal communities. Notionally, there is a budget to spend there but, because of the difficulty of service delivery, it just simply is not spent and it gets dragged back into the city. That has been history since we decided to change the policy of investment in remote communities. Not only was every 'i' dotted and every 't' crossed in relation to financial accountability, it highlights the special measures we have put in place to ensure that dollars do get on the ground in remote regions in South Australia.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Mr Speaker, I understand that the minister is reading from a docket. Can I ask that that docket be tabled?

The SPEAKER: There is a difference between dockets and whatever briefing notes the minister is reading from. If it is a government docket, he must table it.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I can clarify, sir, that I have some notes but I also have a funding agreement dated 13 June 2008 which I would be more than happy to table.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens) (14:47): My question is to the Minister for Families and Communities. What are some of the recent developments in the child protection system in South Australia?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Northern Suburbs, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability) (14:47): This week is National Child Protection Week, so it is timely to remind members of the house of some of the challenges we face in child protection, as well as the initiatives this government has put in place to try to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

I am proud to say that this government has prioritised the safety and welfare of our children since we took government. We have worked continually to improve our child protection and alternative care systems from the ground up. I am proud also that we have increased the number of resources available to support children and their families, including our universal home visiting program where every newborn throughout the state has a visit by a registered nurse, providing support to parents at the earliest possible stage. We have the development of our children's centres that provide positive environments for families to engage with their children.

For those children who, for whatever reason, cannot live with their families and find themselves in an alternative care system, we have more than doubled the funding available to Families SA. This year we have injected \$190 million over four years into child protection, including over \$28 million for intensive family support and over \$15 million for better support for foster and relative carers. The average payment to foster and relative carers will increase by approximately 48 per cent on 1 October this year (up from June last year) and the number of people willing to take young ones into their homes and families has also increased substantially—over 38 per cent since 2004.

Nonetheless, our achievements do not allow us to become complacent and there is always more to be done. It is only through consistent and informed approaches to child protection that we can hope to reduce the impact that abuse and neglect can have on our children. Each year the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) holds National Child Protection Week to keep us all vigilant to the impacts that abuse and neglect can have on our children.

On Monday I was honoured to help open this year's National Child Protection Week at Government House and to launch this year's message: 'Children See, Children Do'. This message is a useful reminder that our children are influenced by what they see around them. A small child may innocently seek to imitate the gestures or habits of a parent—barracking for the same football team or putting on their mum's lippie. A problem can arise if children pick up on some of their parents' negative behaviours, such as resolving issues through violence.

NAPCAN reminds us that all our behaviours around children have a lasting influence. That is why it is so important for families to be provided with the relevant supports to provide safe and nurturing environments for their children, and that is the basis for so much of our work and our reforms in the child protection system. By supporting these children and promoting more positive parenting practices, we hope to see a positive legacy for the current generation of children one day that will carry through into the next generation.

TAXATION

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (14:51): My question is to the Treasurer. Why is South Australia, under this Labor government, the highest taxing state in the nation? A report in the *Financial Review*, conducted by financial consultants Pitcher Partners, confirms that the tax differential for businesses between the lowest taxing state of Queensland and the highest taxing state of South Australia is 50 per cent. The review measured taxes and charges, including payroll tax, WorkCover premiums, land tax and transfer of land duties in each mainland state. The findings of this review are confirmed by the Commonwealth Grants Commission, which states that South Australia levies its tax base more severely than any other state or territory.

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I called for order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Federal/State Relations) (14:52): I find it interesting that one of the comparisons between Queensland and South Australia is the issue of the WorkCover premium, at which we are currently 3 per cent; I think Queensland is at sub 1 per cent. Think of the battle we had to get the opposition to agree—

Mr Hamilton-Smith: You bankrupted it from \$60 million to \$1 billion, you galah; you wrecked it.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: 'Galah' is a bit unparliamentary, isn't it, sir? I think he should withdraw that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I did not hear the remark. Did the member refer to the Deputy Premier as a galah?

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I am terribly sorry for referring to the Treasurer as a galah for bankrupting the WorkCover scheme.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I withdraw.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: It was this government that had the political courage and the will to reform a piece of law that clearly was in disrepair.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Well, why did you support us in the end? The government has addressed that issue. I accept that the member for Goyder may not be sufficiently well briefed on the historical context of taxation and budgetary policy in this state, but, historically, South Australia has been a higher taxing state than many other states. The reason is that, relatively, we have been a poorer state than many of the other states, and that has been a factor because of the post war period of heavy—

Mr Hamilton-Smith: World War II.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Post war period.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The post war period saw our state heavily industrialised. A lot of heavily protected industries were brought into our state, and we had a large influx of low-cost labour.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for MacKillop!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Well, these are the facts. If you guys are not prepared to accept historical facts, how can I have a proper debate about it? The percentage of government as a proportion of state gross product has always been very high in the state. Because we have not had an economy as dynamic as other parts of Australia, the government sector has had to have a higher percentage of gross state product than other states' government sector. To fund that, our state has had a higher regime of taxation. That has been a historical fact probably for all time but, certainly, since the post war period. When we came into office, we set about retracting from areas of government activity in the economy that—

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Finniss!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: —other governments, both Labor and Liberal—fancy trying to have an economic debate with you two. I mean, honestly.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: A bit like your business management skills.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I did not go bankrupt, that is for sure.

The SPEAKER: Order, the deputy leader!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! When the chair rises, members become silent. I have called members to order. I should not have to do that more than once. The Deputy Premier has the call.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: There were issues like the industry assistance program, when we came to office, where the former Liberal government (and not dissimilar policies to the former Labor government) was providing massive handouts of government subsidies to fly-by-night

capital, which would only stay invested in this state as long as there was a subsidy attached to it. We are talking about call centres, low value added business, manufacturing; businesses that were not capable of staying here unless they had a government handout. We withdrew those subsidies.

We also set about broadening our economic base and ensuring that we had a broader manufacturing sector so we were not over reliant on sectors such as the automotive sector. We have built up, and are continuing to build up, an outstanding defence electronics sector, where we are putting a lot of effort into expanding the expertise that we have available here way beyond the air warfare destroyer. That is a very good point for me to put on the public record, because I think it is a very good economic point for us now to be concentrating on.

At present, three air warfare destroyers are to be built at Techport. We have the through life support until at least 2022, and beyond, of the six Collins class submarines; that is \$150 million a year of work. We are very hopeful that the government will have a fourth air warfare destroyer. We will have to wait and see. The other night, if members missed it, the Prime Minister said that, in his view, we need to have a stronger defence force going forward and, in particular, we need a larger navy.

Let us think about and concentrate on what that may mean for South Australia. When we won the air warfare destroyer contract, instead of just giving the infrastructure to the Australian Submarine Corporation, we kept it in government ownership and made it a common user facility. That will mean that the ASC will have access to it but other shipbuilders can also have access to it.

An outstanding piece of work done by the Premier prior to the federal election was to get a public agreement, which has now been confirmed with Labor in office, that the next class of submarines will be built in South Australia—not necessarily at the ASC, but in South Australia—and a competitive option is that we have a common user facility available should there be a second builder. It will either be the ASC—and I would be a bit surprised if it was not—but you never know; there might be another builder who can access it. I say that for this reason. We are now not talking about six submarines. There are all sorts of—

Mr GRIFFITHS: Sir, I rise on a point of order.

The SPEAKER: There is a point of order. The Deputy Premier will resume his seat.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am getting to the answer.

Mr Griffiths: You are getting to the answer—because I was going to challenge you on a matter of relevance?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Although I disagree—

The SPEAKER: Order! Both members will take their seat. There is a process, and it does involve the Speaker. It is not a private arrangement between the member of the opposition and the Deputy Premier. At the moment I do not uphold the point of order. I will allow the Deputy Premier to draw where he is going with the answer.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. Honestly, if members opposite can be just a little bipartisan and objective and think this through, the federal government has said, 'We need a bigger navy.'

Mr Hamilton-Smith: You are the highest taxing treasurer in the country.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: But I am the Treasurer.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We will build perhaps 10 or 12—or more—next generation submarines which will come into service in 2022. The design period and the selection period means that by 2010—only 18 months away—serious decisions will be made by the commonwealth government and detailed planning will have to begin at that point for the next class of submarine. That will involve hundreds of engineers and design experts.

The point I am making is that, in that broadening of our economy, Techport Australia will be the home of all major naval construction for the foreseeable future of this nation. With a broader economy, we are able to start bringing down taxes. That is why—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: That is why we cut payroll tax in the last budget.

Mr Pengilly: What about land tax?

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Finniss!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Is it hurting you a bit? That is why we have brought down payroll tax and lifted the threshold and that is why we wanted to cut WorkCover, despite attempts by the opposition to stop it.

Mr Williams: No attempt by the opposition to stop it.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Members opposite are condemning us. He went out there and said that he would never support it but then did a backflip that should have been in the Olympics.

Mr Koutsantonis: You moved a motion in this house.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You moved a motion and voted against every clause. What a hypocrite!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I think we can proceed without interjections.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: One minute he said, 'We never opposed it,' and then he said 'Oh yeah, I did.'

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You said all that within 60 seconds.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier will get back to the answer.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. The whole point of the exercise is that we are cascading down the rates of tax in this state. We have been doing that and we have abolished taxes. We have cut billions of taxes—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The *Financial Review* article is a bit swayed in its presentation. Let us not forget the 2008 KPMG competitive alternative survey. That report found that Adelaide outranks all other Australian cities. It has the lowest business costs compared with Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

In relation to some taxation levels we are higher than other states but in other levels we are lower. When one takes in the whole basket of business costs—land costs, electricity costs, water costs and all the other inputs to business—KPMG found that we are the cheapest city in Australia. That is how you properly evaluate whether or not this is a good place to do business; and the other way is to look at the level of business investment. We have a flood of business investment coming into this state. Unemployment today is down to 4.4 per cent.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: She says that it is disgraceful—90,000 jobs since we came into office. I say to members opposite, particularly the deputy leader, that you have to accept we are a very good government when it comes to economic management.

IRIS SYSTEMS

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (15:04): Will the Minister for Health provide further information in relation to IMVS?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (15:04): I have sought further advice, subsequent to the questions asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition earlier in question time. The Government Investigations Unit has conducted a preliminary investigation into allegations of misconduct by staff at the IMVS relating to conflicts of interest and the assignment of intellectual property rights in the IRIS 2 computer interface software system.

These are complex legal issues in relation to whether the assignment of the intellectual property is valid. There are also issues relating to the employees who authorised the assignment, in particular as to whether they had authority to do so and that it was done in breach of government intellectual property policy.

Following the preliminary investigation into the matter, it has been referred to the SA Police Anti-Corruption Branch to enable a criminal investigation, particularly into whether criminal offences may have been committed contrary to the Public Sector Management Act 1995 and the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1936. The Auditor-General has also been informed of this matter. I wrote to the Auditor-General on this matter after being briefed by the Department of Health on 2 February 2008. Prior to 1 July this year, the IMVS was responsible to the IMVS Council under the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science Act 1982. I just repeat: I was concerned, as was my department, about the governance issues associated with the running of IMVS and the associated Medvet company.

This legislation was opposed by the opposition. In fact, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition at the time said, 'I think this is tragic enough, but if it is not performing, if it was underperforming, if it was inadequately providing a service, the opposition would be the first to look at it.' That is what they said: if it was underperforming or if it was inadequately providing a service, they would be the first to look at it, but it is performing above par. They endorsed this structure which was failing. After the passage of this legislation (which those on the other side opposed), SA Pathology is responsible to the Central Northern Adelaide Health Service and the Department of Health.

SA Pathology extended an existing agreement that IMVS had regarding the maintenance of the IRIS software for 12 months, and that was following crown law advice. This software is essential to the operations of the organisation. I repeat: this matter is being investigated by the police. No findings of any sort have been found against any individual. We (that is, the department and I) were very concerned about the way the IMVS governance arrangements were operating. We took action to fix that. We are now pursuing the circumstances of this particular case through the SA Police Anti-Corruption Branch, which is the proper thing to do.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN AGREEMENT

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (15:07): My question is to the Minister for Water Security. Is it the case that, under the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Murray-Darling Basin signed by the South Australian Labor government, only a review of an existing Victorian water plan will commence in 2019, with the existing plan to remain in place until 2021?

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security) (15:07): Under the Murray-Darling agreement that has been signed by premiers and the Prime Minister, state water sharing plans will remain in place for the duration of the term of those plans. It needs to be made very clear that what that means is not a volume of water for extraction from those states will be in place until 2019 but how that state shares the available water—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: The plan is up for review in 2019 and, during that review process, new caps will be included in that review process. It is very important that this house and members opposite understand that that water sharing plan does not entitle Victorian irrigators to a quantity of water. It actually provides for them the determination of how the available water will be shared in that jurisdiction.

Mr WILLIAMS: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. My point of order is relevance. I am asking whether the plan will continue to exist until 2021.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I am more than happy to give the member for MacKillop the call after the minister has completed her answer if there is something the member for MacKillop needs to clarify.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: Thank you, sir. It is an extremely important issue and one that the opposition continues to misunderstand. The water sharing plans in Victoria, as they do in South Australia and New South Wales, distribute the available water; that is, the available water that is allocated to those states under their bulk entitlements. Under the new Murray-Darling Basin Authority, a new basin-wide plan will be established that will set new caps on extraction on each of the river valleys. That will determine how much water each state has available to share and each state will share that—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: No, I need to make this point very clear to you because you seem to misinterpret this constantly in the public arena. You do not want to get the right message out because you believe that there is a political imperative for you to get the wrong message out. This is a very good step forward in the management of the Murray-Darling Basin. We are seeing a new historic agreement come into effect. Referral of powers to the federal government will occur in the next few months, and what members opposite try to do is twist the facts to get their own political—

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: They are not interested in the facts.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: They are not interested in the facts. What they are interested in is trying to mislead the public into thinking that the water sharing plans actually fix an amount of water, and that is not correct. That is incorrect.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: 2021, yes, their plan for sharing—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: No, in fact I think that, sir, once again they have misrepresented what my response was there: 2021, 2022, 2030, 2040, Victoria will share its available water according to its water sharing plan and it will change over time. I have no doubt it will change over time. Our water allocation plan will also change over time. What will change under the new agreement is the amount of water that Victoria can share under that plan. It will change from 2011 when the new basin-wide plan is put in place. That is the important date: 2011. Regardless of what plans any state has, 2011 is when the implementation of the basin-wide plan, which will set new caps on extraction on all river valleys in the basin, will occur. That is the important date.

How Victoria shares it among its users is actually irrelevant. What is important is that the new cap is set and the new cap is implemented. That will occur in 2011 and it is mischievous of those opposite to try to imply that any water sharing plan in Victoria, ongoing or not ongoing, will have an impact on that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hammond.

MURRAY RIVER, LOWER LAKES

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:12): My question is to the Minister for Water Security. Was the minister aware from the outset that a significant part of the \$610 million promised by the commonwealth government for water infrastructure in the Lower Lakes will be used to build the government's weir near Wellington? The opposition has been advised that over \$200 million of the \$610 million will be spent on the government's weir near Wellington.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security) (15:13): You're wrong. The \$610 million is about a Murray Futures project. It is about the future, it is not about dealing with the current drought issues.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: You're wrong.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: You're wrong.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

MURRAY RIVER, LOWER LAKES

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:13): Can the minister confirm that the steel for the construction of the weir has already been ordered from the manufacturer in Germany?

The SPEAKER: I do not think that that is a supplementary question, but I call the minister.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security) (15:14): It is actually a separate question. I agree with that, it is a totally separate

question. SA Water, I am advised, has called for tenders for the supply of the sheet piling, should we need to purchase it. No; it has not been purchased or ordered as yet, I am advised.

SCHOOL COMPUTERS

Mr PISONI (Unley) (15:14): My question is to the Minister for Education. Why is the government charging those state schools that have been successful in round 1 of the National Secondary School Computer Fund a \$40—

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

Mr PISONI: And who do you think gave it to *The Advertiser*, you goose?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PISONI: Unbelievable.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley will withdraw the word 'goose'.

Mr PISONI: I withdraw calling the Treasurer 'goose', sir. I will start again. Why is the minister charging those state schools that have been successful in round 1 of the National Secondary School Computer Fund a \$40 commission fee on top of the \$6 per head annual fee for current computer licences, and withholding up to \$250 per computer to cover licence fees, when non-government schools are being allocated the full \$1,000 per computer and have negotiated an additional administration amount from the commonwealth?

In answer to questions during estimates about the provision in the state budget to fund commonwealth election commitments for the digital revolution, the minister told the house that there would be no additional costs because:

We also have sufficient licences because we have many licences in our schools and these are replacement computers.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Adelaide—Minister for Education, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (15:15): I think those opposite might be the only people in South Australia who would complain about funds flowing to education in South Australia from the commonwealth government. The reality is that it is, I think, a \$1.2 billion package to provide computers for children in schools.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The house will come to order!

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: This is a federal government program which was calculated at a thousand dollars per computer per placement in schools. The reality is that the whole program has to rely on federal government rules and their compliance issues, and one of the areas that has allowed the purchase of the computers has been bulk orders. I believe that non-government systems are indeed involved in bulk ordering, because you would know that a computer box does generally cost more than, say, a thousand dollars if you buy it individually or privately. So, the federal government has allowed—wait for it—systems of education across the country to bulk buy computers, and when you bulk buy computers, guess what, they cost less.

But whether you send your children to a public or a private school, whether you buy your computer individually or by bulk, you can never avoid the licensing costs from Microsoft. The reality is that if you have a computer already and you have a licence for that computer, if you buy a new computer in a school, you can reuse the old licence. So, in the first program purchases, where many of the computers were replacement computers, the overall cost of buying licences was reduced because, where there were already licences in place and the computer box was replaced, a new licence was not required to be bought.

Having explained that, the notional thousand dollars which comes into the system where there were extra funds and where there were replacement computers without a new licence, there were larger funds left over from the residual purchase. That money was then allocated to the schools for their use for whatever needs within the limits on which the federal government allowed the funding to be spent; that was then allocated to the schools. It does not actually matter whether the computer is in a public or a private school. There are always licensing fees and costs involved.

Clearly, the federal government has initiated this program. It is a \$1.2 billion program, from memory. It is a massive investment in education across this country but, whatever the member for Unley thinks, if you have to buy a licensing fee, it will be illegal to operate that computer without having the coverage of the licensing costs, and you have to buy a licence if it is a new computer. If it is an old computer and a licence is in place, you do not have to make that investment.

RECREATIONAL SERVICES

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Northern Suburbs, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability) (15:19): I table a copy of a ministerial statement on the Recreational Services (Limitation of Liability) Act 2002, made in another place by the Hon. Gail Gago MLC.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

IRIS SYSTEMS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:20): Today we have the revelation from the government that, while a company is under investigation by the anti-corruption unit, it has entered into a contract to the value of some \$305,000 with that company as an annual provision for an IT service that was developed in the IMVS.

The government today, via the Minister for Health, has admitted that this is a serious matter, in particular, that the government-owned intellectual property that had been developed in the IMVS was sold to a private company run by public servants, a company that was established as a partnership held in the names of the wives and partners of these public servants, and it then reaped a million dollar benefit in return when it onsold that technology to the Western Australian Health Department.

As if that were not bad enough, subsequent to that, and while a police Anti-Corruption Branch inquiry has continued, the government-owned SA Pathology, the successor to IMVS (which was established in this parliament and presented by the government as being necessary to take control over the provision of pathology services for all public hospitals in this state and to offer a private service), has, as one of its first actions, signed a contract with the very company that is under investigation by the anti-corruption unit. The minister told us this afternoon that he could not remember when he first knew about it. Half an hour later he came into the parliament and told us that the matter was so serious that on 2 February this year (nine months ago)—he remembers the date now—he referred this matter to the Auditor-General.

We have had debates in this parliament dealing with the IMVS. We have abolished that act. That act has been repealed. Through all those debates did the minister make mention at all about this issue, an issue that was so important that it was necessary for him to refer it to the attention of the Auditor-General in February of this year? Did he mention in those debates that this company, established by employees of IMVS, was under police investigation and under investigation by the Attorney-General's Government Investigation Unit? No, not a word. Then he stood here today and pretended that he did not know the detail of this matter, that as it was such an important matter and because a fraud was being investigated he needed to be careful of what he said.

What has been exposed is that his own new SA Pathology—while he knew about it and he reported it to the Auditor-General—has entered into a contract with the company in question, the very company that is under investigation. His own SA Pathology has entered into a contract with that company before the investigation is even finished. What explanation does he give to us? He does not know; he will have to go away and get some advice on that.

Given the knowledge that there is a police anti-corruption inquiry that the minister has known about, on his own admission, for nine months and thought was so serious that he should write to the Auditor-General about it, it is unacceptable that the minister should come into this house and pretend to the people of South Australia that it is satisfactory in some way that SA Pathology should sign a contract with a company under investigation.

It is utterly irresponsible government at best, and it is a cover-up for corruption that has been happening under the minister's watch, which he has known about and which he has failed to disclose to this house. He has failed to do anything about it himself, he failed to tell us about it when we were dealing with IMVS, and he has allowed his own department, SA Pathology, which is completely under his control, to sign up to that contract. That is completely unacceptable

behaviour. For two days in a row the minister has come into this house and told us, and told the people of South Australia, that he—

Time expired.

MINING SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson) (15:25): Today I rise to talk about a trip I did during the winter recess from this place. I used my parliamentary travel allowance, with the blessing of the Speaker after I wrote to him last year, to hire a bus to take students from the southern suburbs of Adelaide up to Roxby Downs to show them the mining boom first-hand. I thank the schools who were involved, including Reynella East High School, and companies like BHP Billiton who were so generous with their time and information during the process.

We took 31 students from years 11 and 12 to Roxby Downs. We stayed at Woomera, then we took them around the mine above ground and then into BHP Billiton's facilities to hear from BHP management, including their HR boss, who spoke to the students about how important it is to have a work record, to get a job outside of school hours at the local supermarket or a fast food outlet. They were explaining to the students that one of the first things they do as HR professionals is check work history—not so much school history, because school is not for all students, as we found out on this trip. Probably a lot of the students we had on the bus were not the best scholars but they were keen to start their after-school life on a positive note and get a job and have a pathway and a career.

The students were very excited about the large amounts of money that could be made, and not all of the students were interested in going underground to work in the mines. One of the students was so excited because he wants to be a chef. When we took him through the facilities at the Olympic Dam camp where they serve 900 breakfasts, 900 lunches and 900 dinners every day, he was very excited about the prospect of trying to get a fly-in, fly-out job and working as an apprentice in that facility to start his progress to become a chef.

We are having a get-together next week at Reynella East High School to do a debrief, but already I have seen some of the written reports and surveys that the students were asked to do, and they all found it a very rewarding and worthwhile experience. One of the other things I pointed out to the students was that just because the mining boom is happening in the north of the state—and it is not just at Roxby Downs but right across the North and out to the Western Australian border where we have some fantastic mineral sands deposits that are being mined—there are lots of related jobs. I think it is five or six jobs for every mining job elsewhere in the state, including in the southern suburbs.

We have some very smart companies in the southern suburbs who are doing some highly technological work in the areas of drilling and other related facets of the mining industry. People do not have to go a long way away to get a job related to the mining boom; in fact, they can find some very good jobs and apprenticeships around the southern suburbs. I was very pleased to hear earlier today during question time an answer from the education minister about the development of trade schools in South Australian schools.

I think it has been noted for a number of years now that successive governments have failed in the area of delivering skilled workers out of our school system. Also, the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, who is doing a wonderful job in the area of TAFE and training, spoke today about the big leap forward in the increase in the amount of skilled people we have going through training in our state and, as he said, we are leading other states in some cases three to one. That was wonderful news to hear and it ties in with the trip that I took the students on to Roxby Downs.

We have to let the students know what the possibilities are and there is no better way than taking them literally to the coalface—although it is not the coalface: it is the uranium, copper and silver face—showing them first-hand what is available out there. This is not just a boom. With the exploration of minerals in South Australia, we are going to take this state to a higher level that we are going to sit on as a plateau for many years to come. It is not a mining boom or a bubble that is going to burst some time soon. It is only something that will continue to grow, and we need to have skilled tradespeople there to be able to work in the mines and all those related industries. We will do anything we can to help as local members. I am sure that other members in this house would agree that we should be setting the course and helping students of today become the skilled workers of tomorrow to make sure that this state really prospers.

SCHOOL COMPUTERS

Mr PISONI (Unley) (15:30): I rise to further expand upon the question I asked the education minister in question time about what is now becoming a debacle—the minister's roll-out, if you like, of the Rudd government's funds for computers in schools. I think that one way of describing this process is that this is not about delivering an education outcome: this is about delivering an election promise. If we remember, there was Rudd waving a laptop before the last election saying, 'There'll be one of these for every school child.' And there was Mike Rann, as President of the federal ALP, right behind him saying, 'Yes; that's what we'll be doing.' Of course, after the election we realised that we did not read the fine print. Certainly, kids and parents did not read the fine print. We find that it is now only for years nine to 12, and it is now one computer to share between two students. But, it gets worse than that.

In introducing my comments I would like to read an email that was sent from one principal to another about the difficulties that they are coming across in trying to deliver this program. It states:

For example when doing our planning we have been told that the cost for each laptop is \$1,300. The Federal Govt is saying the cost price should be figured at around about \$1,000. I cannot believe that given the enormous buying power that we cannot get quality laptops for half that price.

That is in response to an email that was sent a few minutes earlier, which states:

Last week we were visited by DECS ICT to look at their eStrategy to help us prepare for the submissions for the DER.

Don Priest made it clear that schools will have to purchase from a list of computers drawn up by DECS ICT and in particular, TKM.

Don also said off the record that Ross Treadwell has been working hard to keep them flexible.

In my view this is very bad news indeed. Take BHS. We are able to get computers (ACERS) with 4 year guarantees while the DECS purchase list only provides for 3 year guarantees. There are other technical deals that can be done by schools that DECS can't match, not to mention the cost and speed of the ISP.

The work they do at DECS is expensive and they will take money off the top of the overall grant. And, they may organise a worse deal than what we can get. How can we influence this? Shall we just lie down and take it? How can we get our views through to the feds? (I want the money!)

The schools are saying that the education minister has intervened instead of letting the schools manage their own IT, or even having the minister go out and get good deals for schools, as they have done in Victoria. *The Australian* on Monday in the IT section had an article about the Lenovo deal that the Victorian state government has done, where it purchased laptop computers worth \$12,025 for a bigger than 50 per cent discount, for \$560. Individual schools can buy computers better than what DECS is offering them for. So, who is getting the discount?

On top of that, DECS is taking a 4 per cent commission for handling the deal for the schools. Not only is DECS removing the schools' flexibility, interfering in their own IT set ups that they did through the very generous grants for investing in our schools by the previous Liberal government in Canberra, they are also restricting what schools can use. DECS is making them buy software that they do not want, and they are not allowed to buy software that they do want with that money. We are seeing a huge centralisation, a huge mess being developed out of the minister's office. On top of that, they are using money from the digital revolution to pay bureaucrats to tell them to deliver to them what they do not want. This is an absolute disaster.

A classic example is Renmark High School: \$121 to replace 32 old computers and get 89 additional computers. DECS is taking 20 per cent off the top. If the school purchased 120 computers of its own, it could have an agreement with Microsoft to licence them at no additional cost. Yet the minister has dug into the pockets of the Renmark High School and said, 'Thank you. I will take 20 per cent of that, and perhaps I will send it off to Mr Foley to help me with my savings targets in the department.'

Time expired.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (15:35): Since September 2005, Australian workers in the construction industry have had to work under, in my view, an oppressive set of industrial laws. In addition to the Howard government's WorkChoices legislation, the construction industry has had special laws that make nearly every form of industrial action unlawful. The Building and Construction Industry Improvement Act 2005 (or the BC2 act, as it is known—I will not say

affectionately, because that would be inappropriate) created a new regulator for the industry with sweeping coercive powers.

A wide range of industrial action is caught up by this legislation. Martin O'Malley, the State Secretary of the CFMEU, says that virtually any deviation from normal patterns of work has the potential to infringe this legislation—and, in fact, the legislation states, 'the performance of work in a manner different from that in which it is customarily performed'. He said that not even action over health and safety concerns and preventative measures are immune from these laws.

That is really amazing, in my view, when one considers that the building and construction industry is, in fact, the most dangerous industry in Australia in which to work. On average, 50 construction workers are killed each year from work-related incidents and illnesses. In South Australia, I am advised by the CFMEU that, not only is there a general concern about occupational health and safety (and the CFMEU has maintained a very proud preventative record), but also just recently there have been two major safety issues with respect to the same builder.

In one instance, a crane load crashed, and in another a steel girder weighing up to two to three tonnes just fell. Fortunately, no-one was injured in either of those cases, but quite often, as we know from the statistics and the WorkCover claims, people are injured and killed. If a CFMEU official goes on site after giving 24 hours' notice, they may or may not be able to investigate these kinds of incidents. However, with respect to the two that I just mentioned, I am told that when the organiser went on site the employee was monitored and one of the builders stood by and took notes about what the member was telling his organiser.

There is also the following point to be made. Why should building and construction workers—who, as I said, work in the most dangerous industry—have different rules from the rest of Australian workers? It is very clear that the WorkChoices legislation is unacceptable, and I am most pleased that the Rudd Labor government is addressing the inappropriate legislation under which workers have had to suffer.

The ABCC (Australian Building and Construction Commission) has the power to fine workers up to \$22,000 for stopping work, even if it is for a safety reason. It also has the power to interrogate anyone connected to the industry and gaol them for six months for not answering questions they are asked, even if it is about a union meeting. That seems to me to be extremely harsh. Even under WorkChoices (which, as I said, is hardly model legislation, in my view), penalties usually flow after there is a breach and the commission specifies that that has happened. With this legislation, there is no early warning and there are no second chances and, if the action taken is deemed to be unlawful, industrial liability will follow.

The International Labour Organisation has condemned these laws many times. I think it is a bad reflection, certainly on the previous government, that even the ILO has commented on this terrible legislation. At the very least the 900,000 or more construction workers should have the same rights as all other workers in Australia.

POLICE, STRATHALBYN

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:40): We in the country live in a time when the state government seems hell bent on shoring up its own electoral stocks in the city by stripping or shaving services in country regions. We still have problems with the new Country Health Care Plan. The government is telling us that because it cannot afford to provide reasonable health services to 500,000 rural residents country people have to go without. Rural education needs have been compromised in order to save the government money, and now penny pinching on rural transport services is compounding the problem of how country people access basic services at other regional centres.

Residents of one town in my electorate presented a petition requesting the government to provide a reasonable level of police services to their fast growing community. The people of Strathalbyn have been grappling with increasing lawlessness in their town for some time. This lawlessness is generally perpetrated by younger people, many in their early teens. They have reported incidents of repeated and systematic destruction of letterboxes and fences, unruly behaviour late the night (including yelling, foul language, broken bottles and street lights, vomiting, and so on), speeding cars with screeching tyres and loud exhausts, and abuse and threats to anyone who dares to challenge them.

Specific examples include noisy, drunken groups occupying parklands adjacent to the home of elderly residents, who get no sleep and receive little or no response when police are

called. A woman in her mid 40s was too afraid to walk a few hundred metres to visit her mother after dark. Perhaps the most disturbing story came from an elderly gentleman who was woken by cries for help. When he went to investigate he found a young girl on his front lawn, naked and extremely distressed. It transpired that she had been drugged and allegedly raped. What use is a 30-minute wait for police attendance in that situation?

Something else happened on this occasion. The resident was advised by police that he might think twice before reporting the matter, as it might bring reprisals against him. This is not an isolated case. The volunteers at a community shop were given the same advice following an incident at their premises. This situation raises several worrying points. Police response times to calls for help typically have been too long to be effective in preventing or limiting crime. Police numbers can be so low as to cause a lone police officer not to attend an incident where he fears he will be outnumbered. I cannot blame him for that, but he should not be placed in that position. The suggestion that further reprisals may occur implies that police are powerless to prevent it.

In 1972 Strathalbyn had 1,200 residents served by three police officers. In 2001 there were over 4,700 residents and still three police officers—a situation which continued until April 2007. The current population is probably already over 5,000 with four officers. The population will continue to grow and could double within the near future. The local police station is not manned throughout the whole day. Many years ago, following a public outcry, residents were led to understand that approval had been given for the full-time manning of the station. It did not happen. Why? Funds were available.

When questioned on radio about the situation, I understand that the Police Commissioner said that there was no need. One cannot help but marvel at the priorities. No-one could condone or excuse the deplorable actions of the so-called gang of 49, but how much is being spent trying to deal with 49 misfits in a city of one million people. Here we have 20 or 30 troublemakers in a community of 5,000, where an appropriate police presence would make life better for all. The community is not asking for a new station or ridiculous numbers of officers but, rather, a reasonable level of staffing.

Earlier this year over 1,150 residents signed a petition requesting better police services. Strangely, services seemed to improve around this time. More recently, one resident met with a senior regional police officer. She felt that he subtly chastised her for speaking to me about the matter before speaking to him. She pointed out that many members of the public had been bringing the matter to the attention of the police for years with no result.

It has been noted that police presence appears to have improved again since then, with one late night incident attended by three patrols. Wonderful, but for how long will this go on? Will it be just until the noise dies down or another neighbouring community begins to notice police presence has dropped off, or maybe it will be until the local station is properly staffed? We can only hope.

CALISTHENICS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AND MUSIC CAMP

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:45): At my first opportunity to speak since opening day, I acknowledge that parliament meets on the traditional lands of the Kurna people and we acknowledge their spiritual connection to the land. After that last contribution, I make one that focuses on some positive things with young people. I conclude the remarks I made on 22 July concerning the 2008 National Calisthenics Competition in Perth. At the time I was thanking CASA's executive and committee for their work on behalf of the calisthenics girls in this state. All those people on the committees, along with each of the state's various clubs, are the backbone of this unique sport. Teams travel with managers and chaperones who help prepare the girls for their items and support them both before and after performances.

Much goes into the final item the audience sees. Costume making, of course, is a particular highlight of calisthenics life, along with the fundraising—and everyone in this place knows how hard it is to fundraise. Each local community club has all the same jobs and tasks to attend to and also relies on and enjoys the help of the many dads who work alongside their daughters providing back stage support and the sacrifice of many hours of family time. I was particularly proud of the South Australian 2008 national support crew: the two Georges, Wayne, Craig, Trevor and John, who worked tirelessly shifting the props and preparing sets. Also the many parents, family members and friends who travel to support the teams, both the South Australian contingent and those from all the other states and territories.

The calisthenics community represents everything I admire in working together for a great result, and I am proud and happy to have a connection with them and look forward to a long and fruitful collaboration. The calisthenics year will soon finish and clubs will have their presentation nights and Christmas break-ups, and not too far away is the beginning of another year where we will see another state team go away this time to Brisbane to represent our state. When that time comes, I am sure all of us in this place will wish them well, and I urge members, particularly with clubs in their areas, to attend any calisthenics concert whenever they have the opportunity to do so.

The other thing I put on the record today in the house is the wonderful work being undertaken by the South Australian Music Camp Association. It was a privilege to attend the final concert of the 46th camp on Friday 11 July at St Peter's College Memorial Hall, and thanks go to principal, Philip Grutzner, for again allowing the use of his school's facilities. The South Australian State Music Camp offers instrumentalists from the age of nine to 23 years an opportunity to play in one of five ensembles, which cater for a wide range of ages, standards and level of experience. The daily routine includes a mixture of tutorials with specialist tutors and rehearsals.

Students audition for a place in one of the five ensembles. Most of the staff are former campers themselves, and this year it was a real privilege to see one of the young winners of the Florey Music Award take up a spot as a tutor. They pass on their love of music during this inspirational week of music making and fun. Many tutors are employed as musicians and teachers by the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, the Department of Education and Children's Services, the South Australian Police Band and the University of Adelaide. Without the support of their organisation, the state music camp would not be possible at all. We have a great group of sponsors such as the Silver Keys and Strings Music Centre. Ian and Lorraine Brown have an enduring relationship to the camp and their commitment to youth music is greatly valued and appreciated. A great committee is also involved. As camp director Peter Webb said, the engine room is Josie Hawkes, ably assisted by Aaron Dohse, and they need particular thanks and recognition for their effort.

This year's program was spectacular. Steve Eads and the Roberts Wind Ensemble, Brendon Pearn and the Marcus String Orchestra and the Alexander Orchestra under the baton of Mark Smith took us to the interval break, with a tremendously varied feast of musical treats. We, the lucky audience, then reassembled for the remainder of the concert: the Grutzner Concert Band conducted by Stephen Millar and the wonderful finale by the Bishop Orchestra under David Stanhope. Their performance of Prokofieff's *Romeo and Juliet*, Second Suite, was absolutely spellbinding and one of the finest musical moments of my public life supporting live performances in schools. I thank the hundreds of young performers for the night of music and encourage them to continue well into the future. I also thank their teachers and especially the Instrumental Music Branch for their dedication and commitment. It is also important to thank the parents and caregivers involved in making the opportunity to learn an instrument available to these young people and providing them the means and encouragement for them to achieve their goals.

The Florey Music Award will again be presented to a young person in each of the schools in my electorate this year and, as I said, it is great to see those young people going on to take their place in various bands and orchestras around the city. I also mention that another Florey Music Award recipient was part of the Army band that accompanied the Adelaide Male Choir.

Time expired.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (15:50): I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move a motion for the adoption of sessional orders in relation to days and time of meeting and adjournment, a right of reply, the delivery of messages and Private Members' Business without notice.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: A quorum not being present, ring the bells.

A quorum having been formed:

Motion carried.

SESSIONAL ORDERS

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (15:52): I move:

That for the remainder of the session standing orders be and remain so far suspended as to enable the adoption of sessional orders in relation to days and time of meeting and adjournment, a right of reply, the delivery of messages and Private Members' Business as distributed to members.

Motion carried.

GENE TECHNOLOGY (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (15:54): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Gene Technology Act 2001. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (15:54): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

This Bill amends the *Gene Technology Act 2001* (the *South Australian Act*) in a manner consistent with amendments made to the *Gene Technology Act 2000* of the Commonwealth (the *Commonwealth Act*), in order to preserve consistency with the national regulatory scheme for gene technology. The purpose of the amendments is to improve the operation of the Act without changing the underlying policy intent or overall legislative framework of the regulatory scheme.

The South Australian Act is the State Government's component of the nationally consistent regulatory scheme for gene technology. Under the *Gene Technology Agreement 2001* (the *Intergovernmental Agreement*), all States and Territories are committed to maintaining corresponding legislation. The object of the Act is to protect the health and safety of people, and to protect the environment, by identifying risks posed by or as a result of gene technology, and by managing those risks through regulating certain dealings with genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

In 2005-06, an independent review of the Commonwealth Act and the Intergovernmental Agreement was conducted. This review found that the national regulatory scheme had worked well in the 5 years following introduction, and that no major changes were required. However, it suggested a number of minor changes, aimed at improving the operation of the legislation.

On 27 October 2006, the Gene Technology Ministerial Council, an intergovernmental body comprised of State, Territory and Australian Government Ministers, agreed to proposals to implement the recommendations of the Review which included amendments to the Commonwealth Act which took effect on 1 July 2007.

This Bill proposes to implement the corresponding amendments in the South Australian Act. These changes include introducing emergency powers that give the Federal Minister, in consultation with the Gene Technology Ministerial Council, the ability to expedite the approval of a dealing with a GMO in an emergency. Such an emergency could be, for example, the need to allow a genetically modified vaccine to enable a timely response to a disease outbreak or use of a genetically modified organism to aid in degrading an environmental toxin. Other changes proposed in the Bill include improving the mechanisms for providing advice to the Gene Technology Regulator (the *Regulator*); streamlining the processes for the initial consideration of licences; reducing the compliance burden for low risk dealings; providing clarification on the circumstances in which licence variations can be made and the circumstances under which the Regulator can direct a person to comply with the South Australian Act; providing the Regulator with the power to issue a licence to persons who find themselves inadvertently dealing with an unlicensed GMO, for the purpose of disposing of that organism; and technical amendments to improve the operation of the South Australian Act.

I commend the Bill to Members.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Gene Technology Act 2001*

4—Amendment of section 8B—Notes

This proposed amendment would provide that notes form part of the South Australian Act.

5—Amendment of section 10—Definitions

This proposed amendment would insert a number of new definitions for the purposes of the South Australian Act and make related changes to current definitions. In particular, an *emergency dealing determination* is defined as a determination in force under section 72B and an *inadvertent dealings application* is defined as an application for a GMO licence to which Division 3 or 4 of Part 5 does not apply because of the application of section 46A or 49. A note is also to be inserted that points out that section 10 of the South Australian Act is different from section 10 of the Commonwealth Act.

6—Amendment of section 31—Simplified outline

This proposed amendment adds another paragraph to make it clear that a dealing specified in an emergency dealing determination is not prohibited under the Part.

7—Amendment of section 32—Person not to deal with a GMO without a licence

Current section 32(1) provides that a person commits an offence if he or she deals with a GMO in the circumstances set out in that subsection. The subsection is to be clarified and an additional circumstance added; that is, that the dealing with the GMO is not specified in an emergency dealing determination, and the person knows or is reckless as to that fact.

8—Amendment of section 33—Person not to deal with a GMO without a licence—strict liability offence

9—Amendment of section 34—Person must not breach conditions of a GMO licence

Clauses 8 and 9 would insert a new paragraph (ba) into current section 34(1) and a reference to that new paragraph in current section 34(2). The effect of these amendments is to provide that it will also be a strict liability offence for a person to deal with a GMO, knowing that it is a GMO, if the dealing is not specified in an emergency dealing determination.

10—Insertion of sections 35A and 35B

35A—Person must not breach conditions of emergency dealing determination

Proposed section 35A is similar to current section 34. Proposed subsection (1) creates an offence for intentionally breaching the conditions of an emergency dealing determination. Proposed subsection (2)(a) provides that the penalty for an aggravated offence is imprisonment for 5 years or a fine of \$220,000, while in any other case, the penalty will be imprisonment for 2 years or a fine of \$55,000.

35B—Person must not breach conditions of emergency dealing determination—strict liability offence

Proposed section 35B creates a strict liability offence for breaching the conditions of an emergency dealing determination and is similar to current section 35. In order to have committed an offence under proposed subsection (1), the person must have knowledge of the conditions to which the emergency dealing determination is subject, but need not know that he or she is breaching that condition. Proposed subsection (2) provides that strict liability applies to proposed subsection (1)(a) and (c). The penalty for an offence under this proposed section is \$22,000 for an aggravated offence or, in any other case, \$5,500.

11—Insertion of section 40A

40A—Licences relating to inadvertent dealings

New section 40A provides that if the Regulator is satisfied that a person has come into possession of a GMO inadvertently the Regulator may, with the agreement of the person, treat the person as having made an inadvertent dealings application.

12—Amendment of section 42—Regulator may require applicant to give further information

The proposed amendment provides that the Regulator may require information to be given under this section at any time before the Regulator decides the application, whether before or after the Regulator has begun to consider the application.

13—Amendment of section 43—Regulator must consider applications except in certain circumstances

The proposed amendment to current section 43(2) adds an additional paragraph that provides that the Regulator is not required to consider an application under Part 5 Division 2 for a licence if the Regulator is satisfied (having regard to the matters specified in section 58) that the applicant is not a suitable person to hold a licence.

14—Insertion of section 46A

46A—Division does not apply to an application relating to inadvertent dealings

New section 46A provides that Division 3 of Part 5 does not apply to an application for a GMO licence if the Regulator is satisfied that—

- the dealings proposed to be authorised by the licence are limited to dealings to be undertaken for the purposes of, or for purposes relating to, disposing of a GMO; and
- the applicant for the licence came into possession of the GMO inadvertently.

15—Substitution of section 49

49—Division does not apply to an application relating to inadvertent dealings

Current section 48 makes provision for applications to which Division 4 of Part 5 apply. Substituted section 49 clarifies the position to provide that, despite section 48, Division 4 does not apply to an application for a GMO licence if the Regulator is satisfied that—

- the dealings proposed to be authorised by the licence are limited to dealings to be undertaken for the purposes of, or for purposes relating to, disposing of a GMO; and
- the applicant for the licence came into possession of the GMO inadvertently.

16—Amendment of section 50—Regulator must prepare risk assessment and risk management plan

These proposed amendments are consequential on the insertion of proposed section 50A and allow the Regulator to prepare a risk assessment and risk management plan without consulting with the various bodies set out in current section 50(3) if new section 50A applies in relation to the application for the licence.

17—Insertion of section 50A

50A—Limited and controlled release applications

Proposed section 50A(1) provides that this section applies to an application for a licence if the Regulator is satisfied that—

- the principal purpose of the application is to enable the licence holder, and persons covered by the licence, to conduct experiments; and
- the application proposes, in relation to any GMO in respect of which dealings are proposed to be authorised—
- controls to restrict the dissemination or persistence of the GMO and its genetic material in the environment; and
- limits on the proposed release of the GMO; and
- the Regulator is satisfied that the controls and limits are of such a kind that it is appropriate for the Regulator not to seek the advice referred to in section 50(3).

18—Amendment of section 51—Matters Regulator must take into account in preparing risk assessment and risk management plan

The first amendment proposed to this section will remove the unnecessary reference to the matters set out in current section 49(2)(a) to (f) and insert, instead, a reference to matters prescribed by regulation. The other proposed amendments tidy up subsection (2) and are related to the amendments proposed by clauses 16 and 17.

19—Amendment of section 52—Public notification of risk assessment and risk management plan

These proposed amendments set out some additional requirements relating to public notification by the Regulator of the risk assessment and risk management plan.

20—Amendment of section 56—Regulator must not issue the licence unless satisfied as to risk management

These proposed amendments insert a reference to a risk assessment and risk management plan being prepared under section 47 in current subsection (1) and a note that provides that subsections (2)(a), (b) and (c) do not apply to an inadvertent dealings application.

21—Amendment of section 57—Other circumstances in which Regulator must not issue the licence

This clause provides for a new subsection to be inserted in current section 57 which provides that subsection (2) does not apply to an inadvertent dealings application.

22—Amendment of section 60—Period of licence

This clause provides for an additional subsection that provides that a licence issued as a result of an inadvertent dealings application must not be expressed to be in force for a period of longer than 12 months.

23—Amendment of section 67—Protection of persons who give information

This amendment is consequential.

24—Amendment of section 71—Variation of licence

The proposed amendments to this clause will allow for the Regulator to vary a licence (by notice in writing) at any time on the Regulator's own initiative, or on application by the licence holder. The power of the Regulator to vary a licence is subject to a number of exceptions or conditions to be inserted under the proposed amendments.

25—Amendment of section 72—Regulator to notify of proposed suspension, cancellation or variation

The proposed amendment provides that the Regulator is not required to give written notice of a proposed variation of a licence to the licence holder if the variation is of minor significance or complexity.

26—Redesignation of section 72A

It is proposed to redesignate current section 72A as section 72AA to allow for new sections to be inserted into the South Australian Act (see the following clause).

27—Insertion of Part 5A

Part 5A—Emergency dealing determinations

Division 1—Simplified outline

72A—Simplified outline

New section 72A is a simplified outline for the new Part. It provides that the Part creates a system under which the Minister can make a determination relating to dealings with GMOs in an emergency.

Division 2—Making of emergency dealing determination

72B—Minister may make emergency dealing determination

New section 72B(1) gives the Minister power to make an emergency dealing determination by order published in the Gazette. The emergency dealing determination effectively authorises the specified dealings with a GMO so that the penalty provisions in Part 4 of the Act will not apply.

In accordance with the nationally consistent scheme, new section 72B(2) provides that the Minister may make an emergency dealing determination only if the relevant Commonwealth Minister has already made, or is proposing to make, such a determination, known as 'a corresponding Commonwealth emergency dealing determination'.

Section 72B(2) of the Commonwealth Act sets out the conditions under which the Commonwealth Minister is permitted to make an emergency dealing determination. It provides that before making an emergency dealing determination the Commonwealth Minister must—

- have received advice from the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer, the Commonwealth Chief Veterinary Officer, the Commonwealth Chief Plant Protection Officer or a person specified in the regulations, that there is an actual or imminent threat to the health and safety of people or the environment and that the dealings proposed to be specified in the emergency dealing determination would, or would be likely to, adequately address the threat; and
- be satisfied that there is an actual or imminent threat to the health and safety of people or the environment and that the dealings proposed to be covered by the emergency dealing determination would, or would be likely to, adequately address the threat; and
- be satisfied that the risks posed by the proposed dealings can be managed safely, and have received advice from the Regulator to that effect.

States and Territories must also have been consulted about the proposed emergency dealing determination. This means that before making a determination under new section 72B(1) of the Act, the Minister will have had input into the decision-making process leading to the 'corresponding Commonwealth emergency dealing determination'.

Examples given in section 72B(3) of the Commonwealth Act of situations in which it may be appropriate to make an emergency dealing determination include—

- where there is a threat of disease;
- where there is a threat from an animal or plant (such as a pest or alien invasive species); or
- where there is a threat from industrial spillage.

The new section makes it clear that the threat must be actual and imminent for the emergency provisions to apply. It is expected that the provisions will only be utilised if a threat is serious and immediate.

New section 72B(1) restricts the Minister's power to make an emergency dealing determination to making 1 the same as any made or proposed by the Commonwealth Minister, to ensure that the exemption from all the offences in Part 4 in relation to that dealing will apply consistently to all those dealing with GMOs throughout the State.

New section 72B(4) sets out the types of dealings for which the Minister will be able to make an emergency dealing determination.

It makes clear that the determination may be in respect of all dealings with a GMO, a specified class of dealings, or 1 or more specified dealings and may relate to a specific GMO or a class of GMOs. This provision is drafted in similar terms to existing section 32(4) of the Act dealing with exempt GMOs.

72C—Period of effect of emergency dealing determination

New section 72C(1) sets out that a determination can take effect on the day it is made or at a specified later date. In other words, the determinations cannot apply retrospectively. Subsection (2) provides that a determination ceases to have effect on a date specified in the determination, or the date on which the determination is revoked, or after 6 months, whichever occurs first; and subsection (3) provides that the Minister may extend an emergency dealing determination by order published in the Gazette.

New subsection (4) provides that the Minister may extend the emergency dealing determination more than once, but only for up to 6 months at a time. New subsection (5) provides that the Minister may extend the period of effect of an emergency dealing determination if the Commonwealth Minister has extended the period of effect, or is proposing to extend the period of effect, of the corresponding Commonwealth emergency dealing determination. New subsection (6) provides that an order extending the period of effect of an emergency dealing determination takes effect at the time the original determination would have ended if not extended.

Division 3—Effect and conditions of emergency dealing determination

72D—Emergency dealing determination authorises dealings, subject to conditions

New section 72D(1) allows conditions to be imposed on an emergency dealing determination. Subsections (2)(a) to (v) give examples of the conditions that may be imposed. These include conditions relating to the quantity of GMO, the scope of dealings, the source of GMO, the person who may deal with the GMO, information required to be given to persons permitted to deal with a GMO, additional information that must be provided to the Regulator and the storage and security of the GMO amongst other things. Subsection (2)(w) clarifies that the conditions the Minister may impose are not limited to the matters listed in paragraphs (a) to (v) but that the Minister may impose conditions over any other matter he or she considers appropriate.

Paragraphs (a) to (v) of subsection (2) correspond to the current sections 62, 63 and 64, which relate to the conditions that may be imposed on licences.

Subsection (2)(f) provides that a condition may specify the person who may deal with the GMO and subsection (3) makes it clear that it is not necessary to specify a single person, that a condition can specify persons or a class of persons who may deal with the GMO. There are no restrictions on who may be included in the class of persons who may deal with the GMO, or how large the class may be.

Subsection (4) is drafted in similar terms to current section 64. It provides that it is a condition of an emergency dealing determination that a person permitted to deal with a GMO under an emergency dealing determination must allow the Regulator (or delegate) to enter premises where the dealing is being undertaken, in order to conduct audits, or monitor the dealings covered by the emergency dealing determination. This allows the Regulator to undertake routine or 'on-the-spot' auditing or monitoring of dealings covered by an emergency dealing determination. Subsection (5) makes it clear that subsection (4) does not limit the conditions that may be placed on an emergency dealing determination.

Division 4—Variation, suspension and revocation of emergency dealing determination

72E—Variation, suspension and revocation of emergency dealing determination

New section 72E(1) provides that the Minister may, by order in the Gazette, vary the conditions of an emergency dealing determination if the relevant Commonwealth Minister has made, or is proposing to make, the same variation to the corresponding Commonwealth emergency dealing determination. This power to vary includes the power to impose new conditions.

New section 72E(2) provides that the Minister may, by order in the Gazette, suspend or revoke an emergency dealing determination if the relevant Commonwealth Minister has suspended or revoked, or is proposing to suspend or revoke, the corresponding Commonwealth emergency dealing determination.

The corresponding provisions of the Commonwealth Act set out the relevant circumstances for the Commonwealth Minister.

Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) provides that a variation, suspension or revocation of an emergency dealing determination may take effect immediately only if the Minister states that this is necessary to prevent imminent risk of death, serious illness or serious injury or serious damage to the environment and paragraph (b) provides that, in any other case, the variation, suspension or revocation will take effect on the day specified by the Minister in the order making the variation, suspension or revocation.

Subsection (5) provides that the date specified in the order under subsection (4)(b) must be 30 days or more after it is made.

28—Amendment of section 78—Regulator may include dealings with GMOs on GMO register

This clause amends section 78(3) of the Act to remove the requirement that a registration of a dealing, made on the application of a licence holder, can only take effect if the licence authorising the dealing ceases to be in force.

29—Amendment of section 82—Simplified outline

This clause amends the simplified outline to Part 7 of the South Australian Act to include conditions of an emergency dealing determination, along with licence conditions, as conditions that could require a facility to be certified under Division 2 of the Part, or an organisation to be accredited under Division 3 of the Part.

30—Amendment of section 83—Application for certification

This clause inserts words into the note at the foot of section 83(2) to make clear that the conditions of an emergency dealing determination could require a facility to be certified under Division 2 of Part 7.

31—Amendment of section 89—Regulator to notify of proposed suspension, cancellation or variation

This clause inserts subsection (7), which provides that section 89, which includes, among other things, requirements of notice of proposed variations of certification, does not apply where the proposed variation is of minor significance or complexity.

32—Insertion of section 89A

89A—Transfer of certification

New section 89A(1) provides for transfers of certification by way of a joint application between the holder of the certification and the transferee; subsection (2) requires the application to be in writing and contain information prescribed by the Regulations or specified in writing by the Regulator; subsection (3) prohibits the Regulator from transferring certification unless satisfied that the conditions to which the certification is subject will continue to be met; subsection (4) requires the Regulator to give written notice of his or her decision to the applicants; and subsection (5) provides for the transfer, if approved, to take effect on the date specified in the notice, for the certification to continue in force and for the certification to be subject to the same conditions which applied before the transfer.

33—Amendment of section 91—Application for accreditation

This clause replaces the note at the foot of section 91(1) with notes that make it clear that the conditions of an emergency dealing determination could require supervision by an Institutional Biosafety Committee (*IBC*).

34—Amendment of section 92—Regulator may accredit organisations

This clause amends section 92(2)(a) to remove the obligation for the Regulator to have regard to whether or not an organisation proposes to establish an IBC for the purposes of deciding whether to accredit an organisation. The other proposed amendment substitutes paragraphs (b) and (c) of subsection (2) and inserts a new paragraph (ca). The new provisions require the Regulator, for purposes of accrediting organisations, to have regard to—

- whether an organisation will be able to maintain an IBC already established;
- whether an organisation has appropriate indemnity arrangements if the organisation has established an IBC;
- whether or not the organisation will be in a position to use an IBC established by another accredited organisation.

35—Amendment of section 97—Regulator to notify of proposed suspension, cancellation or variation

This clause inserts a new subsection (7) which provides that section 97, which includes, among other things, requirements of notice of proposed variations of accreditation, does not apply where the proposed variation is of minor significance or complexity.

36—Substitution of heading to Part 8

It is proposed to amend the heading to Part 8 to the Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee and the Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee as a result of combining the Gene Technology Ethics Committee (the *Ethics Committee*) and the Gene Technology Community Consultative Committee (the *Consultative Committee*) into 1 advisory committee. The combined committee will be known as the Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee (the *Ethics and Community Committee*) and will carry out the combined functions of both committees as well as providing advice on risk communication and community consultation in relation to intentional release licence applications.

The object of the amendments proposed to Part 8 is to increase efficiency by addressing the overlap between the roles of the Ethics Committee and the Consultative Committee. The new committee will also allow relevant skills to be distributed across its membership so that the committee is able to provide clear, balanced, appropriate and more coordinated advice.

37—Amendment of section 99—Simplified outline

This clause amends the simplified outline of Part 8 in section 99 to replace the names of the previously existing committees with that of the new combined committee.

38—Amendment of heading to Part 8 Division 3

39—Amendment of section 106—The Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee

These proposed amendments are consequential.

40—Substitution of section 107

107—Function of Ethics and Community Committee

New section 107 provides that the function of the Ethics and Community Committee will be to provide advice, at the request of the Regulator or the Ministerial Council, on—

- matters on which the Ethics Committee currently advises;
- matters on which the Consultative Committee currently advises;
- community consultation matters relating to intentional release licence applications; and

risk communication matters relating to dealings that involve the intentional release of a GMO into the environment.

Risk communication involves an interactive dialogue between risk assessors, risk managers and stakeholders. It underpins the processes of risk assessment and risk management.

The new section 107 is not intended to mandate the examination of every intentional release application; instead it is intended to permit the Regulator to seek advice in relation to certain types of releases that might be precipitated by such an application.

The matters on which the Ethics Committee currently advises are set out in section 112 of the current Act. These are—ethical issues relating to gene technology; the need for, and content of, codes of practice in relation to ethics in respect of conducting dealings with GMOs; and the need for, and content of, policy principles in relation to dealings with GMOs that should not be conducted for ethical reasons. These matters have been incorporated into new section 107(a), (b) and (c).

The matters on which the Consultative Committee currently advises are set out in current section 107. These are—matters of general concern identified by the Regulator in relation to applications, matters of general concern in relation to GMOs, and the need for policy principles, policy guidelines, codes of practice and technical and procedural guidelines in relation to GMOs and GM products and the conduct of such principles, guidelines and codes. These matters have been incorporated into new section 107(d), (g), and (h).

41—Amendment of section 108—Membership

42—Amendment of section 109—Remuneration

43—Amendment of section 110—Regulations

44—Repeal of section 110A

45—Repeal of heading

46—Substitution of sections 111 to 116

The amendments to clauses 41 to 46 are consequential on the proposed changes to the Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee in Part 8.

47—Amendment of section 136A—Quarterly reports

This clause inserts 2 new paragraphs into section 136A(2) to provide that quarterly reports prepared by the Regulator and given to the Minister must include information about any emergency dealing determination made by the Minister and any breaches of conditions of an emergency dealing determination that have come to the Regulator's attention during the quarter.

48—Amendment of section 138—Record of GMO and GM Product Dealings

This clause inserts a new subsection (1A) into the South Australian Act providing that the Record of GMO and GM Product dealings required under Division 6 of Part 9 must include comprehensive information, except confidential commercial information, about the content of emergency dealing determinations. The clause also makes a consequential amendment to subsection (5) to ensure that this information is entered on the Record as soon as reasonably practicable.

49—Amendment of section 145—Simplified outline

This clause inserts a new paragraph into the simplified outline of Part 10 of the South Australian Act. This makes clear that Part 10 enables the Regulator to give directions to a person permitted to deal with a GMO under an emergency dealing determination.

50—Amendment of section 146—Regulator may give directions

This clause amends section 146(2) to provide that the Regulator may give directions to a person dealing with, or who has dealt with, a GMO specified in an emergency dealing determination in the circumstances set out in that subsection. The other amendments proposed to the section are consequential with new subsection (2A) setting out the matters to which regard must be had when deciding whether it is desirable to exercise the powers under the section.

51—Amendment of section 149—Simplified outline

This clause inserts a reference to an emergency dealing determination into the simplified outline in section 149. This makes it clear that Part 11 does not limit the conditions to which an emergency dealing determination can be subject.

52—Amendment of section 152—Powers available to inspectors for monitoring compliance

This clause inserts a new paragraph (d) in current subsection (2) to make it clear that an inspector may enter premises and exercise monitoring powers set out in section 153 for the purpose of finding out whether the Act or regulations have been complied with, if the occupier of the premises is a person dealing with, or who has dealt with, a GMO specified in an emergency dealing determination and entry is at a reasonable time.

53—Amendment of section 177—Part does not limit power to impose conditions

This clause amends section 177 to make it clear that Part 11 is not to be taken to limit either the Regulator's power to impose licence conditions, or the Minister's power to impose conditions on an emergency dealing determination.

54—Amendment of section 179—Meaning of terms

This clause inserts various new items into the table in section 179 of the South Australian Act. These make it clear that the Regulator's decision to refuse—

- (a) to consider an application on the basis that the applicant is not a suitable person to hold a licence; or
- (b) to transfer a licence; or
- (c) to vary a licence; or
- (d) to transfer a certification,

is a reviewable decision, and that the eligible person can apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal under section 183 of the Act for review of the decision.

55—Amendment of section 182—Deadlines for making reviewable decisions

This clause amends the wording of section 182(a) so as to extend the application of section 182 to all applications to the Regulator, not just applications to the Regulator to make a reviewable decision. The wording 'reviewable decision to reject the application' is to be inserted in the section, thereby removing any doubt that a deemed rejection of an application on account of elapse of time is reviewable under the Act.

56—Amendment of section 185—Regulator may declare that information is confidential commercial information

This clause adds a new subsection (3B) into the section which would provide that information specified for the purposes of an application for a declaration that information is confidential commercial information (CCI), is treated as CCI until the Regulator has made a decision on the application.

57—Amendment of section 192A—Interference with dealings with GMOs

This clause amends the definition of authorised GMO dealings in section 192A(2) to include a reference to dealings specified in an emergency dealing determination that are not prohibited by the determination from being undertaken.

Debate adjourned on motion of Ms Chapman.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption (resumed on motion).

(Continued from page 61.)

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (15:56): At the adjournment for the luncheon period, I was just about to start a discussion in regard to country health and, specifically, the health section of the Governor's speech. There is no doubt that South Australia needs to see a continuous, significant investment in its health services. As our population ages, as our population increases, as the health demands upon our community increase and place more pressure on the health system, it is important that the investment continues to take place.

I know that the health budget is some \$3.3 billion, which is a very significant percentage of the state's total revenue. It is interesting, though, in reviewing the speech, I expected to see some form of reference to the Country Health Plan. If I missed it, I apologise, but I cannot find a reference to country health. For those of us on this side of the house who have been part of the series of public meetings that have been held around the state and witnessed the outpouring of emotions about the retention of the hospitals and the services they provide, it has been quite inspiring.

For some time, I had been worried about the fact that communities had become apathetic about too many things, that they accepted change too easily, that they were not prepared to fight for important issues in their community. The Country Health Care Plan and the real concerns that people across regional South Australia and the metropolitan area have expressed about it really has enlightened me and made me feel confident of the fact that communities actually want to get involved in politics. They realise how important politics are because politics, as alluded to by the Treasurer today, and the government and the extent of involvement that the government has in the economic base of the state really are critical areas.

Within my own electorate, I held three meetings. I had 700 people at Yorketown, 500 people at Balaklava and 400 people at Maitland. I am aware that some 26 meetings were held around regional South Australia. Amazingly, at Bordertown, I think, there were 1,500 people there—a thousand in the hall and 500 outside. I have some degree of responsibility for the

meetings that I held in my area because I called them and arranged for country health representatives to be there to explain the plan, for the Health Advisory Council chair to be in attendance to speak from their perspective about it, for the local mayor and a local GP to be invited to speak. On two of the occasions, the shadow minister for health was also there.

In those meetings, overwhelmingly, we devoted the evening not to hearing people on the stage speak but to actually hearing people from the floor, people from communities who had come out in the cold weather who wanted to make sure that their questions were answered and that they heard what the Country Health Care Plan would potentially do to the hospital that was very dear to them. In many cases these people came from families who, over generations, had worked very hard to fundraise to ensure that the hospitals were able to improve, were able to grow better services, were able to attract and retain staff and they were committed to it.

The concern out there was enormous. It was brought home to the city when there was a rally of 1,000 people on the steps of Parliament House early on in the process. It was also brought home to the city when a rally was held at Norwood, where we brought people together and made them understand. There was a good range of speakers—a young GP from Port Lincoln, I think, and the President of the Rural Doctors Association—and these people emphasised the fact that people in the regions and people in the metropolitan areas who travel to the regions need to be prepared to fight it.

Since then the minister has changed some things. A task force was appointed, and its role changed (amazingly) from the original intention to more of a review of the submissions that were made, and those submissions were the letters that people wrote to the minister with their concerns. I know the minister has written letters to each of the 32,000 petitioners who have been presented to the house already. With a petition carrying 6,500 signatures being presented to the house earlier this week, another series of letters will go out, no doubt. My wife, who was a petitioner, received a letter addressed to 'The petitioner' care of our home address. Obviously they must have been able to make out her signature. But, importantly, people are fighting for their hospitals, and I commend everybody in the community for that.

There is no doubt that there are some important aspects of regional health that the government is supporting. It is good to see investments being made in the forward estimates for the Berri, Whyalla and Ceduna hospitals: Ceduna, I think, in the vicinity of \$34 million; Whyalla \$15 million; and Berri \$41 million. I also acknowledge the commitment in the Governor's speech for two new breast screening buses equipped with the technology to ensure that women can be tested closer to home without the necessity of travelling to Adelaide. Because of the breast cancer in my wife's family, I know that my wife and her other sister, who have not suffered from the disease, ensure that they are tested regularly. So, I acknowledge the fact that the government is investing appropriately there.

Another point of the Governor's speech that I highlight is the statement about a record level of investment being made in the roads program over the next four years. Well, I am not sure where that is happening. We know about the Northern Expressway and its \$564 million, but the people in the electorate that I serve are very concerned about the condition of the state's road network. The road going from Kulpara through Paskeville to Kadina is terrible, and there is no other way of describing it. There are serious humps in the road. I am told of instances where two trucks coming towards each other, going through the humps in the road, start to shimmy across the road, and there have actually been instances of the trailers on these trucks 'kissing' or touching each other.

I am also told of the danger that the road presents to caravans, where similar instances are occurring. People travelling through there expect the road network to be in good condition. They have come from Adelaide, they have gone through the Hummocks where the road has been upgraded, and suddenly they hit this terrible stretch of road and they are caught by it. People with boats have similar problems.

Further down the peninsula there are identical problems. The road shoulders between Maitland and Millicent are terrible. There needs to be significant investment in the road network across the state, not just my electorate and not just the metropolitan area, but across the state, because it is important that people can travel on safe roads and so reduce the carnage that sometimes occurs. While some is directly related to people's driving behaviour, there is no doubt that the condition of the roads may contribute to accidents occurring.

The Governor, in his speech, alluded to the desire to ensure that there is a 25-year rolling supply of broadacre land. Members of the Adelaide community have been very outspoken about

the fact that the restriction in the urban growth boundary is artificially pushing up the value of land in developments and making it very hard for younger people, especially, to afford to buy into subdivisions and to build new properties.

It is obvious to me that the availability of land determines what price people pay for it. Even in the area adjacent to where I live when I am in Adelaide, in the new part of Northgate called Lightsview, I have read in the *The Advertiser* of allotments being on the market for \$400,000. Who can possibly afford an allotment of \$400,000? If we want to keep to our population targets—and I support that—it is important that we have more land available for people to build homes.

Adelaide and the regions will grow. If our population is to increase from 1.6 million people to two million people, or even more, as the Treasurer alluded to yesterday, with the projections looking a bit more positive than that in some ways, it is important that we have homes for these people to move into and that means that land has to be available. We have to ensure that the urban growth boundary is regularly reviewed. We have to ensure that allotment sizes are appropriate and that we provide a range of smaller homes and larger homes, but we have to make sure that we get it right because future generations will not be able to afford to build a home if the prices keep going up like they are.

The Governor also referred to mining. There is no doubt that the exploration that has occurred in the last 10 years promises a great future for South Australia, and we all hope that that comes to fruition. I have heard that 29 mines which are currently under exploration are probably going to come on line soon. Earlier this year, a few of us went with the member for Stuart for a tour through some of the northern areas in South Australia. We visited mining sites, and it is wonderful to see the private enterprise investment that is occurring. There are working sites with 1,000 people living there, working long shifts but earning a lot of money, too. Most of those people are fly-in/fly-out operations, but they are contributing enormously to South Australia's economy. The infrastructure needs of these industries will be a challenge, there is no doubt, for both Labor and Liberal, when we come into government in 2010, but we have got to get it right.

One point I will focus on, and it has direct portfolio responsibility, is the workforce needs of the state. Minister Caica speaks about this quite often, and appropriately so. He confirmed that an Economic Development Board report released just prior to 30 June, I think, discussed the fact that, over the next 10 years, South Australia needed 206,000 workers to replace those people already in jobs who are retiring (the baby boomer generation), plus we also need 133,000 workers to fill vacancies that will be created through development opportunities in the state. If we consider that there are 780,000 people in work, to suddenly have to come up with 340,000 new workers over a 10-year period when there are only, I think, 15,000 young people entering the workforce each year—the sums do not quite add up.

It is important that we look at any opportunity to increase our workforce. Our workforce participation rate is below the national average. I think it is about 63.8; the national average is about 65. It is obvious to me that we need to pursue immigration opportunities: bringing people here permanently and making them part of the South Australian community, encouraging them to have their families here and to have strong job opportunities and to grow, because that will make the state grow.

The state's economy relies on transactions and the only way to have transactions is to have people out there buying things. You have to do that. Government revenue relies on transactions, business relies on transactions, as does the future of our economy. So, we have to get the people here to fill these vacancies, making sure that the opportunities that are there that will become more evident in the future are actually filled.

These people, though, need to be trained, and I know there is a focus on that. The training and skills development bill discussed a few months ago is a step in the process, but it is not just one-off training. People now need to respect the fact that once you get into a job that is not the end of your training needs. You have to up-skill yourself continually. If South Australia wants to maximise its economic opportunities, we have to get the attitude out there that learning is a lifelong experience. It is not just a one-off thing—it is not just while you are at school and not just prior to or in the early stages of any working role—it has to be a continuing thing.

It is good that there is a relatively high number of people in training. The minister in question time today detailed the fact that 33,900 people are in apprenticeships or traineeships. I listen to talkback radio and I hear people like Leon Byner ask the question: how many of those are

making sandwiches, though? We want to make sure that people who are in training are actually training for the skills that are needed for the state's future.

So, getting it right is the challenge, not just to the Labor government but also to the Liberal opposition when we form government, and I will keep talking about that, member for Mawson.

Mr Bignell: Dare to dream.

Mr GRIFFITHS: We must all dream. We must all have ambitions. Our dream is to be in government from March 2010. We are part of the way there. A united team makes a difference and that is what we are. I look forward to the introduction of the public sector bill. Interestingly, the Governor spoke about this. This was flagged earlier in the year. I held a briefing with the minister's chief of staff and adviser in January, I think. I was advised that it was intended to be presented to the house in something like April but here we are in September and we are still waiting for it, so we will see what happens.

Overseas students are also important to our economy. Adelaide and South Australia are blessed to have some great universities, staffed by people who are dedicated to the learning opportunities that they provide, not just for South Australians or Australians but also for our overseas students. We are getting it right; there is no doubt about that. We are attracting larger numbers of people who recognise the fact that, by undertaking study, the future will be good for them. The overseas students who come here—and nearly 25,000 do—contribute enormously to the economy of this state. I believe it is just under \$600 million, so we need to make sure that we support that. I can assure the house that the Liberal opposition supports that, and we want to make sure that the future of our universities is a positive one, and we will do whatever we can.

Another point, which is not a portfolio responsibility but something I want to speak about, is the reference to the Social Inclusion Unit in the Governor's speech and the number of people sleeping rough. My own situation as a youngster was not necessarily the best with my parents being divorced at a young age but, to me, it is an absolute disgrace that the Australian society does not provide enough to ensure that everybody has a future. To have people unable to get a roof over their head, who cannot find a job, who seem to be hopeless and lacking a positive outlook about what they can be in life is not good enough. We need to make sure that this is a priority, not just in the metropolitan areas but also the regional areas, because I know in my own electorate there are people sleeping rough. It does not sit well with me and I am sure it does not sit well with any other member of this house. We need to change that. We need to make sure that South Australians care for their community.

I want to focus on some more direct portfolio responsibilities. Finally, I would like to talk about some state finance issues. I have talked about this a few times before and I will continue to talk about this because it is absolutely key. The Treasurer with great fanfare is proud of the fact that he achieved a triple-A credit rating in 2004. I have no doubt that the very hard decisions made by the Liberal government from 1993 to 2002 created an opportunity for that to be achieved. It is also very concerning to me to see now that, where direct government debt has been reduced to a very manageable figure of over \$2 billion, the forward estimates project it to go out to a fraction under \$2 billion. That is going to take away so much capacity for important projects to be undertaken.

On top of this, there will be an on-balance sheet entry for the liability attached to the Marjorie Jackson-Nelson Hospital. We do not know what that will be yet. I have had briefings on the PPP issues associated with the project, and who knows what it will be? It is \$1.7 billion, plus the ongoing management and maintenance of the facility being paid back over 30 years. Who knows? Is it going to be \$200 million a year or \$300 million a year? What will it be? How will it affect the state's health budget? If it is \$300 million a year, on our current figures that is about 9 per cent of what health has available to undertake the important works that it does, so we need to get it right.

I want to talk about issues within my electorate in my few remaining minutes. A lot of press has been given to the performance of councils in recent weeks in the area in which I serve, namely the Copper Coast council and the Yorke Peninsula council. Only if you have read the local press would you be aware of it, so I do not expect all members of this house to be aware. There has been a lot of negative thought. I admit openly to the fact that I come from local government, having worked there for 27 years. I work on the basis that I have loyalty towards local government because, in every instance I am aware of, they are people who act with integrity and make difficult decisions based upon the fullness of knowledge of an issue.

The Hon. Sandra Kanck has been outspoken in the Legislative Council on several occasions about activities in the Copper Coast council at the moment with what is happening in Wallaroo especially. A public meeting is being held at Wallaroo tonight about a retail proposal which council invited tenders for. It selected the best tenderer and it has chosen to negotiate further to improve the value to the community, and the concern is enormous. The fact that the tenderers chosen were not those who were operating the existing business (Foodland) in Wallaroo has caused a lot of people to be concerned. The people who were successful have an arrangement, I believe, with Woolworths, which also operates out of Kadina, so it is causing a lot of concern.

Foodland has been great for Wallaroo; there is no doubt about that. It has provided a lot of employment opportunities. It has been good to the town in the sponsorship that it has provided, so it is a difficult one to consider. I am heartened, though, by the fact that the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times*, the local newspaper, which I believe to be a fearless reporter of the truth, reviewed independently the merits of all the proposals considered for this project, and determined that the proposal chosen was the best one. We will see what happens about that.

As the community grows—and the Copper Coast is predicted to have growth, I think, double that of the state average—there are a lot of challenges to get it right. The council is working hard, and let us hope that it happens in the future.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:16): In beginning my Address in Reply, I acknowledge the excellent work and the fine service that the Governor is giving this state. Members would be aware that there is growing pressure to take two massive steps for the future of the River Murray and the Lower Lakes: (1) dam the river at Wellington to temporarily relieve the critical water supply problem the state now faces; and (2) open the barrages to allow sea water into the Lower Lakes to prevent the spread of acid sulphate soils.

The causes of these two huge problems have been discussed many times before in this place, and I do not propose to go over them in detail again. Suffice to say, the problem is man-made, not a freak of nature. Nature is merely another victim of man's mismanagement. As we face the looming prospect of signing the death warrant for our precious river and lakes, the local communities and other caring Australians, with a bit of help from Mother Nature, are re-examining the fine detail of the current situation and ways to save the ecosystem.

It has become apparent that much of the science is inaccurate or inadequate. Crucial and terminal decisions must not be based on wrong information. Before anyone presumes to override nature and institute more engineering fixes for this tortured environment, consider some of the information we do have that must be carefully considered first.

The following statements are either direct quotes or statements based on facts from a Murray-Darling Basin Commission document entitled *Salinity Audit*, produced in 1999. It states:

The rivers generally collect groundwater in their lower reaches and carry it to the sea. During periods of low flow, the salinity of the streams and rivers rises dramatically.

...Currently [1998] the River Murray exports an average of 2.1 million tonnes of salt a year to the ocean.

...The salt load exported to and through rivers will double by 2100.

...Salt ingress into the Murray between Tocumwal and the border is 995,000 tonnes.

...From the South Australian border to the Barrages...the dominant salt source is direct accession by groundwater.

...The level of salinity in a river at any time is a consequence of the salt load and the flow.

...Regulation of rivers by dams and weirs and the diversion of water for consumptive uses have further compounded the lack of natural flushing.

...Water diversions have significantly reduced flows in the lower reaches of the River Murray, so much so that the median annual flows from the basin to the sea are only 21 per cent.

That was in 1999; it is obviously much less now. It continues:

Salinity in rivers was considered to be a downstream problem, and this continues to be so for the River Murray.

...There are serious implications for the Lower Lakes.

...As the feedwater salinities rise and the consequences of reduced 'whole-of-system' flow equilibrate, these water bodies will become regularly saline.

...The impact on streams and rivers is exacerbated by the reduction in flow resulting from the high rates of diversion...

A graph produced by DWLBC in 2008 depicts volumes of salt exported to the sea through the mouth over the period 1975 to 2007. Between 1975 and 2007 outflows at the mouth dropped from 8,000 gigalitres a year to 1,500 gigalitres a year. It used to be 12,900; it is currently zero. Between 1975 and 1997 an average of two million tonnes per year of salt were flushed out to sea. Between 1997 and 2007 an average of just 700,000 tonnes of salt were flushed out to sea. Taking the last five years—2002 to 2007—an average of only 200,000 tonnes of salt were flushed out to sea; it is currently zero.

Why am I relating all this information about salt loads and river flows? Because the salt is still accumulating—all 1.8 million tonnes of it annually. What will happen to all this salt if the river is blocked at Wellington? The question must be answered before 700,000 tonnes of rock are dumped into the river. I have heard it said that some minimal flow over a spillway will occur, supposedly mitigating that salinity. But that spillway is in shallow water well to the east of the deepest part of the weir wall. Saline water sinks to the bottom, and the river channel, a kilometre or so upstream, is far deeper than the weir will be. The saline water will not simply flow over the shallow spillway; it will accumulate in the weir pool upstream.

I have another thought on this debacle. The South Australian section of the river does almost all the water treatment of the salt loads that come down the river, and it takes large volumes of water to be able to manage that salinity, yet we are expected to borrow water from upstream to assist with this and then pay it back. Where is the equity in that?

I now wish to address the issue of saving massive volumes of water from evaporation by damming the river. We have all been led to believe that there is anywhere between 750 and 1,400 gigalitres per year lost from the Lower Lakes. The most commonly quoted figures are somewhere around 1,000 to 1,200 gigalitres a year. That is a lot of water, although it is still less than is lost from man-made storages and channels upstream of the border, which is rarely, if ever, acknowledged.

An evaporation and inflow study just completed and currently being peer reviewed indicates that the true losses from the lakes are significantly less than is commonly stated by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission and other authorities, some of which concede that the true losses for the lakes have never been accurately calculated. Further investigation has revealed that it was an accepted fact that these estimations were inaccurate, being based on various approximations and non-specific factors. A CSIRO document from 2004 makes that clear.

The new study's finding is that the actual loss is closer to 400 gigalitres a year. That is vastly less than the huge and unnatural losses that occur from the hundreds of man-made inland storages and channels. Why is South Australia being asked to pay the evaporation price with what is, after all, a vital function of a natural ecosystem?

Early indications are that the methodology—and, therefore, conclusions of this new study—are sound. We could close off the lakes and flood them with sea water and still not save anywhere near the amount of water expected. Talk about throwing out the baby with the bath water! Interestingly, in a 2002 Murray-Darling Basin report entitled 'Environmental Flows for the River Murray—a Healthy River Murray System, Sustaining Communities and Preserving Unique Values', the following paragraph appears on page 17 under 'Further proposals':

Wellington Weir Proposal

A strong perception exists that the construction of a new weir at Wellington would save very large volumes, (hundreds of GL) of fresh water that would otherwise evaporate from the Lower Lakes system. There are significant costs and disbenefits but modelling to date indicates that the actual potential savings are only approximately 60 GL per annum.

It would be interesting to know how that figure was arrived at and why and when it was ignored or changed to justify the weir's construction—or is it just that pressure from other states forced the Premier's hand to be seen to be doing something?

Let us assume that the Premier goes ahead and builds a weir to appease his Labor mates in the east. Damming the River Murray then leads to a problem with low levels in the lakes. Much has been said about the risk of acid sulfate soils and the profound effect they have on water environments, because the lake beds have almost never been exposed before: unlike the ephemeral wetlands upstream, the problem with acidity is far greater.

But what are the real limits? What is the trigger point level for acidification? How accurate is that science, and just how late can we leave it before we abandon the lakes entirely? How much water would be needed to forestall that fateful decision? Where could we get that water from and how long would it take to get there? It may only require a small amount that could be sourced from the weir pools within South Australia.

Some calculations based on data freely available answer some of these questions about additional flows required to maintain minimum lake levels at minus 0.7 AHD, the level that we are currently told is safely above the minimum trigger point of minus 1.0 AHD, a figure that was recently upgraded from minus 1.2 AHD. Various figures abound about this, with proponents of allowing sea water into the lakes pushing water volumes like 1,000 gegalitres that could fix the problem overnight. What locals want is for the lakes to be given a fighting chance.

Even though the consequences of acid sulfate soils are dire, the lakes' capacity to manage low levels should not be underestimated. The lakes do not need massive flows to struggle on to next winter. It has been calculated that, on current figures, allowing for 900 megalitres a day dilution flow past Wellington, recent rainfall, and allowing for the pumping into Lake Albert and estimates for other inflows and extractions, we might not need any extra water put into Lake Alexandrina until next winter to maintain the level at minus 0.7 AHD. We are told that the critical level for the potential onset of acidification is minus 1.0 AHD, so why would anyone advocate opening the barrages now?

It is highly questionable whether that would achieve any significant advantage, anyway, as with no outflows the mouth would want to close off completely. Suddenly we would be confronted with another expensive engineering dilemma. Even if we have an exceptionally hot, dry summer, and considering all the same factors that I have just mentioned, the amount of water required to maintain minus 0.7 AHD may be in the range of only 100 to 200 gegalitres. We must not be hasty on this: nature has given us some time.

While we are on the subject of lake levels, why is water still being pumped from Lake Alexandrina to Lake Albert when Lake Albert is currently at around minus 0.18 AHD? When this project started, the critical height was minus 0.4. Why do we not keep as much in Lake Alexandrina as we can for as long as we can?

There is another risk that needs vital answers before we write off the lakes and block the river at Wellington—or, I should say, the government writes off the lakes and blocks the river at Wellington: acid sulfate soils between Lock 1 and Wellington. Apart from the increased risk of blue-green algae in what would become a long weir pool with no appreciable flow because of a rock wall, I am advised that the river between Lock 1 and Wellington has a particularly low alkalinity reading, making its backwaters and wetlands—and, therefore, the river itself—very susceptible to acidification.

The alkalinity reading for this stretch of water is about 50 milligrams per litre. Sea water has 130 milligrams per litre, and the lake water is between 300 and 400 milligrams per litre. Therefore, the wind-driven flushing action between the lake and the river is even more crucial than its moderating effect on salinity alone. More work is currently being carried out on natural ways to mitigate the effects of acid sulfate soils, and the government should redouble its funding in support of this urgently needed research.

Does the \$120 million for a weir include the extra weirs/bunds required for the lake's three tributaries? As members may know, there are other smaller tributaries to the Lower Lakes, whose contribution to their survival was evidenced by substantial inflows from recent heavy rains in the eastern ranges. Lake Alexandrina gained at least 150 millimetres from this event.

These tributaries will have to be isolated from the body of the lakes or their contamination from seawater, or indeed acidifying lake water, would seem inevitable. Does the somewhat rubbery figure of \$120 million that has been given to build the weir at Wellington include their cost? It would seem extremely unlikely.

What will be the total cost of this action and will appropriate environmental impact studies be required for each of them? Will they be 'temporary'? If so, has the government factored in the cost of their removal? The South Australian public is used to big blow-outs with this government's major projects, so perhaps the government is counting on that in order to float them off another voter backlash reef.

It is hard not to be suspicious and even cynical of statements made by the government about the critical limits of water levels, inflows, salinity and toxicity readings, and other related matters vital to the decision making matrix. At the beginning of this water supply crisis we were told categorically that the pump off-takes in the Lower Murray that supply Adelaide could not possibly be lowered. After much debate the government announced that it could lower these off-takes to a level of minus 1.5 metres AHD, thereby prolonging the time before a decision on the weir would have to be made.

For many months we all understood the maximum depth at which the Murray Bridge off-takes could operate was minus 1.5 metres AHD, but in an SA Water paper dated 4 June 2008 the maximum depth for operation with modifications is given as minus 2.1 AHD. In fact, it is also noted that the Mannum, Swan Reach and Tailem Bend pumps can be modified to operate down to minus 3 AHD. This is very pleasing news, but it differs significantly from the earlier figures and leaves one wondering what other variables are in the system.

In early July I travelled to north-western New South Wales and southern Queensland. I learnt many things about the way in which water is or is not managed effectively. The cries we hear in South Australia for fairness and equity with Australia's most valuable resource are not confined to this state. A great many farmers and others in those areas deplore the selfishness and greed they see above them in their local rivers.

I spoke to flood-plain graziers whose important food producing enterprises were founded on a reasonable expectation of water flowing as it always had. They are being deprived of that by their own neighbours and countrymen. Much has been said about water storages up north, and I note that more than Cubbie Station is operating in the far north. I was told that there are at least 22 major properties between the New South Wales-Queensland border and St George and a record amount of water—over 1,000 gegalitres—was diverted.

Between 1995 and 2002 diversions in that part of Australia increased threefold. One has to wonder where the water is? People down the bottom of the Murray, including Henry Jones, have said to me that they used to get 20 per cent of their water from the Darling and now they do not get anything. How often do we hear local farmers and their various community representatives, such as our water security minister's National Party colleague Barnaby Joyce, bleating about destroying the communities that have sprung up around massive new farms that are underpinned by excessive water diversions? Did any of them ever consider that scores of towns and communities downstream would be decimated by their actions?

I also learnt about the metering of water. I was surprised to learn that the only metering of water on these massive private dams is on the exit channels, so there is no accurate measurement of how much is taken out of the streams. Worse still, there is scant monitoring of these meter wheels—and it is known that farmers' boots get stuck in them for hours.

This lack of inflow metering also makes it impossible to accurately calculate storage losses through evaporation and leakages. It makes it almost impossible to detect water theft, if there is any. A water audit will be a valuable yardstick but effective ongoing management will depend on far greater monitoring and control.

This brings me to Premier Rann's recent hollow, belated threat on water theft and what he calls environmental terrorism. His bold announcement, coming well and truly after the horse has bolted, is an empty threat expressing indignation at practices about which we have known for some time. His labelling of water thieves as environmental terrorists is truly ironic. His November 2006 announcement of a weir at Wellington, which has terrified and threatened thousands of people in his own state, would qualify him as the environmental terrorist of the decade. Premier Rann's federal Labor colleagues may find themselves the subject of similar accusations at the upcoming Ramsar convention.

Through all this turmoil and community concern, what is being done to assist river communities at the local level? Several different groups are trying desperately to make the best of a bad lot in their own stretch of the river. Their ideas are not always winners, but they are ideas, and they do indicate that communities are actively seeking alternatives for their own economies. How much direct help is being given to them to develop and pursue these ideas?

Only yesterday the tourism minister proudly announced 24 projects around the state that would receive funding. How much will go to the struggling river communities? Three projects in the Riverland will receive \$200,000 between them and the lucky old Murraylands will get \$5,000 for one project. The minister's release states:

The South Australian government is committed to working with the tourism industry to encourage sustainable tourism developments that will attract high-yield visitors from interstate and overseas.

Only yesterday a constituent of mine advised that he had heard of a tour party of 50 New Zealanders who had cancelled their planned tour of the river because their agent told them that there was no water. If the minister's budget was so tight, it might be better spent on informing agents interstate and overseas that the river and its communities are not dead.

The most frustrating part of my job at the moment is constantly spreading the word to irrigators, journalists and the general public both here and interstate (and from time to time even my own counterparts) that the lakes were never a salt environment. It seems that many people who write letters to the editor in interstate papers do not read any other letters in the same paper. No sooner has a letter of mine refuting that dangerous misconception been published than more letters turn up the following week saying untruths. No wonder people upriver think we are selfish.

For those of you who still doubt the fact about the fresh water history of the lakes, let me refer to 'A Fresh History of the Lakes; Wellington to the Murray Mouth', published by the River Murray Catchment Water Management Board in 2004. The introduction states:

Saline invasions were more common after 1900 and the development of irrigation works because reduced river flows could not hold back the sea...Through the joint influences of long continued drought and an increasing diversion of its waters in its upper course, the River Murray has steadily lowered its levels so that its lower reaches and the lakes which for centuries it had supplied with a constant flow of fresh water, have fallen to sea level, with the result that instead of the river 'rushing out to sea' the tides of the ocean have flowed in, changing the freshwater lakes to salt ones.

That quote appeared originally in the *Southern Argus* (a Strathalbyn newspaper) in 1903. In 1902, the Superintendent of Point McLeay said:

Despite the long drought the waters of the lakes have always been sweet at this time of year, and more or less throughout the hot weather...

We so often hear statements like, 'Let the lakes return to their normal state'; 'revert to salt water'; 'go back to their estuarine condition'. These statements are all wrong and also very misleading, just as the suggestion that the barrages were built to create freshwater lakes. The barrages were not built to create a freshwater environment but to preserve one. These commonly held but incorrect beliefs are often at the root of poor judgment and unreasonable demands on us as river and lakes custodians to implement even more changes, change that will potentially destroy not just the environment itself but the way of life we seek to preserve.

I would like to know whether members opposite are generally aware of the true facts about the history of the Lower Lakes. More to the point, does the Premier and his water security minister (who I acknowledge is in the house) accept this fact and have they ensured that their counterparts from the east understand it? It is a critical piece of information. How many bad decisions have been and continue to be based on that misunderstanding? We just need to ensure that the right decisions are made in the short term so that we get the proper longer term outcomes for the whole river system right throughout the basin, including the Lower Lakes.

I cannot let this moment pass without saying a few words about the Country Health Care Plan debacle. This ill-conceived and city-centric plan was slipped under the public's door last budget day. It contradicted the understanding most country health professionals had about what to expect and flew in the face of the spirit of agreements the government had struck with country health communities. Not surprisingly, there was a huge outcry which the government accused the opposition of orchestrating. Perhaps members opposite have forgotten what it is like to be in opposition. It will not be long and they will have to start remembering. When constituents flood your office with phone calls, letters, emails and visits, the local member must act, especially when the basis of their complaints is so compellingly obvious.

Yes, I took part in community forums (as did many of my colleagues), and yes, I circulated petition forms registering the community's horror and indignation at the government's clumsy plan. That is my job. The opposition did not precipitate the statewide outcry: we facilitated it, as we must. As if to underline the government's total mismanagement of the whole business, weeks after the plan was withdrawn, we started to get calls from anxious constituents who had received government initiated surveys proclaiming the plan's benefits and describing changes to local services that had already been abandoned. I suggest we rename the government's offices 'Faulty Towers' in recognition of their blundering and insensitive incompetence.

In the few minutes I have left, I will say a few words about the upcoming development of the high security correctional services precinct that will be built at Mobilong near Murray Bridge. I know that the council, along with me, have had several discussions with Treasurer Foley, minister Conlon and others on the other side about the needs for the Murray Bridge community and surrounding areas when this proposal takes shape.

A social and economic study does need to be instigated so that we can see the full effect of what will happen when a 700-odd cell prison is constructed in Murray Bridge, the women's prison of 100 cells and also the forensic mental health facility to ensure that we get the right outcomes for families who will move to Murray Bridge, whether they be prisoners' families or warders' families, and also to look after the present population. Government services will need to come up the road, as well.

I hope the government is taking that into account because, at a briefing the other day at the local council of the rural city of Murray Bridge, the Public Service Association certainly made their members' issues clear. Many of them said that they would not drive up the road. To me the trip from Murray Bridge to Adelaide is a walk in the park. It is only about 50 minutes. It is no fuss at all. I do understand that many people will have to relocate or work out their work options. I do acknowledge that the prison precinct will provide an economic boost in the short term, especially its construction, etc. In the longer term, we must ensure that we have the right social outcomes and the appropriate amount of services in Murray Bridge.

Looking particularly at the forensic mental health facility; will the appropriate doctors, nurses, psychologists and psychiatrists travel up the road? Looking at the prisons, will lawyers come up from North Adelaide to Murray Bridge? When you talk to some of these people, you would think we lived on Mars. Murray Bridge is a nice place and I hope that the people associated with the prisons, if they need to come to the community, will find out how good a place it is to live, but only if it receives the appropriate support from government agencies and others. Housing is affordable. For around a couple of hundred thousand dollars you can get an excellent place to live, but the community does need support so that people can enjoy the lifestyle and everyone can get on as one. With those few words I conclude my remarks.

[Sitting extended beyond 17:00 on motion of Hon. K.A. Maywald]

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

The Legislative Council notified its appointment of a Standing Orders Committee.

PRINTING COMMITTEE

The Legislative Council notified its appointment of a Printing Committee.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption resumed.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart) (16:47): In rising to support the Address in Reply, I say from the outset I am not sure how many Address in Reply debates I have participated in since 1970, but it is a considerable number. I must admit that on this occasion I feel somewhat more relaxed than I did on the first occasion that I had the honour and privilege of addressing this house. I suppose that as my time in this august and esteemed chamber draws to an end, this may be the last occasion upon which I have that particular privilege.

I say from the outset that I do not regret being given the opportunity to serve in this house. I have always regarded it as being an honour and a privilege to be a member of parliament and that one should conduct oneself responsibly and wisely and always act in the best interests of the people of this state.

I went into the Stranger's Lounge and counted up of the number of people I have served with. I hope my counting is accurate. I think that I have served with 173 members; that is 174 counting myself. I was fairly good at counting sheep so I hope that I have counted up correctly. I do not think I missed anyone, but it was particularly interesting looking at the people. I think the first one was the Hon. D.M. Brookman, whom I got to know when I first came here. He was a very good person with similar views to my own.

Mr Venning: Even my father.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, I served with the honourable member's father, I served with minister Wright's father, and with a number of other people.

Mr Venning: The member for Davenport's father.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The member for Davenport's. The deputy leader's—

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, all those people. In that time I have seen many changes take place. I have seen many enthusiastic people come into this place. Some have been very fortunate. Some have been unfortunate to be caught up in swings of political moods, one way or the other, and got swept in and swept out.

I congratulate the Governor on the manner in which he made his speech to parliament and I commend him for the way in which he and his wife are carrying out their duties. It is excellent that we have a South Australian carrying out this important role, someone representing the Crown. As a staunch monarchist, I believe that the system we have in this particular country is as good as you get anywhere in the world. The role of the Governor as a unifying force in our community, to encourage people and to bring out the best in the community is very important and that it is done in a bipartisan, responsible and friendly way.

As you know, Mr Speaker, one of interesting things in your role is going to Government House and delivering the bills to His Excellency. I do not know what the arrangement is now, but I can say to you that, during the time of Her Excellency Dame Roma Mitchell, it was a very formal occasion. One had to conduct oneself in an appropriate manner and be directed as to how one would present oneself. She had the habit of questioning the particular piece of legislation handed to her and giving her views on it, which was somewhat interesting.

Without speaking out of school, on one occasion I gave her a piece of legislation. She looked at it, turned over the pages and said, 'I don't particularly like this very much,' and I said, 'Your Excellency, I share your views on the matter.' She said, 'Who was the architect of it?' and I said, 'Minister so and so.' 'Oh,' she said, 'I wish I'd known.' The then premier said, 'I wish I'd known that the Governor wasn't happy, that would have been the end of it, we wouldn't have had it.' It was to do with skateboards going down North Terrace. We know which minister that was, and that was most interesting.

She said one or two other interesting things to me. I received some criticism from certain members for wearing the wig and all those things, and she said to me, 'I am of the view that it is absolutely essential that you do it and I intend to make those people who are criticising you know that I have directed you to wear this regalia, and those who are criticising you, I intend to have a word with them.' It was interesting after that; there was no further criticism made.

Mrs Redmond: It would be treasonous to reject the views of Her Excellency.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, one member did get an early minute for doing so.

Mr Venning: He reflected on the wig—my God!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No; it was slightly more than that. It was slightly more than the wig. You look up the record and you will see the whole process. He was looking for a bit of publicity, and he got it. He got four days, in actual fact. Ask the Deputy Premier, he knows about four days. He knows all about standing order 137.

Nevertheless, on occasions like this I would just like to say that the challenge to state members of parliament is to ensure, when we are examining the budget and the process of government, that we are really reflecting and putting into effect the needs of community. The great challenge for state governments in a changing society is to ensure that they are really targeting the real needs and issues. One of the things that concerns me is that I think state governments are trying to spread their resources too far and not actually concentrating and providing the resources for those really important issues.

In a large rural constituency like mine, and that of the member for Giles, road funding is of the highest priority. You may have heard in recent times the debates and discussions in the Far North by my friends the Williams, up at Hamilton Station, and other places and so on, about the need just to have the very basic maintenance and construction funds spent.

We have had the most challenging debate on health services. We want people to live in regional and country areas, and, in fact, if you look at the latest local government grants and the

population numbers there, we can see an increase in the population in a number of these small communities. One of the first things people look at is: what are the health services? What services are there at the hospital? Is there a pharmacy there? Is there a dentist? Again, if you look at my constituency, in the last couple of years there have been pharmacies established in places like Booleroo Centre and Orroroo, all through funding arrangements put in by the previous federal government.

There have been, in the past, places like Hawker, Booleroo Centre and other hospitals that have had very considerable investments, and they have been supported by the community. Unless there is a guarantee that those services will be maintained and continued, you will not have increases in population. It is as simple as that. I will just give you an example. About 2½ weeks ago I happened to be home on my farm on Saturday at lunchtime. I said to my wife, 'We'll go to Port Kenny and get a paper.' She went to get up and her knee locked. It was not a very pleasant experience. I rang my son and we lifted her up, and then rang one hospital but there was no doctor. We rang the other and there was. It was about a 90 kilometre drive, but at least when you get there you have very good services at that hospital.

It happened to be Elliston Hospital. It has an interesting history. When I first came to this place in the early 70s, I represented Elliston and they were building a new hospital. They got it half-built and ran out of money, and I well recall taking the then chairman of the hospital board and the chairman of the council along to meet minister Banfield who kindly helped them finish it. So that community has not only a hospital, but an aged-care facility and other facilities there, a surgery for the doctor, and it is absolutely essential. It is a popular tourist resort where people come to have their holidays. But if those services are not there such places will not be as attractive for the tourists to go there. It is as simple as that.

In a place like Hawker, a large number of those people who come to that hospital to get services are tourists from Wilpena. There is going to be an upgrade at Wilpena. The Rasheed family have just sold their lease and outside people are going to make further investment there, which is a great thing for South Australia. Wilpena is one of the jewels in the crown of our tourist industry. Unless those services are there, it is going to be a disincentive. One night a few months ago, my wife and I were at Blinman. It was a pretty damp night. The road between Hawker and Blinman, because of the construction work to seal it, was completely a quagmire. There were some young chaps up there having a bucks party, because one of them was getting married, not an unusual thing to do, and they were a bit exuberant, perhaps slightly too exuberant, and one of them walked outside and fell down a pit at about half-past one in the morning. They had to drag the ambulance people from Leigh Creek and take him back to the hospital.

Now, the Sir Humphreys in the health commission have had their eye on Leigh Creek to shut it ever since I can remember, and I know that former health minister Dean Brown told me that every six months they would tell him that he should close it, and he said that his life would not be worth living if he did, and that was right, because that community is entitled to a hospital. That community and those people beyond need that facility. I would suggest to the government that, if the bureaucrats from the health commission were to try to shut that hospital, these lights here may get a little dim.

Those people have got a bit of a stick which most others in the community have not. I am fully aware of their views on what they propose to do, so I would say to Sir Humphrey one and two, sitting up there, isolated and out of touch with reality, Sherbon and others, and that bloke with the earrings, whatever his name is, up there in the health commission, if you want to start closing health services, I suggest you go and perhaps try Mount Gambier, or perhaps go and try Norwood, or one of those places, and see how well you get on. See what the result is. Keep your hands off the long-suffering people in rural South Australia because most of those communities have helped build those hospitals, they are pleased to continue to work for them, and they are entitled to have a say in their management.

I look forward to changes in the future, because the winds of political change are blowing through the corridors. People should be aware of it. One of the interesting things I have learnt is that when you happen to meet senior people in the Public Service and they think the winds of political change are blowing they become a lot more friendly towards you. It is interesting: they become a lot more friendly towards you and more amenable to your suggestions. So I would suggest that they need to be very much aware of what has got to happen in the health system. It may only be an interesting set of circumstances, but it is a feeling I have that they have become somewhat more amenable.

I was interested to hear today that a ministerial statement has been made in another place relating to recreational services and about helping pony clubs and things, which is very good. The question I raise for the now Minister for the Environment and Conservation, the minister in charge of the animal cruelty legislation, legislation that went through this parliament and set out to make life as difficult as it possibly could for the people who run rodeos—good volunteers who work hard to support the Flying Doctor Service—is that, when the government was given the opportunity to give reasonable protection to those people against frivolous, unnecessary or quite malicious prosecutions, it was not prepared to do so.

In the time I have left in this place, I intend to continue to pursue this matter, both in this place and in the community, with some vigour. Later in the year I will have the opportunity, at one or two of these occasions where there are large gatherings, to explain to those people what the likely consequences are for their future. I am looking forward to it. I have been invited to open a couple of them with 6,000 or 7,000 people there.

It will take me a day or two to work myself up to it, but nevertheless I will say a few well chosen words, and I will make sure that my predecessor is there and is given the right introduction in front of all of those good, hardworking people. Those people who ride horses and wrestle steers and things are the salt of the earth. It is a very good example of an Australian recreation. It is something which should be promoted and not hindered by obstructionist people.

Mr Venning: Or besmirched.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, they are doing more than that. You have a few of these crazies, you know. I have made comments about the horse trials, which seems to have upset Channel 7 and one of the others, but I have not lost any sleep over that. Channel 7 have never had to vote for me; I have never needed them in the past and I will not need them in the future. I have my good friends at GTS4, which is a good television station, and it will take me all of tomorrow to work myself up to do an interview with them on a range of subjects.

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No. It takes a lot to get me on my feet, particularly when they point a microphone at me. I have to take a step back and take a breath. In recent times I have taken some interest in the ongoing attack on ordinary citizens with these disgraceful, on-the-spot fines. For my further education, I decided that I would go and sit in court, and I did so. I was very concerned that people, obviously without the ability or the means to represent themselves, are dragged before the court. A lot of them were quite terrified.

I think that if we have a system where we are taking people's rights away in a shockingly arbitrary manner and reversing the onus of proof on them with these on-the-spot fines—and many of these people have never had a conviction in their lives but are now subject to going to court—then we have to make sure that there is adequate legal advice available to them so they can adequately defend themselves against the aggressive and unnecessary issuing of these on-the-spot fines.

It was an education for me, and I suggest to all members that they avail themselves of the opportunity to go and sit in the courts and see how the laws that we have passed—and many people think they have done a great thing in passing the laws, but mostly we are taking someone's rights away or making life more difficult—are being implemented and what happens.

The Legal Aid people were doing their very best, but a lot of them were inexperienced. It was clear to me that a large number of the people before the courts were people in the lower socioeconomic group, one would say. They were people who were battling and who had done some quite foolish things. However, it appears to me that we really need to make sure that they are treated fairly.

One of the things that concerns me is that there seems to be an obsession with issuing on-the-spot fines. There appears to be relatively no recourse to the use of the trifling legislation. There is a need to change the system, and I intend to bring legislation into this parliament to give people a chance to have their case independently adjudicated and to make it illegal for the management of the police department to set quotas or to issue instructions that a certain number of cars must be stopped over a prescribed period. I think it is appalling, and we are going to face problems with the new legislation dealing with trucks. I issued a number of challenges before the house that either people did not understand or did not want to understand, and they accepted other advice. When

these difficulties arise, I intend to fill the *Notice Paper* with questions on notice about the activities of those involved, and that will start from next week onwards.

There appears to be an obsession among those involved in prosecuting people to deny them their rights. A case was brought to my attention today in which a person was interviewed by one of these people and was told by this interviewing person that they had to answer the questions, he had the power to make them. I said to my constituent, 'Well, you should have told him to stick his head in a bucket of water, because he does not. You are entitled to have a lawyer present. Your answer should always be, "I will see you in my lawyer's office." If he got abusive or threatening then you should take his name and the number of the vehicle and contact your local member of parliament.'

This character is going to get his name on the *Notice Paper* because I am going to put some questions on notice. It is a function and role of a member of parliament when we are debating laws to have a watching brief on the laws that this parliament has passed, wisely or unwisely, to make sure they have been implemented in a responsible, fair and sensible way, not harshly or unreasonably. It is unnecessary to want to make life difficult for the community.

I come from a rural background and I strongly support the agricultural sector. I am very much aware of the great benefits to this state and this nation of the mining and tourism industries, and I am terribly concerned about the welfare of my constituents at Cadell, Morgan and Blanchetown where people are suffering great hardship. Of course, the real difficulty is that there are no simple and easy answers to these difficulties. If we want people to settle their water entitlements, it is clear to me that they have to be offered a very good incentive for them to do so and, if the value is X and it has to be X plus 25 per cent, that will be an investment in the long-term future.

Further to that, there needs to be some flexibility in the planning laws. I have had a number of people contact me who would probably wish to sell but they would like to live in their existing house on their half or full hectare, but there are planning difficulties preventing them from doing so which I think is quite ludicrous. They would be prepared.

It has been a most interesting exercise to be involved in the Natural Resources Committee where we have been visiting interstate and looking at the whole river system, and it is certainly a very complex issue. It is an issue which takes a lot of understanding. It was clear when we visited the Menindee Lakes that urgently needed engineering works should be done which could have a benefit for this state. We were only there for a limited time and we were given certain information, but I really do believe that the suggestions that were put to us need to be thoroughly investigated and acted upon.

When people say we should just let the water go, it is no good letting the water go if it is not going to get here. So, I think that the committee needs to take very good evidence and to examine all the options very closely. Of course, the best result would be to get substantial rain in the catchment areas. That would be the greatest result to help save the river. I understand the shortage of water. As someone who has had to provide their own water for most of their life, I understand the challenges and difficulties when adequate, reliable sources are not on hand, and it makes you very careful and cautious.

I would say to the government that it needs to be very cautious in dealing with those interstate because I think the Victorians have a far better cut of the cake than they are entitled to, and probably at our expense. It was challenging to go to look at Queensland and northern New South Wales. People who are making comments in these areas should clearly understand that there are no magic wands and, if you did attempt to buy some of these properties, you would think at this stage you would be buying fresh air. You would not be getting any water. So, people need to be cautious and make sure that any investment is made to achieve benefits to our hard-pressed Riverland producers because the effect of these problems, not only on them but their community, will be horrendous.

I was in the Riverland earlier this week. Unfortunately, the packing shed at Cadell has gone. So, there is an urgent need to do what we can. It is interesting, having been in this place for a long time, to reflect on the changes in technology since I was elected. When I first became a member of parliament I was on a party line, if anyone knows what a party line is. It was five or six people on the one telephone line and you took turns to use the telephone. There were no fax machines, no laptop computers.

Mr Venning: No mobiles.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No mobiles.

Mrs Redmond: A typing pool and a tea lady.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: There was a limited typing pool here at Parliament House and the building was in some urgent need of repair. We did not have the Festival Theatre car park. We had the old stables at the back and we used to park out the front and there was a policeman standing at the front to make sure you could get out when you went to back out.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: And others. Things have changed. Of course, we have a lot more bitumen roads. We also did not have electoral offices, and they have been a wonderful institution.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Long may incumbency reign.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I just want to say that I have been very fortunate with the people who have helped me in my term in this place. My office has been hard working, capable and has assisted me with my successes in this place.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: To squeak over the line three times in a row.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, there is one thing you—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: It doesn't matter whether you win by a half head or the length of the straight.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: It doesn't matter—I am still here. There is one thing: I have had a lot of advice about what I should do. I have always done my own thing. I own up to the fact that most of my leaders have found me a little hard to manage, but I make no apologies. I admit to being somewhat single-minded and somewhat of moderate views and—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Immoderate.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Moderate—I have always been fair-minded.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I am sure you said 'immoderate'.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: But, at the end of the day, I have had one guiding light: I used to stick up for the people of my constituency.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: No villains?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No, to stick up for people. No matter who they are or where they come from, if they have a just cause I will stick up for them, and I have stuck up for them. There are some people who currently, I believe, have been badly treated. That is why I have been going to the court and watching what is happening. At the end of the day they will get their moment in the sun in this place. I think the hallmark of democracy is how you treat people, particularly people who do not have the ability to stand up and represent themselves. That is our role and our function, and this parliament should always allow members that opportunity.

The processes of this parliament, with its two houses and the various other opportunities, should never be run down, abused or misused. Anyone who, for their own short-term publicity, such as Mr Xenophon and others, tries to undermine this institution, I think, is doing a great disservice to democracy, as does anyone who tries to undermine the role of the presiding officers and other institutions. They are really very ill informed and do not understand that a lot of the privileges that this parliament has are really not our privileges but belong to the people. We only exercise them from time to time, like parliamentary privilege. That does not belong to us; it belongs to the people.

In my experience, it is similar to people who put on a turn about the salaries of members of parliament. They do not normally last very long, because people see through them as being shallow and as stunt people. I do not think they do the cause any good. I know they do not do their constituents much good because, if they are shallow in those sorts of issues, they will be the same on other important issues. Whether I have the chance to make another Address in Reply speech I cannot say, but it has been a privilege to be here. I have enjoyed the speeches, raising matters of concern. In the time that I have left here I will continue—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Don't go, Gunny!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: —I will keep raising them. It is all right; one should know when one's time has come. You should know when your time has come because—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Yes; 38 years.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, it will be a few weeks under 40 when I finish. But I have a few other things that I would like to do.

Time expired.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen) (17:17): I must say that it is a pleasure to follow the Hon. Mr Gunn, member for Stuart, in my Address in Reply. Well do I remember my very first Address in Reply in this chamber, prior to which the honourable member came along and said to me and others who were new on that occasion, 'You can read your maiden speech, but after that expect me to do something if you start reading your speeches.' I took him at his word, as I am wont to do, so the poor old Hansard staff never get notes from me because I make speeches instead of reading things that I have written out beforehand or, indeed, that someone else has written out beforehand. And it is largely thanks to the member for Stuart, because I believe that he would indeed come along and remove my notes.

I am grateful for that, and I am grateful to know the honourable member. I will be saddened when he leaves this place. Like the Attorney-General, I think the member for Stuart's departure will be a sad loss and that he should stay, but I understand that after 38 years, and nearly 40 years when the time comes, he probably will feel that he has done his service by us and the people of his electorate. I have to say that his basic principles—and he is a man of great principle—and the manner in which he has conducted himself throughout the 38 years so far, I think, are a lesson to us all. I would like to find some way to put on record the stories that I am sure the member for Stuart could tell us, because it will be a sad loss when we no longer have him in our house.

My Address in Reply, however, probably should turn to the speech delivered by His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce, our new Governor. I thank him for his attendance at parliament yesterday and for the speech, although I accept that probably the words were not entirely his. He is a man who has done an enormous amount for our community. From my conversations with him, he appears to be really quite enjoying being able to yet again give back to the community in his new role of Governor. With his wife, Liz, we should be grateful that he is prepared to serve in that way.

I am a little surprised that we have to have an Address in Reply, because I was surprised that the parliament was prorogued. I am still a little puzzled as to why a government, at this stage, would prorogue the parliament. For some members, I can understand that last year the parliament was prorogued because we wanted to have a ceremonial recommencement to celebrate the sesquicentenary of self-government in this state. But, the fact that we have now prorogued and recommenced means that some of our new members are up to their third Address in Reply already, which is really, I think, a little bit unusual.

So, I thought: what would be the motive for the government wanting to prorogue and start again? It could be that it just wants to get a whole lot of things off the *Notice Paper*. But that does not make a lot of sense because we will simply reintroduce all the things that are on the *Notice Paper* and the government will spend a lot of time putting its own things onto the *Notice Paper* again. In fact, in some cases we will have the opportunity to debate issues that have already been debated, and so on. That did not make a lot of sense in terms of motivation, so I thought maybe it is because the government feels that it needs a bit of a bounce in the polls, as it were.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mrs REDMOND: I suspect from the Attorney's protestations—methinks he doth protest too much—that perhaps I have hit a raw nerve, in that the government wanted to have a statement about the government and all its good intentions and good works, and not have to get on with the real work of being in government. They are certainly tired and lacklustre—and, in fact, the Attorney seemed to have his eyes closed more than open through a lot of yesterday afternoon. I thought that that was probably part of the motive.

I have noticed that, over the last week or so, the government has been doing a lot of advertising on television, in particular. We have seen the Premier heading a lot of these advertisements. I am gobsmacked by that, because I seem to recall that some time ago someone said that when you see a politician spruiking in a commercial, in fact, it is party political advertising.

I am paraphrasing the words but that is, in essence, what was said; that this was nothing more than government paid party political advertising.

That is what galls me more than anything else about this government, and particularly this Premier. He has such a thick hide that, having said in his earlier days, 'If you see government advertising it is nothing more than paid party political advertisements,' he then dares to turn around and spend massive amounts of money, no doubt, on his party political advertising.

I should not be surprised by the gall and the thickness of the hide of this Premier because, after all, it was he who wrote about the mirage in the desert, and now the mirage in the desert is to be a saviour for this state, in terms of its economic future. I have no problem with a premier who takes one view and, over a period of years, changes his mind. There is nothing wrong with that at all, if someone has a view and is persuaded on the evidence that a different view is the preferred one.

However, one would imagine that they might at least be a little humble about it. But not this Premier. This Premier just throws the phrase back and tries to use it against us. We always supported Roxby Downs, but this Premier gets up and says the most astounding things. Mind you, the Premier now recognises the importance of these things to the state's economy. We had tried to tell him for years, but he would never say so.

I now wish to refer to the speech that was delivered yesterday by our Governor, His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce. He said some interesting things. At the beginning of the speech he said: 'My government proposes to continue its program to foster economic growth, prosperity and opportunity for South Australia.' Is that not fascinating? For a start, what would any government say but that?

However, this government's attack and how it will go about fostering economic growth, prosperity and opportunity is, to say the least, puzzling. We heard a question earlier today during question time about how our taxes here are 50 per cent higher than the taxes in the cheapest taxing state, which is Queensland. Our youth unemployment levels are the highest of any state. Our exports are trending downwards. We have this wonderful aim that we will treble our exports in the period of their economic forecast but, in fact, they are trending downwards.

The government keeps talking about a mining boom but, in reality, what we have is a boom in mining exploration that has not yet turned into a mining boom. However, it is clear that, if this mining boom is to happen, we will need massive amounts of infrastructure. We will need housing and people who have the training to participate in the mining sector. And what is this government doing? It is building an extension of the tram to the Entertainment Centre. It is just a nonsense.

The government does not seem to realise that, if we are to have a mining boom, hopefully, it will lead to a lot of extra employment in this state. However, there are plenty of places where miners do a fly-in and fly-out, and there is no guarantee at all that if they are going to fly in and fly out they will fly in and fly out from Adelaide and live here. They could just as easily fly in and fly out from Sydney, Brisbane, Perth or somewhere else, and we could miss out on a lot of the economic benefits, unless this government starts to pay some attention to the need for the development of real infrastructure and services in the areas that will properly service the mining boom, if and when we get to the stage of a mining boom.

I agree with the government's statement in the Governor's address that the biggest challenge is the issue of water security. However, the government then went on and talked about the drought as though that was the explanation for the crisis we are now experiencing. There is no doubt that we are in the grip of a bad drought. However, this country has always had droughts. The reality of our water problems is that they relate largely to overallocation, which has gone on along the length of the whole basin for a long time and, I suspect, a lot of theft of water.

We need an audit, and we need some immediate action. To say that it is the drought, I think, misses the point entirely. The reality is that we need to do something very urgently, and this government thus far does not even seem to recognise that fact, let alone do anything to solve the problem.

On that topic, I want to touch briefly on the announcement made by the Premier yesterday, because I could not believe it. When the Premier got up I understood him to say, 'We have referred our powers to the commonwealth over this whole issue.' I thought that that seemed a peculiarly silly thing to do. I accept the need to refer the powers to the commonwealth, but only if we do it in concert with all the other states. There is absolutely no benefit to this state if we refer our powers to

the commonwealth and the other states do not refer theirs. So, in my view, whilst referral of powers is something that we possibly need to do, we need to do it only on the basis that the other states refer their powers.

However, I have been told today that I have the wrong end of the whole thing. I have been advised that what the Premier did yesterday, although he made it sound as though he was referring the powers over the whole basin, was to refer only certain powers to enable the administration of the Murray-Darling Basin authority—which we all know will be a toothless tiger with no real independence and no power to compel any state to do anything.

We also know that the Victorian arrangements will stay in place until at least 2019 or 2021. In the Governor's speech the government referred to the purchase of water licences. Again, that seems to largely miss the point. As the member for Stuart was saying, you need to be very careful about how you target those purchases. The reality is that you could be purchasing thin air in terms of seeing more water coming down the river. The government just does not seem to realise that there is no point in purchasing, for instance, sleeper licences. They need to be removed from the system, but a sleeper licence is a licence that is not being used. At present, no water is being taken out of the system on that licence, so purchasing it makes not one drop of difference to the amount of water coming downstream. I agree with the comments of the member for Stuart in terms of what we need to do.

The government talks about its efforts in a whole range of environmental issues. I suspect it is wanting to trumpet its environmental credentials. It paid so much attention to it at the beginning of the Governor's speech. It talks about desalination. Thank you member for Davenport and other members of the Liberal team who—for a good 12 months prior to this government's finally being dragged kicking and screaming to recognise the need for a desalination plant—had done all the background research and figured out that this was a partial answer to the water problems of South Australia. As much as the government might want to take credit for the introduction of a desalination plant—and, certainly, the speech does not give any recognition to the member for Davenport—the reality is that the public on that issue actually remembers that we came out with it 12 months earlier. We championed that cause until the government was finally dragged kicking and screaming to agree that it was necessary.

It is in no way a complete solution on the issue of water, but it is a necessary backup for water. The Governor's speech refers to the Mount Lofty Ranges reservoirs and the government's desire to increase the storage capacity of Mount Lofty Ranges reservoirs. I am sure members on this side will remember that the government, quite clearly, had a very specific policy of doubling Mount Bold reservoir. We had pictures on the front page of the *Eastern Courier*. The government was going to double the size of Mount Bold reservoir. It did not mention that it intended to double the capacity so that it could pump more water from the Murray. That is a bright idea for solving the water problem—take more water from the River Murray! Now, the government has backed off from that idea. Suddenly, it is increasing the capacity of reservoirs in the Adelaide Hills or Mount Lofty Ranges rather than doubling the size of Mount Bold reservoir.

In relation to stormwater reuse, Martin Hamilton-Smith and Mitch Williams have already announced their plans. If you look at the government's policy, they probably grabbed that from Martin 2010, the website on which Martin had the water policy published for some time. Certainly, we are still working on it. I do not think we will ever get to the point where we know absolutely all the answers, but, thank you, Martin Hamilton-Smith and the Liberal team for the stormwater reuse idea.

The Governor's speech then talks about wastewater reuse. I am stunned that the government dares to mention wastewater reuse. In fact, we had three bills in the Legislative Council which dealt with sewerage and mining, and all that sort of stuff, and which the government opposed. It is extraordinary that flushing our toilets is 11 per cent of our water use. Some 11 per cent of our water use is flushing potable water down the toilet. In the driest inhabited state in the driest inhabited continent on earth, it is a nonsense to be flushing potable water down our toilets.

Then we get the idea that the government will continue to support the use of renewable energy. This speech is very cleverly worded because it does not say that the government has done anything—just that it will continue to support renewable energy at Coober Pedy and Goyder Pavilion and hot rocks technology. These things are private enterprise and the government is saying, 'We support that.' We all know how well Labor governments support solar energy. Look at what Kevin Rudd has done in relation to solar energy. Why not remove the incentive for everyone with a combined household income of over \$100,000 because that will instantly destroy the

industry? Anyone with under \$100,000 is struggling to pay the mortgage and petrol under the wonderful government regime and they cannot afford to think about going solar. It is actually a reasonably expensive activity. It is not something that people on limited incomes will be doing. Thank you very much Kevin Rudd and the Labor government.

There is mention of planting one million trees. I am all in favour of planting trees, but it strikes me as a nonsense that we are talking about planting one million trees in the same breath as we are talking about water restrictions. In the past 12 months or so, little old ladies have not been allowed to water their gardens—which are their pride and joy and which keep erosion and house tracking at bay. We will not allow people to water their gardens but we will plant one million trees. It makes no sense.

The last thing on the environmental agenda is the banning of lightweight plastic shopping bags. I will make a personal comment about that. I am not an expert in the area, but I think it is probably not a good idea in that 20 years ago I brought back biodegradable cornstarch plastic bags from the United States. I think it would have been more sensible to simply say that we will impose on the retailers an impost if they choose to use non-biodegradable bags, but if they are using the biodegradable bags, then it is business as usual, because otherwise I think we will put a huge impost on people and we will end up with a whole lot of the so-called environmental bags which will be less biodegradable than what we have.

I will not say much about health in general, although I do want to comment on the government's proposals for mental health services because I cannot believe that this government is still prepared to sell off the farm—and that is what it is doing at Glenside. Whilst I can accept that, in some dreadful economic circumstances, it might be necessary to do that—that is, take that facility and use it for things other than the mental health campus that it has always been—it is a step in the absolute wrong direction. Over many years, I have discussed with Jonathan Philips, the former director of mental health in this state, the mental health issues in this state. Of course, he came from Sydney. I happened to know Jonathan before his appointment because he had been a witness kind enough to give evidence in a case that I was running.

We maintained a friendship but, because he was in that employment, we were not very close. He certainly could not disclose inappropriate things about the government, but he certainly did let me know, in any number of discussions that, in his view, the ownership of that facility by the mental health sector so close to the centre of a major city was an absolute jewel in the crown in terms of our opportunities to address issues of mental health in this state. But what is this government doing? It is going to use it for all sorts of wonderful rebuildings and refurbishments, but it is selling off the farm in order to make money out of the whole thing.

I now turn to transport. The Governor spoke in his address about building yet more tramlines—and I have already expressed a view on that. It is interesting that he is very interested in extending the tram to the Entertainment Centre. I asked many questions during budget estimates about the park'n'ride at the Entertainment Centre because it is clear, if you look at the questions, that the intention of the Treasurer at least is to make people pay to use the park'n'ride at the Entertainment Centre. There is no doubt in my mind that that will be the plan; that is, they will start charging. Once you start charging for one park'n'ride, why would you not charge for all the park'n'rides? This government clearly has an agenda in that direction, which I notice it does not deny. It will not deny that that is the plan.

In any event, enough about that. The important thing is the lack of real attention to our roads infrastructure throughout the state. The roads infrastructure in this state has been in a sad state of neglect since this government came to office. We know that there needs to be a lot of resealing, a lot of work on shoulder programs and so on, and it simply is not happening at the rate that is sufficient to keep up with current need and to address any of the backlog. Members may be aware that I spent about 10 years on the Road Safety Advisory Council for South Australia. The Road Safety Advisory Council taught me a thing or two about road safety issues.

It is fundamentally the case that we have already addressed two of the three basic prongs of road safety. We have addressed the issue of the safety of vehicles. They are much safer than they used to be. We have that shell that keeps us basically safe, as well as air bags, seat belts and all sorts of wonderful things that now keep us much safer in a vehicle. The second aspect is driver behaviour, and we have largely addressed that. We have had good trends in driver behaviour with the reduction in road accidents, their severity, the number of deaths and so on. We have addressed those two issues. The third issue is that of the roads and what is called the roadside

furniture, or the things alongside the roads. There is a failure by this government to recognise that as the third prong and to address it.

I will skip over a couple of things about which I had made notes because I do want to mention a couple of issues concerning the Attorney-General's portfolio and the shadow attorney-general's portfolio. First, I refer to page 16 of the address by the Governor. He says:

Improvements to the Criminal Assets Confiscation Act will enable law enforcement agencies to target the unexplained wealth of drug traffickers and known criminals.

A laudable thing to do, but let me tell you—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: But you won't be in favour of it, of course.

Mrs REDMOND: The Attorney calls out that I will not be in favour of it. On 25 July last year, I received a text message on my phone from the Hon. Robert Lawson in another place. He sent me a text message which I still have on my telephone. It says:

Be aware that Liberal amendments to Criminal Assets Confiscation Bill was opposed by government in the Leg Co. Our amendment was to include unexplained wealth declarations against bikies and organised criminals etc. as requested by the police.

Once again, just like when this government took over the member for Schubert's drug driving legislation (after he pursued it single-handedly for two years) and trumpeted it as their own, here they are in the Governor's address saying, 'We are going to do this.' I still have the record on my phone. I kept the message so that I could say, 'Here is the date on which I was advised that this government rejected the very same thing'—and it does that frequently. It takes what is clearly a good idea from the other side and says, 'Oh, we will not accept it now, but we will come in afterwards and introduce it ourselves.'

Similarly, they talk about Monsignor Cappelletti's To Break the Cycle report. Again I refer to page 16 of the address by the Governor. It says:

And the government will introduce additional changes to juvenile justice laws and establish a youth parole board in order to tackle the difficult issues identified by Social Inclusion Commissioner Monsignor David Cappelletti's To Break the Cycle report.

I do not know whether the Attorney-General has actually read Monsignor David Cappelletti's To Break the Cycle report, but if he has, he will have noticed that at the very beginning of that report, almost the first thing that Monsignor Cappelletti says is that he wants to acknowledge the work of the juvenile justice select committee of the parliament. That committee met for 18 months, was chaired by the Hon. Bob Such (the member for Fisher), with three members from the Labor Party and three members from the Liberal Party, and heard evidence for over 12 months. It came up with 43 recommendations, which were unanimously supported by that committee, and the government has proceeded to ignore those since that report was brought in here at the conclusion of the select committee.

There were 43 unanimous recommendations specifically dealing with issues in juvenile justice, talking about the importance of early intervention, and Monsignor Cappelletti is generous enough to acknowledge that they formed a large part of the basis for his considerations in his report. The government chooses now to say, 'Oh, well, we're going to do something suggested by Monsignor Cappelletti.' The government has never acknowledged the work done by that committee, which I still believe was one of the most valuable committees on which I have served in this parliament, and I think that a little bit of acknowledgement would go a long way.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mrs REDMOND: The Attorney asks why I am not the Attorney-General already and if he has not figured out that I am in opposition and he is in government, that probably says enough. It is interesting that at least when I become attorney-general, we will have one in place who has been in court as a practitioner. The Attorney-General, of course, has spent more time in court as a witness than he ever has as a practitioner, and I have no doubt that that is going to continue to be the case for ever more. He will never have served this—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mrs REDMOND: He may have been a member of parliament for a long time, but—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mrs REDMOND: The Attorney says he might do crash and bash cases. Let me tell you, I had a lot more experience than just doing crash and bash cases and I appeared in many tribunals, and never as a witness, Attorney, and never as a plaintiff or a defendant. In this state, I will put my credibility on the line against yours any time, Attorney. With those few comments, I close my remarks.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. M.J. Atkinson.

At 17:48 the house adjourned until Tuesday 23 September 2008 at 11:00.