

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 8 February 2011

The **SPEAKER (Hon. L.R. Breuer)** took the chair at 11:01 and read prayers.

The **SPEAKER:** Honourable members, as we start this new year, I respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of this land upon which this parliament is assembled and the custodians of the sacred lands of our state.

CLASSIFICATION (PUBLICATIONS, FILMS AND COMPUTER GAMES) (EXEMPTIONS AND APPROVALS) AMENDMENT BILL

The **Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (11:02):** I move:

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

Motion carried.

DEPUTY CLERK, ABSENCE

The **SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I inform the house that, in the absence of the Deputy Clerk, I have appointed Mr Paul Collett to perform his duties today.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

The **Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (11:03):** By leave, I move this motion in an amended form:

That the Natural Resources Committee inquire into and report on the proposed Murray-Darling Basin plan when it is released by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Pederick.

TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 24 November 2010.)

Mr PISONI (Unley) (11:05): I would like to inform the house that I am the lead speaker for the opposition on the Training and Skills Development (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill. I am here in my capacity, not just as the member for Unley but, of course, as the opposition spokesperson on Employment, Training and Further Education. I was going to be at the SACE celebration at Government House this morning representing the opposition, with the education minister but, unfortunately, that was not to be. Some last minute arrangements meant that the member for Adelaide went in my place. I am a little bit disappointed, just as a personal matter, because my niece was going to be receiving two merit awards there this morning and I would have loved to have been there representing the opposition, but it was not to be. However, I am raring and ready to go in the chamber here this morning to debate the Training and Skills Development (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2010.

Of course, the Liberal opposition supports any measure that will positively contribute to the activities of students, both local and overseas, studying here in South Australia. Any legislation that seeks to protect their interests and ensure a satisfactory standard of vocational education and better standards of regulation of services provided is worthy of our backing. The Liberal Party is also fully supportive of educational institutions and private registered training organisations promoting employment opportunity through improved skills and creating wealth for our state. After all, it was the Liberal Party in November 1988, under the Public Corporations Act, that established Education Adelaide. That, of course, has grown to be a very worthwhile organisation here in South Australia; itself building on the national growth that we have seen in Australia in the international student education business here in Australia.

Of course, South Australia has struggled to keep its share. In the 2003 Strategic Plan the Premier's very ambitious goal was to double the national growth of foreign students in South Australia, but the latest report of the Strategic Plan tells us that that approach is not going to happen. I think the terms that is used is 'unlikely to succeed'. I remember that, at one stage, the previous minister for further education and training—because there have been a few under this

government—said that he was putting a cap of 60,000 students for South Australia because, as I think he told Estimates at that time, we didn't want to be like Melbourne. I am not quite sure if I know what that means but that was the view at the time.

I think we are well short of that 60,000 and rather than a cap we probably need a bit of a bullet to get it moving along a bit more. It is interesting that the latest piece from the Education Adelaide website includes some members of its program: 42 participating institutions including Carnegie Mellon University from the United States and Cranfield University from the United Kingdom. I wonder if Cranfield is still registered, because before the summer break Isobel Redmond, the opposition leader, and I visited the Cranfield University campus and the door was locked and there was nobody there. First of all, we emailed the inquiries number for Cranfield University for course inquiries and we got a message back saying that that person was no longer available on that email address and the email address was no longer valid.

We then tried to call Cranfield University and immediately went to a message bank. We were then very shocked, of course, to get a return call from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet who explained that it was, in fact, managing Cranfield University at that time and that there were not any courses at Cranfield University. We are not sure whether there will be any courses in the future. Remember when Cranfield University came to South Australia and there was a big opening? His Royal Highness, the Duke of Kent was here to open it. Remember the plaque on the wall and the curtain? There was no building, of course; there was a plaque.

The Premier, on two occasions almost 12 months apart, told this parliament that Cranfield University would be offering degrees, yet when we questioned the Premier on how many students had graduated with degrees at Cranfield University, he said, 'Ah hah, I've got you. I've caught you out. It was never going to offer degrees.' However, he told the parliament, on two separate occasions, that it would offer degrees.

So, one has to ask oneself just where are we heading with these pet projects? I know they are not the responsibility of the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, but it may very well fall within his responsibility as the Treasurer because, from what we can establish, close to \$50 million of taxpayers' money has already gone into Carnegie Mellon. Carnegie Mellon does not report to the state parliament. Adelaide University, University of South Australia and Flinders University report to the state parliament, but Carnegie Mellon and Cranfield do not report to the state parliament.

The Hon. J.J. Snelling interjecting:

Mr PISONI: The minister interjects as if it is not an important issue—\$50 million! You're the Treasurer now, minister; \$50 million is a lot of money. Tell that to the students out at Para West College, who have been told that they can no longer attend as adults after the age of 25—tell them that \$50 million is not a lot of money and that it is not relevant in the parliament's bill. This bill is all about protecting international students.

In relation to Cranfield University, if you read the rhetoric—the over-selling of the Premier about Cranfield University and Carnegie Mellon University—it was all about building our foreign student business here in South Australia. Well, the facts are that Terry Buss from Carnegie Mellon wrote to the Treasurer just last year, stating that in four years 137 students had gone through Carnegie Mellon University. Then, its own internal report, which was published in November last year, from the AQAS, I think, the organisation you hire to report on your own business, showed that there were just over 60 graduations—in four years, \$50 million and 60 graduations from Carnegie Mellon University.

The bill we are debating today is about protecting students. What I am saying is, 'How about protecting the taxpayers of South Australia?'—that is what we should be considering on a broader scope. Maybe the Premier needs to let go of the University City Project to enable it to move into the portfolio of the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, just as he did with the Royal Institution, another pet project of the Premier, initiated by Thinker in Residence Susan Greenfield—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr PISONI: Baroness Susan Greenfield, I have been corrected. There were some shocking reports in *The Times* at about this time last year about Baroness Susan Greenfield's sacking at the Royal Institution of London for her grand plan to revamp the Royal Institution. I think

she has left that institution in about £50 million of debt. The unfortunate thing for us is that that same model was used for the Royal Institution.

It might surprise many South Australians to know that \$27 million of taxpayers' money has gone into the Royal Institution here in South Australia. It has a very nice menu. I do not know whether any of you have visited the Royal Institution or looked at its menu on line, but it has a very nice menu to choose from. There is breakfast for \$35 a head, if you like.

Mr Pengilly: Really?

Mr PISONI: Yes. The former minister for education had a very pleasant evening in November 2009 after COAG one night when a half an hour drinking session for her COAG colleagues cost in excess of \$500, plus room hire, at the Royal Institution. The \$27 million of taxpayers' money is being well-spent and well-utilised.

Mr Pengilly: What has happened to her? Where is she?

Mr PISONI: She is actually running it now. She is the acting—

An honourable member: She got a job out of it!

Mr PISONI: The member for Finniss says, 'Where is she?'

Mr Pengilly: She gets a parliamentary pension, plus she gets that.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PISONI: She is now running the Royal Institution here in Adelaide. I suppose she will get free drinks there; I do not know. There must be some perks. Certainly the taxpayers will not be paying for it any more.

However, I digress and I apologise, minister. I am very passionate about my portfolio, I am very passionate about students in South Australia and I am very passionate about responsibility for taxpayers' money. Consequently, I do get a little carried away in expressing my passion in this place and I thank the Speaker for her tolerance at times when I am expressing a passionate view.

While some stakeholders have questioned the need for certain components of the bill that are already covered by existing legislation, they have cautioned over a potential conflict pending federal legislation. Most are generally supportive of the legislation's direction and are keen to have examples such as APIC weeded out before educational damage and expense is inflicted upon students and harm is done to South Australia's reputation as a centre for quality education.

We can all stand proud in Australia and in South Australia that we have world-quality education. That is something I often discuss with friends and associates interstate and overseas and I am very happy to be a salesman for South Australia's education facilities wherever I go. The wonder is that the unfortunate example of APIC was allowed to develop, but I will return to that a little later. We will go into detail on that, but that was a very unfortunate situation for South Australia. There were warning bells and flashing lights but, unfortunately, there were those within government that were both blind and deaf to those signals.

We have also had feedback from some stakeholders that the consultation prior to the bill entering parliament left a little to be desired. Business SA, for example, found out about it by way of a DFEEST newsletter, which is a bit surprising. I am sure that the minister may explain that in his speech. Business SA is an umbrella group for a lot of RTOs and represents a great chunk of the business community in South Australia.

Some would argue Business SA could even be described as the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association of the private sector and the business community—the dominant faction or the dominant group within the business sector. There are many others, but they all really stand in line behind Business SA in many instances, just as the many factions and unions within the Labor Party stand behind the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association as they push their way through with their reshuffles and those sorts of things.

I am grateful to the minister, his staff and representatives from the department for their briefing that was offered to us, I think, about two months after the second reading of the bill. We did contact the office prior to the offer being made and we were very pleased that our offer to be available for a briefing was taken up. Obviously, the minister has had other things on his mind in the last few months, and we understand that. We are very forgiving on this side of the house. We know it is a big change for the minister and we do whatever we can and, if that means waiting a

while for a briefing, we are more than happy to do that. If that means initiating a briefing, we are happy to do that also. That is not a problem. We are very flexible on this side.

Education is a major industry and generator of economic activity in South Australia. Last week's review of the Adelaide City Council's Student Growth Plan revealed that, while education provision will continue to grow and there will be continued investment, the VET sector outlook, particularly for RTOs, is bleaker. I have spent some time with the yellow highlighter looking at that report, which was presented just last week by the City of Adelaide, where some of the challenges, if you like, for RTOs and our international student market in South Australia were highlighted.

While the education system for international students here in South Australia has undergone a major growth spike in each sector as a result of growth in the international market, changes in the marketplace are presenting a number of challenges for future growth. They have been exacerbated by difficulties in the commercial environment after the GFC, which has severely impacted upon investment, and other issues, such as increased competition in the international marketplace.

I think it is important that we recognise that. You cannot do anything about the GFC. That happens. When you are in business you realise that there are things you can deal with and things you cannot deal with. In other words, you are dealt the hand that you are dealt and you play with those cards. But, of course, competition is something that you can deal with and it should be seen as a challenge for South Australia and an incentive to improve business here in South Australia, that is, to change the way we are doing things to ensure we get our fair share.

We do not have our fair share of international students in South Australia. We have about 7.5 per cent of the country's population but only about 5.4 per cent of the international student market, so South Australia has a long way to go in the international student business, as I like to call it. The report goes on to say that we have had brand damage as a result of student violence—mostly interstate—and college closures, including the very infamous APIC closure here in South Australia. Also, there has been diminished developer interest in the student housing market.

This has been around for some time. I mentioned earlier that I had a conversation—it was a series of questions and answers—with the former training minister about this very issue of student housing, and he said that it is an issue; and certainly, in conversations I have had with those involved who are aware of education in Adelaide, they have raised the fact that student housing is an issue in South Australia.

It is interesting that it has also been raised in the City of Adelaide report but, of course, it has been an issue for the last nine years. We have not seen any solutions being developed by the government, and I think that is a concern. We know that the mining industry needs infrastructure and the defence industry needs infrastructure. We saw the ship lift at Osborne built for the defence industry but we also need to understand that infrastructure is needed for our third biggest business in South Australia, that is, the international student business.

That infrastructure obviously needs to be facilitated by the private sector. I am a strong advocate of the private sector. I have to say that I am a product of the private sector after seeing an opportunity as a young man and grasping hold of that opportunity by starting my own business at the very young age of 21 years. I grew and learnt along the way about the private sector. The private sector is something we really do need to encourage here in South Australia.

We are a small business state and there are many small businesses in the non-government and private RTO area in South Australia. It would be nice if we could have some of those small businesses turning into national and even multinational companies with their head offices right here in Adelaide. That is one of the advantages we can have here in Adelaide, if we play it well, namely, encouraging new industries and new businesses.

It is fair to say that the education sector is a growing new business. There are new areas of education, new areas in the economy that need different degrees, new degrees, new criteria, new training, and they are becoming more popular, particularly as we move more into the service sector. We used to be a very strong manufacturing state. I see the painting up of there of Sir Thomas Playford, and in his 27 years as premier we saw this state turn from an agricultural base to a very mixed economy that included a very strong manufacturing sector.

Victoria has also been a strong manufacturing state. In my other role as part of this portfolio, as the employment spokesperson for the Liberal Party, I find it distressing—it is a strong word to use, I know—to see that we have fared very badly in maintaining manufacturing jobs in this

state compared with Victoria, for example. We have seen here virtually a 20 per cent drop in manufacturing jobs in the last five years, and in Victoria we have only seen about a 5 per cent drop. Manufacturing is difficult. I was in manufacturing for 22 years and, even before we saw a flood of imported products into Australia, manufacturing was still very difficult, very competitive, because particularly in the small business field and certainly in my area of furniture manufacturing there is no protection, just like for our farmers. Our farmers are very efficient, they are not protected out there in the marketplace and are forced to make efficiencies and forced to make savings so that their businesses can survive and they can compete on the world market.

They have factors they have to deal with, just like Education Adelaide, just like our universities and RTOs that offer products to foreign students, as they also have to deal with the rise in the dollar, which is as a result of how strong our mining industry is in Western Australia and Queensland in particular. We are told about a mining boom in South Australia, but the figures do not tell us there is one. In fact, there are fewer people working in mining now than there were five years ago and even fewer than there were 10 years ago here in South Australia.

We have a number of exploration projects going on. We have a number of consortiums working in new technology to turn our coal, for example, into diesel and those sorts of things are happening. I am pleased to see that we are encouraging or enabling those industries to exploit the assets of South Australians that we have here and we can hope those assets are turned into benefits for taxpayers in South Australia.

The report also goes on to say that the industry experts agree that Adelaide and South Australia remain well placed for growth, albeit that there will be a lot of structural change within the industry. We hope that part of this bill will help us manage that structural change and, if there are issues that need to be dealt with, like we saw with the APIC situation, that occurs. My sources tell me we are not alone, that APIC was not a lone college that was questionable, and I hope the minister is aware of any other examples and will approach those examples with far more enthusiasm than the initial response to the concerns raised by the MTA, for example, and others about APIC.

It has been very evident in the lack of interest from smaller, independent, largely VET RTO providers in expansion or local opportunities in the city and minimal interest in the development market for student housing. We want students to come to South Australia. The former minister has told us there is a cap of 60,000. We are at about 32,000 to 34,000 at the moment. We do not know what the next year or the year after will bring with changes that we have seen implemented federally. We know that a lot of our institutions, both private and universities, have relied very heavily on funding that they have received from foreign students, and a lot of the growth that our educational institutions have seen has been funded by foreign students.

In Victoria, for example, they have had very large growth. Latrobe University is very concerned about funding issues and income because of its drop-off in international students. We know that a lot of the income that came in from international students was used to offset government money to replace government money and other forms of income. It is a bit like land tax. It is an unexpected windfall, and you get reliant on it, and you hire more public servants because of it, and then you are hooked, and you do not know what to do to get rid of it or to reduce it. I suppose that is one of the reasons why, here in South Australia, that this government has fallen into a similar trap with its taxing.

It is another challenge for the new role of the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education as the Treasurer in dealing with the fact that we reside in the highest taxing state in the nation here in South Australia. That, of course, affects every business. Every business is affected by state government taxes, but more so small businesses, because small businesses pay a higher proportion of their turnover in state taxes than bigger businesses. So, state taxes are a bigger burden for small businesses than they are for, say, companies like GMH or others to operate in South Australia.

I recommend the report from the Adelaide City Council to members. It certainly is an interesting read. As with the Adelaide Pacific International College (APIC), stricter regulatory guidelines may expose further quality programs which, while good for educational standards, will obviously present challenges for RTOs and providers, many of which in the private education sector have undergone rapid expansion. I have a copy of the McCann report here, and I might at some stage enlighten the parliament with some extracts from the McCann report. I know that the minister's department's legislation was partly a response to the McCann report and, of course, the very public deregistration of the Adelaide Pacific International College.

The McCann report recommended that a greater proportion of the regulator's resources be dedicated to identifying levels of risk and noncompliance by individual RTOs. That is a challenge for the minister, because this government has form on dealing with a situation—whether it be law and order, or whether it be industrial relations, or whether it be training—of increasing penalties and increasing fines but then not following through with the resourcing and enforcement. I think that will be the challenge, because it can be expensive to resource and enforce the regulatory process.

One of the things that I think can work really well in having a reliable system of enforcement in this area in particular is that, if it is reliable and trustworthy and people understand that you are serious and not afraid to act, just that in itself is a deterrent from doing the wrong thing. So, although you may need to put in some resources very early on to let people know that you are serious and that you are fully resourced to deal with such issues, it may very well be that sometime in the future you have changed the culture in the system for fear of retribution.

People have tightened up the way they run their training organisations and they have a better understanding of their obligations. Consequently, you will find that simply the threat of a visit from the regulatory authority may very well be enough to ensure high standards within our higher education system and our VET system.

The APIC incident has illustrated that it is probably less a matter of quality and quantity, as with many things, and that this quality with regard to auditing will need to be analysed as the new national regulator looks to take on elements of the state-based assessment organ when setting up his SA office. In other words, my understanding is that when the national regulations come in we are likely to see that subbed out—if you will forgive me for using an old tradesman's term, being an old tradesman myself—to DFEEST. My understanding is that they were the ones responsible for the 12 or so audits that APIC had passed.

It was interesting to note from the reports and the evidence we had about APIC that there were no chairs in classrooms and no machinery at the workshops. One must wonder just what the audit process involved when such crucial requirements—what I would have thought an automotive training college would have—were lacking. You would expect to see more than just a car door leaning against the garage—perhaps an engine lift, a jack, perhaps even a toolbox, and the odd differential around the place—but there was not a lot of evidence of that from the photographs I have seen and the eyewitness accounts I have heard about the goings-on at APIC.

In that part of the higher education area, where perhaps the business planning has been less robust and where taxpayers' subsidies have been needed to ensure enrolments, there is also, unfortunately, the potential for future closures—Carnegie Mellon, for example. Carnegie Mellon here in Adelaide continues to struggle to attract overseas enrolments, although public sector employees are enjoying the opportunity to study for \$65,000 degrees paid for by South Australian taxpayers. Cranfield University's Adelaide campus, as I mentioned earlier, was nothing more than a closed door and an unattended room.

This bill predates the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Bill 2010 and the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Transitional Provisions) Bill 2010 introduced into federal parliament at the end of November last year and yet to be debated. The federal legislation, of course, results from the 2009 COAG agreement on the national approach to VET regulation.

While this bill, to an extent, mirrors the provisions and aims of the national bill, the minister has proposed this bill on the basis that safeguards are necessary for 12 months or longer, until the national regulator commences regular activity. Again, is 12 months optimistic? I am not sure. I can remember the urgency of the Rudd Labor government putting a price on carbon to do with the greatest moral challenge of our time. Then, of course, the disastrous Copenhagen meeting and it was off the agenda, and it was off the agenda during the election campaign. I think Julia Gillard said—she's the one who replaced Rudd; remember that? Again, the right-wing unions came in and said, 'No more Mr Rudd, you've had your turn.' They brought in Julia Gillard.

I do not know whether anyone saw *Four Corners* last night, but I think it was Jennie George, former ACTU president and former Labor member of parliament, who thought that Julia Gillard was not quite ready, it was a bit early. It was an interesting insight into the situation at the federal level. Of course, a lot of distractions have happened at the federal level. It is almost a mirror of what has been happening here in South Australia, with changes of leadership and changes of ministries. I like to be an optimistic sort of fellow; I would like to think that we will only be relying on this bill for about 12 months before the national regulator bill comes into place.

On that basis, we think it is important to deal with this now and deal with it so that our Education Adelaide and other education facilities (private companies) can go to the marketplace and say, 'We've got the quality tick. We're abiding by these more stringent requirements. We understand that we're being watched and we've behaved very well, so please come to Adelaide and buy our education facilities—senior kids here—and spend your money here in Adelaide. We love it and we need it, and we would certainly like to have more students visiting.'

As we have seen in many areas of legislation and administration, there is an alarming lack of coordination and, indeed, cooperation between the state and federal governments; so we perhaps need to indulge them with regards to this public benefit. So, that is, of course, why we are looking at doing this now. I suppose that is an admission by association that the minister agrees with me that there is probably not quite the coordination there should be between state and federal governments on issues such as this.

Of note, while this legislation is in many ways a reaction to the McCann report, commissioned post the deregistration of APIC, this report concentrated on the providers of VET services to overseas students. While this legislation, including increased penalties, applies to all VET providers, the deregistration of APIC followed a series of federally initiated audits by the state's RTOs with foreign students.

As I said earlier, it is difficult to understand how these same state-based audit teams had previously missed the glaring faults in training, documentation and general poor management standards highlighted by the MTA to staff and to the minister at the time, Michael O'Brien, who has now gone on to be the world's greatest agricultural minister. For example, in the automotive courses the college operated for a long period without basic equipment needed for training, even without chairs for students to sit on.

The course in itself was of a standard inadequate to be accepted as a basis for employment by the MTA. I think this is an important point. The MTA did in fact write to the minister concerned about the APIC operation. I think the concerns, from what I understand, were broader than just whether or not it would pass an audit but the fact that Indian students were coming to Australia expecting to get these qualifications in a course that did not require on-the-job training, and its members were telling it that they will not employ mechanics who have this qualification. The MTA is a very successful training organisation. I think it is about 25 years old now, and 500 apprentices—

Mr Griffiths: And 250 different employers.

Mr PISONI: It has 250 different employers. It has been a very successful scheme that has been industry-driven. Industry knows the training outcomes that it needs, and is very heavily involved in the development of training, even to the extent that when it takes on a new apprentice they spend six months in the classroom at the MTA training facility. It starts by teaching trade-based maths and literacy skills, the sorts of things that you would expect they would have got from the education system. I can empathise with those students because I too went through the high school system under a Labor government, so I do understand the issues they may have had.

However, the MTA has seen that that is an area it needs to take up with the students to get them ready for the workshop floor. They then go on to do a four-year apprenticeship which, of course, involves on-the-job training. Now, I am a bit of a traditionalist; on-the-job training was a great part of my apprenticeship. I remember going to the storeroom for the 'long weight' and, after a while, thought, 'Yes, I think I have probably waited long enough!' Of course, a 'long weight' was not, in fact, a tool. It was a very good lesson. The left-handed screwdriver was another; it takes ages to find a left-handed screwdriver.

Mr Whetstone: What about the metric shifter?

Mr PISONI: The member for Chaffey, another tradesman, tells me of the metric shifter. What I liked was the first time I had to pass a couple of hundred, I think, chair legs over the buzzer; I got to the last chair leg and the foreman ran over to me and said 'David, you should have done that one first.' In a panic, as a new apprentice, I asked, 'Why should I have done that one first?' He said, 'If you'd done that one first you wouldn't have to do it now.' Boom boom! It is that sort of on-the-job experience that you have as an apprentice that is character building, and I owe a debt to those who trained me in those four years as an apprentice.

I think it would be great if our training organisations here in South Australia could contribute to the richness of the broad education that we all need as we move on through different stages of

our life. I think the types of qualifications you get—whether it be through an RTO or the university sector—are a major step to where you will end up 10, 15, 20 years down the track, and I think it is fair to say that we will see many of the newer generation moving on from one career to another. They may very well move into training organisations as adults, whether they be 30, 40 or even 50 years of age.

The thing I find amazing is that with so many of the jobs that are available to my kids—who are now getting towards the end of their high school years—those career options simply were not invented when I was in school or even 10 years ago. I think training institutions, being industry driven, will certainly reflect that, and I think that is what is very important about our training institutions: they need to be industry driven, they need to reflect what the industry needs and its training requirements.

Unfortunately that is not what APIC had. APIC was bringing in a system of training that was not accepted by the vast majority of those in the automotive industry, whether they ran panel shops or were mechanics or vehicle dealers. All of them who employed tradesmen in that area were simply not interested in employing somebody who had gone through a classroom-based course without the on-the-job training in a condensed period. I think that is a debate that we will continue to have. Some are saying that one of the ways that we can deal with our trades shortage is to reduce the time it takes to do an apprenticeship. That is an area where I think there will be quite fierce debate for those who truly understand the benefits of the traditional apprenticeship system.

It is not just the MTA that raises concerns about one specific college, the APIC college. I would like to refer to an excerpt of an email I received from Professor Freda Briggs:

Dear David, I was pleased to see you expose the scam relating to the Indian students/migration. I brought this to the notice of my then Labor MP for Morialta—

who, incidentally, was Lindsay Simmons—

who advised the minister, who said he was conducting an inquiry.

That was back in October 2009, I think, when she advised her Labor MP, who advised the Minister for Transport. The email continued:

For the last two years or more, Indian cab drivers have been telling me that they enrol in a community welfare certificate course. They don't have to attend. They will never work in community welfare here or in India and they openly tell you that it is the cheapest way of getting permanent residence. Second, I was told that the Indian cab owner does not pay them. They pay him. As a result they make their money by cheating.

This story came up because her husband, who was a regular user of taxis because of his health, was often asked for double the fare. When he questioned why he had to pay double the fare that appeared on the meter, the Indian taxidriver would say: 'Because I don't get paid. The boss gets all the money and I don't make any money unless I charge you extra.' That was reported to the Minister for Transport and yet, when the training minister received concerns from a major employer and training organisation in South Australia, the pennies did not drop to say, 'What is going on here?'

We have since learnt that one of the directors of APIC had many taxi licences in South Australia. A former course coordinator who resigned in disgust at APIC came to see me and explained that many students were not turning up to class because they had been driving taxis all night for the boss, and the threat was, 'If you don't drive this taxi, you will fail your class and you will then have to go back to India and you will have no chance of getting Australian citizenship or residency.' That was very concerning, because we do not want to see those types of scams here in South Australia.

I have heard very little from the government. I just wonder whether the government's investigation, which it has refused to hand on through the FOI process, has raised concerns about immigration scams with federal authorities. This bill is all about protecting our reputation, and protecting international students, so if we are serious about doing that we are going to think it is important that other authorities, where this government does not have a direct role, are advised. This is what we were told would be one of the benefits of nationwide Labor governments—a sense of cooperation. I think the Premier was very excited about that: reduction in red tape, the ability to do things quicker, stop the blame game. I would be very happy for the minister to put on record any other action he may have taken in regard to advising federal immigration and other areas, and whether the investigation was handed on for further investigation outside the scope of the minister's department.

While this bill is a stopgap measure, it is also a spontaneous reaction to address the recommendations of the McCann report, which in turn arose from the deregistration of the Adelaide Pacific International College in July last year. The amendments cover all RTOs, not just those with international students which were the focus of the McCann inquiry. Interestingly, the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) has 1,262 registered providers on their books around Australia; only 47 of them are in South Australia, and that is straight from the McCann report. What is the percentage there, member for Goyder?

Mr Griffiths: Four per cent.

Mr PISONI: Four per cent of colleges (7 per cent of the population); so again, we have the question of the over-spruiking of the Rann government on this issue. It is a pattern, and I think there could be a chapter about this in the Hawker Britton 'vote for me' book about how you do this. I think it is something about repeating numbers: say them often enough, say it loud enough and say it with somebody famous, and they will believe you. I thank the member for Goyder for this: 3.7 per cent is the exact figure—3.7 per cent of RTOs in this state.

The Hawker Britton model tells you just to keep repeating things and, generally, people will not bother checking. It is very hard to be heard against a head of government like a premier or a high profile minister to rebut what they are saying. But we do know that the government has form on mining, defence and education. If I just stick with education, we know the over-spruiking of the University City Project with Carnegie Mellon, Cranfield and the University College London. It was an enormous over-spruiking effort by the Premier.

Roxby Downs is another example—the very project he was the architect of opposing when he was working for John Bannon in 1982. I think it is close on nine years now that the Premier has been promising 23,000 additional jobs simply from that mine alone. I am just waiting for the release this week at the start of a new parliamentary term. It is somewhere there in the Hawker Britton book about a new parliamentary term: repeat another promise that was made or another statistic that was made the year before at the same time in the same rotation on the calendar.

I think it is interesting that people have really stopped listening. That is going to be difficult for South Australia in the next three years because people really have stopped listening. The Premier said that, despite his reshuffle here today, he will be here until 2014. I think the problem that we have for South Australia is that the Premier has lost his credibility. He has been promising things for nine years and not delivering.

We all remember the mini turbines on top of the State Administration Centre and how they were going to power parts of the state administration building. They were pulled down about 12 months ago because they did not work. Then of course, there was the announcement with his good friend, the Hon. Jane Lomax-Smith, about wind turbines on schools. Not long after that announcement, the Public Works Committee discovered that they never really worked and they were not going to go on schools, but, of course, there was no announcement that they were not going to go on schools.

As a matter of fact, I think there is still a shed somewhere where there are about \$300,000 worth of these mini turbines just sitting there. I do not know whether they are waiting for new technology to make them work or whether they are waiting for the warranty. Maybe they are having trouble cashing in on the warranty. Often you buy something from a very convenient store, but with the warranty process, you have to go to some back street behind a manufacturing plant down at Lonsdale that is only open between 1pm and 2pm on Saturdays to honour your warranty. I wonder if that is the problem they have got with the wind turbines. Maybe that is why they are still in storage somewhere.

Again, I apologise; I do digress. The necessity of this bill, with such a short period before the national legislation is finalised and further amendment to our act is again necessary, could probably be questioned. We will be required to make amendments to the state act to align with the national legislation in New South Wales, where the referral bill was passed on 30 November last year. So, basically, I think that we accept that that may very well need to happen. I think again, in the interests of sending a message out there that we are serious about protecting our investment here in international students, we are supporting this bill so we can, in actual fact, ensure that foreign students can rest assured that they are in safe hands here in South Australia.

The introduction of the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Bill into the Senate on 26 November last year will have it being considered in the autumn sitting, so we are told. Anticipating it being passed quite early, the national VET regulator may be set up and running

as planned in April with similar clauses and penalties to our amended state act. The interim chair and CEO of the national VET regulator has, in fact, already been appointed. So, that is interesting, isn't it? We have not got it yet, but we are paying somebody to run it. Again, I suppose we are getting used to that under both federal and state Labor.

I remember the Stormwater Management Authority. Board fees were being paid and here we are, six years later, and the only action we have seen from the Stormwater Management Authority is a direction to councils to have a plan by April this year. Gee, they move fast on those committees.

There have also been amendments to education services for overseas students in the ESOS Act 2000 that regulates training. ESOS is actually the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and it regulates training providers. So, with overseas students, following the Baird Review, released in March 2010, these amendments include strengthening the provider registration requirements measure for the management of risk in international education and financial penalties for a wider range of noncompliant behaviour. Again, those penalties are only as good as the enforcement.

The re-registration of all providers currently registered with CRICOS by December 2010 was part of the Education Services for Overseas Students Amendment (Re-registration of Providers and Other Measures) Act 2010, which took effect in March 2010. The draft training and skills development guidelines for RTOs are also out for consultation until 21 February 2011. It seems a little strange to some of the stakeholders, and to the opposition, that will be dealing with this legislation that we will have to deal with it again in the very near future when this consultation is still out.

As I said, we accept that. We accept the minister's argument of urgency and, consequently, that is why we are happy to support this amendment bill. One of the main concerns of stakeholders and, of course, the opposition is that these amendments work smoothly and in synchronisation with existing and future federal legislation pertaining to overseas and domestic students.

I think that something that is often lost to those in our position who regulate and who make laws is that there is always a cost to business and to the private sector. We do have an obligation to minimise that impact and the cost because we know that they are the ones who pay the taxes that pay not just our salaries but salaries of public servants who provide the services in South Australia and the salaries of teachers in our schools. They are the ones who pay the \$50,000 bonus for the disengaged teachers. They are the ones who pay the 114 weeks redundancy pay for the 4,000 or so public servants who are no longer required. They are the ones who pay the bills, and we need to be very aware of and respect that, and be very responsible with that responsibility, if I can put it in that manner.

Take for example, clause 16 which amends section 39(1), regarding cancellation of qualification or statement of attainment. While it is obviously important to address the issue of poor quality and fraudulent education activity, it is important to ensure that legitimate students are not put in any disadvantage in the process. I think, unfortunately, we may have seen that. I am aware that, despite the scam that APIC was, at least a couple of students thought it was a genuine organisation and I have heard some reports that they felt a bit let down with the process after that.

It must be ensured that the cancellation of qualifications and statements of attainment does not hinder the operation of the TAS (Tuition Assurance Scheme) in seeking to place students in other colleges. I think that is important—and the McCann report also raises that. It is important that TAS is again like a warranty that we are offering foreign students. You need to have either a very large security bond not to be a member or you must be a member if you are catering for foreign students in South Australia.

Basically, what members do is to minimise the impact of a college closing or a college going out of business for whatever reason, whether it be insolvency, administration, or it simply does a runner. Those members within the Tuition Assurance Scheme come in and coordinate places for those students, as a best fit for what they were actually studying, when their operator or their provider closed their business. It is important that, under this arrangement, no additional fees are charged.

For example, if you had three months to go on a training process—let's use the automotive process—and you had paid up-front for those three months, then the agreement amongst the members of the TAS would be: 'Yes, come into our college, finish it off and we won't charge you until the next lot of fees are due.' In other words, if you only had three months to go and that was

paid up-front, there would be no further expense. If you had two years to go and you had paid for one year and you were halfway through, you would complete that year with no additional charge but, of course, then you would pay the new college for the tuition that you had not paid for.

The system itself worked quite well. I witnessed how it worked when I attended a meeting for students of a Japanese-owned English college (I cannot remember its name) that closed down around Australia. It was managed by the membership, but it was also facilitated by the federal department, and it did seem to work well. An area that did cause some concern was those who had paid for homestays but homestays had not been delivered because they had actually paid the operator (the college) for the homestays that would then sub-contract, if you like, that homestay. I am sure there was a margin in it for them. They are businesspeople after all. Those people who had paid up-front for their homestays but who had not actually been delivered somewhere to live had some difficulty, and the TAS did not cover that process.

The Hon. J.J. Snelling interjecting:

Mr PISONI: What time is lunch? Take your time, Jack—eat something while you are out there. So it is hoped that the regulator will work cooperatively with the TAS operator to act appropriately according to individual circumstances and to avoid unnecessary hardship and achieve a fair outcome for students. Once again, it will be important that this is administered consistently with the federal Education Services for Overseas Students Act.

I imagine there is also a role for the Training Advocate, and it is fortuitous that the environment minister is here who still appears on the website of the Training Advocate's page with his message from the minister and a lovely photograph of the Hon. Paul Caica, who was the training minister how many ministers ago?

The Hon. P. Caica: Do I have hair in that photograph?

Mr PISONI: No, no hair in that photograph—1 September 2008, minister. So I wonder just how serious the minister and his department have been in advocating for students—and do not forget that the Training Advocate is also there for providers of training facilities. I think that minister Caica has been the agriculture minister since he was the training minister, and he is now the environment minister. I think you even have that tie, minister. You actually have on the same tie today as the one in this photograph; could that be right? It is a black-and-white photo, but it is very, very similar. It is extraordinary. Change does come at a slow pace in the Labor Party, it appears. I reckon it is the same tie.

The Hon. P. Caica: No, it's not.

Mr PISONI: It isn't?

The Hon. P. Caica: No, because this was given to me by my son.

Mr PISONI: I would like to see this updated. I was just explaining, minister, while the minister for environment was standing in for you, that his photograph and his spiel still appear on the Training Advocate's page as it was not updated for minister O'Brien and obviously has not been updated—

The Hon. J.J. Snelling interjecting:

Mr PISONI: This is very important to those who wish to use it. This is very important for those who are interested in this matter, and I think it sends a message. It sends a message about the amount of interest that you and this government have in training in South Australia; that is what it does. Again, I digress and I apologise for doing so, but these are important matters. These are important training matters.

The minister has told us that this bill is important for restoring faith in our education system, particularly for foreign students here in South Australia. One must wonder just what interest the minister has when the Hon. Paul Caica appears on his behalf with the minister's message on the home page of the Training Advocate's website. I reckon minister Caica finished in that position in about February 2009. So, what is it? Two years and no update. Anyway, the minister says that it is a small issue; so, if he says it is a small issue, he must be right. We will see what other small issues pop up along the way.

Overall, it needs to be ensured that the use of these powers is courteous and appropriate. We do not want heavy-handedness but we do want to encourage industries. There seems to be a perception from those on the other side that those who run businesses and those who run

organisations—particularly small business people—seem to have special powers. They know things automatically, and, so, if they do something wrong, we have to clamp down on them really hard, because they must know that they are doing something wrong, because, obviously, they are born with these types of things.

When the local tradesman goes on to build up his successful air-conditioning business, in his early days, of course, it is a learning process and people do make mistakes, but I think it is important that, when people make mistakes—if it is a genuine mistake—that that business is not damaged, because we want to encourage business here in South Australia. I think that it is important that those mistakes cease, of course, that the error of their ways is corrected and that they do in fact understand. But that, of course, is what the Training Advocate helps them do, because if you read the website, they are there not just for students but also for providers, to offer advice and to help them with sticky situations. It will be very nice when they know who their minister is as well.

It is important that the longstanding quality providers are not unintentionally impacted by these changes and that they do not conflict with existing and pending federal legislative matters. I would be happy to come back to this place and make amendments when the federal processes kick in. We are supporting this bill, and I did promise the minister that I would read some of the highlights of the McCann report as part of this debate.

Ms Chapman: We paid for it, after all.

Mr PISONI: Yes. I mention such things as planning for the transition period itself. This is from the introduction of the bill. Planning for the transition period is not yet complete, adding further uncertainty to the timing issue. Hopefully, we are addressing that today. It would be prudent to sit back and wait to see what happens at the national stage.

There is a point here that I might just like to raise. There are some interesting numbers, because we do hear about students. It mentions the total enrolments by offshore international students from December 2004 until December 2009. We do hear lots of figures from the government, but here we have in 2009 higher education enrolments of 12,715 in the government sector and, in the non-government sector, 794. You would think that Carnegie Mellon would have a big chunk but it has only a very small number of those in the non-government sector.

For the higher education total you are looking at 13,500. Then, of course, in the VET sector (non-government) you are looking at 13,338; and in the non-government sector, 7,581. The non-government sector in the VET area is a very strong sector—much stronger than the government sector—with a total of 8,919. So, 13,500 and 9,000, you are looking at 22,500. We hear figures consistently of around 32,000 and 33,000 people. We hear about the tremendous growth in the area, but, if you go back to 2004, we had 7,880.

So, we had nearly 8,000 in the higher education area, and we had a much smaller number in the VET areas. In the VET areas we had 1,604. We are seeing the bulk of the growth in the VET sector. It is surprising—and that growth has been in the private sector—that six, seven, eight years on we are looking at tightening up that sector. One would argue that it is well overdue, so we cannot have the luxury of waiting for the federal government; we have probably waited too long and could have prevented the embarrassment of APIC in South Australia.

If we look at the minister's own statement, APIC has failed in 12 of the 14 standards of the code: to adequately monitor enrolment of students across the scope of courses and ensure that they complete their courses within a specific duration; to adequately monitor and process students and provide appropriate intervention and support strategies; to systematically and accurately monitor student attendance; to provide training and assessment across the scope of courses; it has also failed to provide training outcomes for its clients, and that was, of course, a warning that the minister had from the Motor Trades Association well in advance; and to have systematic management of records systems which are responsive to the needs of clients, staff and stakeholders.

So, they are some of the issues that we had with APIC, and that and the McCann report have resulted in the amendment bill that we are debating in the house today. I am very pleased to say that we will be supporting this, minister, so that you can get it through as quickly as you can and send a message to those who are seeking places in order to study outside of their own countries, to come to South Australia.

There are, of course, other challenges that I hope the minister will take up with his federal colleagues, such as the size of deposits and other areas. I thought it was interesting that, in briefings I have had from the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, that studying in Adelaide could lead to permanent residency was never a consideration for DFEST. That is obviously the official line: that we do not have the ability to get permanent residency as a carrot for our training facilities in South Australia. It is interesting that when the criteria for residency were changed—under union pressure, I believe, at a federal level—we saw a dramatic drop-off (particularly with India) around the country. I think that conveniently happened at a time when we saw elements of the GFC and the increase in the Australian dollar, so it gave another angle that the government could cover to say, 'Well, look, this is the reason.'

If you have a good product and an established market then you can manage those types of price fluctuations. The Australian wine industry is a classic example of that. In 2000, when the Australian dollar would only buy \$US0.48, it was a great opportunity for Australian wine manufacturers to get into the United States, and a lot of them did; they used the price mechanism to get into the marketplace. What they did once they were in the marketplace is that they built their brand, and their brand continued to build, and as the Australian dollar strengthened against the US dollar the Americans were prepared to pay more for the Australian product. They took advantage of taking a risk and they minimised that risk because when it first came onto the marketplace it was cheap, so people thought, 'Why not spend \$12 on a shiraz?' or whatever.

Mr Venning: It would be a bit rough.

Mr PISONI: A \$12 shiraz is all that I can afford, member for Schubert. It was at that entry point that Australian wine entered the American market and, of course we have developed the market since then. I see that our education business here in Australia is very similar. We are developing a great reputation and I think the important thing is that we need to build on that reputation.

I do not think it is reasonable to say that the Aussie dollar has got in the way. I think we need to look at other issues that have caused a decline here in Australia, because we are certainly seeing Indian and Chinese students going to Canada and the United States to study and I understand that their bond system is much more reasonable than ours. That could be another issue. It really is a combined effort of state governments and the federal government because, after all, the federal government determines who comes to this country and on what conditions.

I personally am very excited about the prospect of Adelaide, and South Australia, picking up a number of foreign students who decide to stay in South Australia. I think it is something that we should be encouraging. I would love them to start businesses here in South Australia. I would love them to employ people here in South Australia. I would love them to pay taxes here in South Australia and be part of the South Australian community. I think that it is a huge opportunity for us, and let us hope that this bill remedies some of those concerns that were raised in the McCann report and enables us all to be very proud of what we do in fact achieve here in South Australia.

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (12:27): I rise to discuss the bill that is before the house today. On 30 September, the government tabled the McCann report on the regulation of vocational education and training services for overseas students in South Australia, and on the 13th the draft bill to amend the Training and Skills Development Act 2008 was released for public comment, and a fair bit of discussion has been had in this environment since that time.

On 24 November last year, the government introduced the Training and Skills Development (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill to the house with some recommendations for legislative change based on the McCann report, and the government is acting promptly on these recommendations and takes this responsibility very seriously, as the high quality of the vocational education and training sector in South Australia is indeed a very serious matter. The quality of our vocational education and training sector is also pivotal for people in my electorate of Taylor. Entering the labour market and developing skills for participation in our community is very important for people in the northern suburbs and, indeed, it is a heart of economic growth for the future of this state.

The vocational education and training sector is a diverse mix of training providers, including TAFE SA, privately-owned industry-based groups (such as the MTAA; I enthusiastically endorse a lot of the things that it does—it is a great facility and a great training system) and community-based providers. These training providers deliver publicly-funded and privately-funded training to clients

seeking to enter the workforce, trainees and apprentices and current workers seeking to upgrade their skills or qualifications.

The bill makes a number of important changes to regulatory arrangements. These measures will increase the regulatory burden on the majority of training providers who are delivering high-quality services to their clients. The bill strengthens regulatory powers by enabling the commission to respond more quickly to apply sanctions where it is warranted by the seriousness and urgency of the matter. The commission will, however, be subject to natural justice requirements and must give the provider an opportunity to respond before action is taken. All training providers need to know that, once registered, they are expected to take their obligations seriously and that not complying with their conditions of registration is in fact an offence.

The bill provides an effective deterrent against contravening the act by raising the level of penalties for these offences. The bill also goes on to outline a number of factors that will affect how this sector is administered. It authorises the commission to cancel a qualification if it is satisfied that the training provider issuing the qualification was not operating in accordance with the standards and the requirements of the qualification have not been met. The bill authorises a person whose qualification has been cancelled to apply to the court for compensation from the training provider for the loss arising from this cancellation. The bill also makes it an offence for a person to use a qualification that has been cancelled by the commission.

The bill introduces a new measure which will allow the minister, on recommendation from the commission, with the agreement of the training provider, to appoint an administrator to ensure a training provider complies with these regulatory obligations under the act. This would only occur if there are very serious concerns about the provider that it is unable to resolve and it is judged that it is in the students' best interests to maintain the training provider's registration rather than pursuing suspension or cancellation.

It is important to note that an administrator, under this act, will not be given full responsibility for the management of the training provider, in particular, its financial affairs. An administrator would not be appointed under this act in the event of insolvency, when an administrator would be appointed under the proposed commonwealth law.

The bill provides a range of new measures to protect consumers and this will be very welcome both for domestic and overseas students who are involved in this sector. The bill also allows a person to make an application to the court for compensation, as I previously mentioned. This measure complements the offences under the act, thus reinforcing the message that training providers must operate in accordance with the act and their conditions of registration.

The training advocate and commission will make public statements about a training provider and education and training services to inform the public and students quickly of current or potential areas of concern. When a training provider closes or has its registration cancelled by the commission, students need to have ready access to their records so that they can resume their training with an alternative provider. The bill gives powers to authorised officers to inspect, copy and take all relevant records, including student results and, indeed, this helps students to continue their training and ensure that they get out into the workforce with the skills that are required for our state.

In summary, this bill strengthens the regulatory arrangements underpinning the quality of the education and training sector in our state, and I welcome the changes that it proposes. I also look forward to seeing the proposed commonwealth changes introduced in the short term in the first half of this year, as the member for Unley indicated will potentially occur. The bill demonstrates to all providers registered under the Training Skills and Development Act 2008 their clear obligation to operate in accordance with the act and their conditions of registration. If they fail to do so, the government will have the powers it needs to enforce the law, apply the appropriate penalties and support consumers to seek redress through the courts.

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (12:33): I recognise the importance of this bill. Having been a previous shadow minister for employment, training and further education, I have taken an interest in it for some time. I make the observation that there might be some members of the chamber who think that the member for Unley, as the shadow minister, spoke at some length—and, indeed, he did talk for quite some time—but it is because he is passionate about this area. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind about that. He was expansive in his comments—

The Hon. J.J. Snelling: He could have spoken to the bill then.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister, he did talk about the bill. I looked at it and I think it was about 30 minutes in that he started to talk specifically about the bill. However, he is a man who is committed and it has been demonstrated to me because, every time I talk to David, he is passionate about his portfolios. Indeed, he is committed to ensuring that he gets the best possible outcomes. I did say to him when he sat down that, upon reflection, when the Training and Skills Development Bill came into the chamber originally, it was subject to some debate between the parties. Indeed, I think in my second reading contribution, as a responsible shadow, I spoke for 57 minutes. However, I am amazed that he spoke for one hour and 20 minutes on the amended bill. It shows that he has a far greater knowledge—

Mr Venning: That is your fault.

Mr GRIFFITHS: —than I of the importance of it.

Mr Venning: He had to gazump you!

Mr GRIFFITHS: No, he wanted to demonstrate what he is trying to do for overseas students and, indeed, South Australian students who are studying at institutions here and that parliament has to ensure that every protection is in place to ensure that quality educational outcomes can be achieved by them. It is true that the problems that occurred with APIC last year have really exemplified this. From conversations I have had with the member for Unley, it has really been demonstrated to me that this is an important area. As a state, we have known for some time that education opportunities are an enormous component of the economic driver that occurs here.

The shadow minister has reflected upon the fact that, with the number of overseas students within South Australia (often quoted as being between 32,000 and 34,000), in fact, education is the third biggest business in this state and the fact that a previous minister had put some level of cap on the number of students the state was in a position to accept. Infrastructure is a big component of that. Indeed, with the large number of overseas students who come here, the need to provide safe accommodation options for them close to their education facilities is one of the challenges all of those facilities deal with—and I know that from speaking to people whose role within universities is to develop projects that provide accommodation options close by for those people. So, a multitude of issues are involved in this.

One thing I want to reflect upon briefly, though, is that, within any industry sector or any sporting team or any government or opposition, the weakest component is the one that can bring down the whole thing. We find that, within education, as in many aspects in life, perception can become reality. So, if one area of the sector has problems in the way in which it provides an educational opportunity or the quality of student it ensures is produced at the end, or the way in which it markets itself or the quality of its staff or the facilities it provides—if it is poor in one of those components—it suffers from the risk of failure and, when it fails, by association, I am fearful that it will bring down other really good components of that sector and expose them to some level of risk in attracting students and in marketing themselves because it can be seen that South Australia suddenly has a problem when it comes to the quality of overseas students.

It is appropriate that the government conducted the McCann review, it is appropriate that the minister has introduced this bill to improve things, and it is appropriate that every measure is put in place to ensure the way in which it is managed, that regular inspections and review of the curriculum take place, that the quality of students who graduate is there and that the employability of that student who graduates is there not just for Australia and South Australia but for the international stage because, unless we get it right, we run the risk of this industry—and, again, I enforce the fact that it is the third largest industry in the state, with 34,000 overseas students—could be subject to some criticism and, then, by association, it will be far more difficult to encourage these students to come to Australia.

It is interesting that, in a discussion that occurred just around here, the shadow minister confirmed to me the level of bond that is required for overseas students when they come to Australia. I found this to be frightening in that every student who comes to this state has put in place a bond of \$144,000, whereas on an international stage it appears as though it is more in the \$25,000 range. I have had many conversations with people who are overseas students in my time (nearly five years) in this parliament. I have had many conversations with these young people at their graduation ceremony or at other events I have attended with them. I have made an effort to try talk to these young people and discovered the sacrifices their families have made to ensure they had the opportunity to come to Australia, and specifically to South Australia, to study.

Those families are not only giving up their child, in essence, for the period they come here to study but they are putting themselves into a position of enormous financial exposure because they want their kids to have a future. We in this chamber are here because we want South Australia to have a future. We do it for our own families and for the constituencies we have the honour to represent. For those who are ministers, they do it for the those portfolio areas they are responsible for. However, these families, at the grassroots level, have made enormous sacrifices. If there is any risk at all of that investment in their child not being returned by an opportunity for their child being a success in life, that is when the serious questions have to be asked.

So, that is why I commend the member for Unley. There is no doubt that he was quite expansive in his comments. He talked about the numerous issues he sees as being of concern when it comes to educational opportunities in South Australia. In some ways, he did reflect upon some history of it, but he was focused on what he thought was important for the future and, indeed, on the fact that the opposition is supportive of this bill and wants to see it come into force, even though legislation was introduced in the federal parliament late last year and delays will occur in that legislation being implemented. So, the opposition wants to ensure that South Australia has a system in place so that we do not have another APIC failure and that an educational opportunity is provided to every student, no matter what facility or educational institution they choose to use, that will ensure that they have some good outcomes.

It is also really important from a local perspective. I have often reflected in the last five years since being in this place that South Australia needs to become a skilled workforce. There are some great people in our older generation of workers who have continued to educate themselves, who have recognised the challenges that their workplace provides and who have continued to upskill themselves and be wonderful contributors to their place of employment. However, there are a lot within our workforce who have, seemingly, gone into a role, accepted that as their lot and not thought that there is a need to continue training. There is, desperately.

If our state is to have a vibrant economy, it is important to ensure that we get this right. I congratulate the minister on his new role as Treasurer. I very strongly believe that the strong social conscience that he demonstrates every day will shine through in the policies that this government takes forward and its future direction.

I only want to make some brief comments. I am reflective upon the fact that, as the shadow minister mentioned as part of his contribution, while South Australia has 7.5 per cent of the nation's population, we only represent 5.4 per cent of the international student market. That demonstrates to me that, of the current number of 34,000, there are some challenges in ensuring that it grows to a larger number. However, we have to actually open our eyes and look at every opportunity to ensure that we provide places for those young people, and that we provide places for our own.

My children are 21 and 19. They are part of that generation that recognises that their education and their skill development is critical to them, and all their friends are, too. Many are in the workplace now and are contributing and looking forward to the opportunities that their future presents. However, these young people understand that, for them to achieve the maximum outcome that they can in their lives, their education capacity is a part of that. They are focusing themselves not only on, yes, having some fun, as young people want to, but also on ensuring that they are well placed to have really vibrant, great jobs into the future and that they are able to contribute to the future of South Australia's economy.

There are many challenges indeed if you look at the global picture and the fact that the Australian dollar is high. It makes the challenge of this \$144,000 bond (which, as I understand it, is a federal direction) even more difficult for families of overseas students to meet. With the Australian dollar at about US101.3¢ at the moment, it makes it exceptionally difficult for those families in economies around the world that are not quite as strong as Australia's—and we have withstood the global financial crisis amazingly well. That will impact on numbers fractionally.

However, for those families internationally that continue to see Australia, and particularly South Australia, as their preferred option for the education of their child to give them the skills that they need, let us ensure that we have a legislative process in place that ensures that there can be no further failures and that the education outcome they receive is always a positive one.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:43): I rise to support the Training and Skills Development (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill. I reflect some years ago on when I was an apprentice. I did my apprenticeship down at GMH at Woodville and it was probably one of the most memorable periods of my youth.

We were given the opportunity to do our training in an apprentice training facility that used to take on between 30 and 50 apprentices per year. It was the type of facility that every apprentice today would dream of doing their training and apprenticeship in. We were given the opportunity to be highly skilled in our chosen field and to be part of an up-and-coming workforce in the manufacturing industry.

The opportunity that I was given gave me a platform to stand on for the rest of my working days and, even today, I am using those skills that I was taught as a teenager. I reflect on that whenever I am speaking to any youth groups and my own children; that is, to have an apprenticeship, some training or a certificate behind you is absolutely vital in today's world. Through a controlled environment we gain the experience and the skill set that we need today to be leaders within our field of expertise.

Also, when working as an apprentice, we are given tuition to work safely. One of the things at the forefront of my mind is that, when young students, trainees and apprentices are given the opportunity to learn a trade, they have to work safely. They have to be in a safe work environment and also work safely with other trainees and tradesmen around them so they are not taking off fingers and having pieces of their workplace flinging around the workshop.

I think, more important than anything, to be part of the future skilled workforce is something that is very valuable. It was a great asset for me as an apprentice and is also for young trainees today, and we can teach overseas young people who come into our workforce the great skill set and values the Australian training fraternity offers.

Just as important is that we need employers to embrace the young to train them and take the burdens that come with training, and they are many. The difference I see between when I was an apprentice (which was quite some years ago) and today is that employers have been turned off taking on apprentices and the responsibility of taking the young under their wing and interrupting the progress of what they do as a business. It is about training the apprentice but it is also about that burden—the financial burden and the time burden that employers have to experience. There is the down time when that apprentice who is being paid by an employer has to go to school, whether it is training at trade school or another workplace, to gain a more far-reaching set of work skills.

In my electorate, country apprentices and trainees encounter an extra burden in coming down to do their training and schooling, and it takes its toll. We see the hardships they encounter in travelling distances to Adelaide, which has its expenses. Whether they travel by bus or in their own vehicle, it all costs extra for those young people to be part of the trainee system.

It is also the cost of accommodation. A young trainee or apprentice who comes from the country to the city has to find accommodation, at cost. Not everyone in the country has relatives who live in the city and not everyone on an apprentice's wage is able to afford some of the accommodation expenses. So it really spreads the burden not only to that apprentice but also to the families supporting that young one who is looking to gain the extra skill set and the tuition at the training facilities.

In training overseas students—not versus the local students—one thing that has become evident, especially with country students, is that, when the overseas students are given the opportunity to come to this country at great cost, as the member for Goyder has pointed out, there is also a downside; that is, they are competing with the local population, the local students who want to take on the apprenticeship. The more wealthy overseas students coming into the workplace, competing with the locals with perhaps a little less wealth, really have to compete. It is showing on the statistics, especially within the medical fraternity, that those students are coming over and almost taking away the opportunity for a local—in many cases a regional student—who is having an extra burden put on him to travel to university or to the colleges and take on the traineeship he wants to pursue.

It really is a balance, and I would like to see the government give more or extra support to the regional trainees and apprentices, because they have just as much right as the city trainees and apprentices to be given the opportunity, and for government to step in and give some form of reimbursement or incentive not only to the employees but also to the apprentice to be part of that workforce and lessen that burden.

In the big picture, apprentices are all about research and development. For an apprentice to be put into the workforce, to gain skills, is about the industry he is doing his time with, about the research and development, the long-term picture. That long-term picture is that today the employer invests and puts their faith in training apprentices, the young, for the long-term, for the future. That,

sadly, has been lacking over the last decade as we see less focus on apprentices and traineeships and more burden put on employees, and I think that is something that needs to be addressed.

I refer to some of the examples with the young gaining practical experience to be able to step into a traineeship, some of the criteria the young have to have before they can be accepted. I have an example where, in my electorate in Chaffey, a young girl who lives in the country and catches the bus to school suddenly wants to look for experience. She has gone to some employers, one in particular, and asked whether she could do some work after school.

The employer gave her the news that, unless she could give her three hours a night, she was not able to take on that girl to give her the valuable experience she needed. By the time she hopped off the bus it was 4 o'clock, but the business closed at 5 o'clock, so that only gave her one hour her day. The federal government's rules and regulations show that, unless they are given three hours per day they do not get the opportunity to gain that experience. It is outrageous that the federal government can step in and deny the young experience and a stepping stone into the workforce. Again, it reflects the nanny state.

Mr Pederick: No idea of employing people.

Mr WHETSTONE: Exactly. Another example we are seeing at the moment is that the Flinders Medical Training School is operating in Renmark in my electorate. It is a world-class facility, giving the medical fraternity, medical students, an opportunity to perform reality procedures. What we are seeing up there at the moment is that that facility offers regional students an opportunity to work and train within their region. They do not have to travel, they do not have to spend that money on accommodation, they do not have to have that extra burden of living away from home. I think it is a great asset to regional South Australia and, in particular, the Chaffey region.

I would like to see this government support that facility. It is being scrutinised at the moment under the Riverland Futures Taskforce. The Flinders Medical Centre is looking for some funding through the minister for regional infrastructure, and I call on him to support that school as it is a vital piece of infrastructure that could go into supporting regional training. I think apprenticeships and training—whether it be for local or overseas students—are a very affordable and practical investment in our workforce future.

Debate adjourned on motion of Ms Chapman.

NEW SCHOOLS PPP PROGRAM

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Science and Information Economy) (12:56): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: On 10 November 2010, during examination of the Auditor-General's Report into the Department of Education and Children's Services, I was asked a series of questions regarding costs associated with the New Schools PPP program. In respect of a question concerning an amount of \$2.5 million for departmental project management and administration costs, referred to at page 311 of the report, I stated on advice that this amount was included in the \$323 million net present value sum of the PPP contract.

I now clarify that the \$2.5 million amount related to costs incurred by DECS for both Education Works stage 1 (including transition costs) and stage 2 and that it was not included in the \$323 million net present value sum.

[Sitting suspended from 12:57 to 14:01]

STATUTES AMENDMENT AND REPEAL (AUSTRALIAN CONSUMER LAW) BILL

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

MARINE PARKS (PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY) AMENDMENT BILL

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

RECREATION GROUNDS (REGULATIONS) (PENALTIES) AMENDMENT BILL

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

ROAD TRAFFIC (USE OF TEST AND ANALYSIS RESULTS) AMENDMENT BILL

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

**PRINCE ALFRED COLLEGE INCORPORATION (VARIATION OF CONSTITUTION)
AMENDMENT BILL**

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

GAMING MACHINES (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

SERET, MRS CLAIRE

The SPEAKER (14:03): Honourable members, it is with sadness that I bring to the attention of the house the death of Mrs Claire Seret, the Administrative Officer within the Legislative Council and, previously, a reporter with Hansard.

Claire was a respected and well-liked member of the parliamentary staff. She was poised, thoughtful and careful in how she fulfilled her responsibilities. Claire's attention to detail and her respect for those she worked with made her a sought-after staff member. Claire's sense of humour, breadth of knowledge, experience of the world and her sincerity attracted the respect of all those who came in contact with her, members and staff alike.

Claire inspired many with her grace and positive spirit throughout her illness. Her kindness and generosity were evident when she attended the farewell of a colleague at Parliament House as recently as December 2010.

I am sure our thoughts and condolences go to her husband, Dirk, her family, her friends and her colleagues.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

NET FISHING BANS

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder): Presented a petition signed by 1,531 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to implement net fishing bans in coastal waters off Ardrossan, Tiddy Widdy Beach and Port Clinton to protect the recreational and tourism industry.

NO FISH ZONES

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder): Presented a petition signed by 842 residents of Yorke Peninsula and greater South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to take immediate action to re-evaluate and decrease the proposed no fish zones in Port Victoria areas B, C and D of Marine Sanctuary Zone 11.

FORESTRYSA

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Presented a petition signed by 3,802 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to take immediate action and stop the forward sale of harvesting rights of ForestrySA plantations.

MOUNT BARKER DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): Presented a petition signed by 2,349 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to reject the proposal to rezone over 1,300 ha of the state's premium farming land to residential use in the Mount Barker area.

MODBURY SCHOOLS

Mr PISONI (Unley): Presented a petition signed by 600 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to take immediate action to stop the amalgamation of Modbury High School and Modbury South School.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

The following reports have been received and published pursuant to section 17(7) of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991—

Public Works Committee—

389th Report entitled North South Interconnection System Project

390th Report entitled Munno Para Railway Station Upgrade

391st Report entitled Berri Hospital Redevelopment

393rd Report entitled Lyell McEwin Hospital Redevelopment Stage C

Auditor-General—

Agency Audit Reports Supplementary Report February 2011

Agency Audit Reports—Part B: Volumes 3 and 4—2009-10—Corrigendum

State Finances and Related Matters—November 2010—Erratum

(Reports ordered to be published.)

Local Government—

Adelaide City Council Annual Report 2009-10

Adelaide Hills Council Annual Report 2009-10

Campbelltown City Council Annual Report 2009-10

City of Burnside Annual Report 2009-10

City of Charles Sturt Annual Report 2009-10

City of Holdfast Bay Annual Report 2009-10

City of Marion Annual Report 2009-10

City of Mitcham Annual Report 2009-10

City of Mount Gambier Annual Report 2009-10

City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters Annual Report 2009-10

City of Onkaparinga Annual Report 2009-10

City of Playford Annual Report 2009-10

City of Port Adelaide Enfield Annual Report 2009-10

City of Salisbury Annual Report 2009-10

City of Tea Tree Gully Annual Report 2009-10

City of Unley Annual Report 2009-10

City of Whyalla Annual Report 2009-10

Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council Annual Report 2009-10

Coorong District Council Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Barunga West Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Ceduna Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Cleve Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Coober Pedy Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Elliston Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Franklin Harbour Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Grant Annual Report 2009-10—

District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Loxton Waikerie Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Mallala Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Mount Remarkable Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of Streaky Bay Annual Report 2009-10

District Council of the Copper Coast Annual Report 2009-10

Kangaroo Island Council Annual Report 2009-10

Kingston District Council Annual Report 2009-10

Light Regional Council Annual Report 2009-10

Mid Murray Council Annual Report 2009-10

Naracoorte Lucindale Council Annual Report 2009-10

Northern Areas Council Annual Report 2009-10

Port Augusta City Council Annual Report 2009-10

Port Pirie Regional Council Annual Report 2009-10

Regional Council of Goyder Annual Report 2009-10

Roxby Downs Council Annual Report 2009-10

Southern Mallee District Council Annual Report 2009-10

The Barossa Council Annual Report 2009-10

The Flinders Ranges Council Annual Report 2009-10

Town of Gawler Annual Report 2009-10

Town of Walkerville Annual Report 2009-10
Wakefield Regional Council Annual Report 2009-10

By the Minister for Health (Hon. J.D. Hill)—

SA Health Response to the Office of the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner—Operational Review Findings Report
SA Health's Interim Response to the Health Performance Council Report—Reflecting on the Results: Review of the Public Health System's Performance for 2008-10
Department of Health Report: Outline Business Case Barossa Health Service Country Health SA
Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner Annual Report 2009-10—Late Submission

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that the following written answers to questions be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

PRISONS PPP PROJECT

159 Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (19 October 2010). Have any payments been made to Perumal Pedavoli Pty Ltd, or any subsidiary thereof, in respect of work concerning the Prisons PPP Project and if so, what are the details?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Police, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Motor Sport, Minister Assisting the Premier with the Olympic Dam Expansion Project): As I announced in November 2009 the government decided to make an ex gratia payment to the three consortia bidding for the cancelled New Prisons and Secure Facilities PPP Project (the Project) in recognition of the unique circumstances that led to its cancellation and as a gesture of good faith given their commitment to the Project. The sharing of this payment was left to the consortium members to agree.

Accordingly, the Government is not privy to the details of any payment that may have been made to the architectural firm of Perumal Pedavoli in any capacity it may have had as a member of one of the consortia bidding for the Project.

DISABILITY SA

165 Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (30 November 2010). How many Disability SA clients have individual funding agreements in place?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability): As at 10 January 2011, 44 people were actively engaged in the Phase One Self-Managed Funding Initiative. Of these:

- 32 currently have an individual funding agreement in place and have commenced self-managed funding; and
- 12 people are still finalising their plans.

BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg)** (6 May 2010).

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Science and Information Economy): Building the Education Revolution (BER) is a Commonwealth Government initiative. Yankalilla Area School was allocated \$2 million under the BER scheme. All projects are required to comply with the building code, legislation and Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) standards and policy regardless of the source of funds.

The South Australian Government does not intend to supplement the Yankalilla Area School's BER funding.

I understand that the school Principal has discussed this matter at length with DECS staff. The school understands the reasons why the costs associated with the school's new classroom building, including for significant site works and fire hardening measures, exceeded the initially

budgeted costs for that building. This has meant that the gym refurbishment cannot be completed within the school's BER allocation.

In addition to the school's BER project, the Government recently completed a \$1.799M capital works project for refurbishment of the administration area and the construction of a new home economics building.

UNIVERSITY VICE-CHANCELLORS

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg)** (10 November 2010).

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): The 'guidelines' referred to in the Auditor-General's report are the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) Financial Statement Guidelines for Australian Higher Education providers for the 2009 Reporting Period. These guidelines prescribe the form of the financial statements approved by the Australian Government Minister under section 19-10(2) of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA), section 108 of the Higher Education Funding Act 1988 (HEFA) and section 58 of the Australian Research Council Act 2001 (ARCA) and are available through DEEWR.

These guidelines do not prescribe how a Vice-Chancellor's remuneration is to be determined.

The remuneration of University Vice-Chancellors and senior staff is the responsibility of individual University Councils. In determining the remuneration of a Vice Chancellor, benchmarking against the general market as well as the University sector is considered in conjunction with organisational factors including the size of the university as determined by its revenue, staff and student numbers, number of campuses, research profile etc.

SASANELLI, MR N.

In reply to **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite)** (10 November 2010).

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): The Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology has provided support to Mr Sasanelli's efforts by attending and presenting at conferences and workshops with visiting international delegations.

Bio Innovation SA (BioSA) has had several contacts with Adjunct Professor Nicola Sasanelli. In particular, BioSA provided a presentation on biotechnology in South Australia to a visiting delegation from Campagna in September 2009. Also in September 2009, BioSA provided a similar presentation for Adjunct Professor Sasanelli for his use in showcasing South Australia's biotechnology capabilities during his visit to the San Raffaele Institute in Milan, one of Europe's largest science parks in biomedical and biotechnology research.

I am advised that establishing relationships with the Puglia region has been beneficial to the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics (ACPGF) which received an amount of funding, \$60,000 from the Department of Premier and Cabinet for this purpose.

I am advised by my Chief Executive that there is a strong synergy between the research efforts of Puglia and South Australia as the Puglia region is the largest producer of durum wheat (used for pasta production) in Europe. Australia predominantly grows bread wheat but is hoping to increase durum production. There are significant differences between the Australian and Italian wheats in their tolerance to drought, heat and Fusarium, a fungal disease.

I am advised that the collaboration with Puglia was expanded to include researchers in Regione Emilia Romagna (University of Bologna) and Italy's largest durum wheat breeding company. This has enabled the ACPFG to access a durum wheat collection, which has been imported into Australia, in order to analyse its characteristics.

The cooperation has been expanded and is now part of a large European Union Framework VII Program, the 'DROPS program' with funding of over Euro 5 million. The DROPS program is investigating drought tolerance in cereals and ACPFG is a major partner with access to the program resources and outcomes.

In addition, the Department acquired 25 copies of Professor Sasanelli's book on science and art to use as gifts for visiting delegations. The total cost was \$528 with funds going to Australian Italian Scholarships Fund not to Professor Sasanelli direct.

AGRICULTURAL SPRAYING PRACTICES

In reply to **Mr PEDERICK (Hammond)** (28 October 2010).

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs): The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority is responsible for setting the conditions of use for agricultural sprays. In 2008 it finalised Operating Principles in Relation to Spray Drift Risk in order to improve the advice provided on product labels to farmers on how to minimise spray drift beyond the land to be sprayed. The application of these principles is to be science based and recognise new improved chemical application technologies. I am advised that research and discussions are ongoing in this complex area. Having said that, the Government supports the provision of better advice on product labels to farmers that reduces the risks of spray drift to protect human health, the environment and trade.

ANIMAL HEALTH BIOSECURITY FEE AND PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION CODE

In reply to **Mr PEDERICK (Hammond)** (28 October 2010).

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs): Biosecurity SA commenced discussion about mandating Property Identification Codes (PICs) with an associated fee with the chairs of my Ministerial livestock advisory groups covering sheep, cattle, horses, goats, pigs, deer and alpacas and a representative from the South Australian Farmers Federation at a meeting on 20 August 2010, before the 2010-11 budget was presented.

Following the presentation of the budget in September 2010, which included revenue and savings targets for the Biosecurity SA Animal Health program and the PIC registration system, a second meeting was held on 24 September 2010. At this meeting Biosecurity SA informed the livestock industry and horse community representatives about the government's decision and Biosecurity SA proposals for achieving the budget targets, which included specifying the proposed PIC fee to recover costs of the PIC system and implementing a Biosecurity fee to recover costs of Animal Health services. Biosecurity SA sought feedback on how the proposed Biosecurity and PIC fees could be best implemented.

Delays in the process to draft a Bill to amend the Livestock Act 1997 to enable application of the Biosecurity fee provided an opportunity for further discussion with representatives and a third meeting was held on 25 October 2010 about implementing the mandatory PIC system, the PIC fee and the Biosecurity fee. Further discussions will be held by Biosecurity SA prior to a Bill being presented to Parliament.

LOXTON LAND SALE

In reply to **Mr PEDERICK (Hammond)** (10 November 2010).

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs): I am advised that the proceeds received for the sale of the two lots and associated buildings at Bookpurnong Road, Loxton was \$315,000 in 2009-10.

As per Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC114—Government Real Property Management, after adjusting for minor costs associated with the sale, and retention of part proceeds by DTF, PIRSA has been provided with \$198,000 of investing expenditure authority in 2010-11. The funding is being utilised to upgrade fire safety systems at Struan Offices and Research Centre and to upgrade the Ceduna Fruit Fly Quarantine Station.

The sale of the third lot at Loxton in December 2010 is expected to generate sale proceeds of approximately \$70,000. The recently revised DPC Circular 114 provides for PIRSA to receive investing expenditure authority of 50 per cent of the proceeds (approximately \$35,000) for a Cabinet approved project or program. PIRSA intends to utilise these relatively minor proceeds for further regional works, subject to DTF confirmation that a 50 per cent portion of sale proceeds can be retained by the agency.

LANGHORNE CREEK PIPELINE

In reply to **Mr PEDERICK (Hammond)** (10 November 2010).

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs): The full costs of

the pipeline are currently being finalised. They are expected to come in at between \$91 million and \$92 million. This includes the construction and development costs of \$90.281 million paid to 30 June 2010.

The defects liability period ran for a 12 month period, from commissioning and handover to the company on 30 October 2009 to 29 October 2010. No project funds were used for any defect rectification. Defect rectification costs were born by the lead contractor, Lead Engineering and Construction.

All payments due to the SA Government from the Commonwealth and The Creeks Pipeline Company Ltd for this project have been received in full.

MURRAY RIVER, DROUGHT COMPLIANCE

In reply to **Mr PEDERICK (Hammond)** (28 October 2010).

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water): I am advised that:

1. The Department for Water Drought Compliance Team was established specifically to ensure sustainable and lawful use of water taken from the River Murray during severe drought.

As the drought eased it was deemed that some of the additional staff employed to provide compliance and enforcement services around extraction from the River Murray could be released and responsibility for monitoring and compliance integrated into existing programs.

Although the Drought Compliance Team has now been disbanded, the Department for Water has 17 staff working within existing licensing, asset management, hazard management and investigations programs who are involved on a daily basis in monitoring, reporting, investigating and responding to licensing compliance and river bank collapse issues.

WATER AND WASTEWATER CHARGES

In reply to **Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (9 November 2010).

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water): I am advised that:

1. The increase in revenues that the Auditor-General's Report is referring to is for the results for the 2005-06 financial year which is referred to in the report as 2006.

Since 30 June 2006, customer numbers have increased by an average of 9,000 to 10,000 new water customers and 6,000 to 8,000 new wastewater customers per annum, which is an increase of approximately 1.2 per cent to 1.5 per cent per annum.

The increase in revenue relating to water and wastewater fixed charges attributable to growth in customer numbers can vary from year to year. However, for the period 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2010, which was analysed by the Auditor-General, it is estimated that growth in customer numbers increased fixed charge revenues by around \$22 million, representing an average of \$5-6 million per annum.

OFFICE FOR RECREATION AND SPORT FACILITIES

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (9 November 2010).

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Lee—Minister for Police, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): The Office for Recreation and Sport (ORS) is involved in managing the following facilities:

1. ORS Kidman Park Offices
2. Hindmarsh Stadium
3. Hindmarsh Precinct
4. ETSA Park (Netball Stadium)
5. State Hockey Centre (Pines Hockey Arena)
6. Adelaide Super-Drome
7. Santos Stadium

8. Eagle Mountain Bike Park
9. Women's Memorial Playing Fields
10. Heini Becker Park
11. State Shooting Park
12. Monarto Shooting Park
13. State Sports Park
14. Southern Sports Complex
15. South Adelaide Football Club
16. AM Ramsay Regatta Course
17. Riesling Trail
18. Mawson Trail
19. Kidman Trail
20. Blinman Pools
21. Riverton Trail
22. Tom Roberts Horse Trail

These facilities are managed under various arrangements including direct management by ORS, leases, licences and other forms of agreements, under which other parties manage the day-to-day operation of the facilities on behalf of the ORS.

NEW MINISTRY

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) (14:09): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: This morning His Excellency the Governor in Executive Council appointed a new deputy premier and two new ministers to the cabinet. As part of these appointments there has been an extensive reallocation of portfolios.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are people taking photos in the gallery. Cameras are not allowed in the gallery, only the media.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I thought I had a duty to the house to inform members opposite and, indeed, the parliament and the people of those changes. As part of these appointments, there has been an extensive reallocation of portfolios. This represents the biggest shake-up of cabinet since Labor came to office. Overall, 11 ministers have changed roles or taken up additional responsibilities. The cabinet is reinvigorated, renewed and stable. We have maintained the right balance of continuity and change, experience and—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Davenport will be quiet.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I was just thinking that, since I have been the leader of the Labor Party, there have been 16 leaders and deputy leaders of the Liberal Party. It is not pass the parcel; it is pass the grenade. From a cabinet of 15, we have five with the experience of having served since we came to office, combined with more recent ministers who are making their mark for the good of the state. The new ministry takes its place here today, and let me say that there is much more talent to draw from our caucus. The member for Enfield was appointed—it is very hard to hear oneself speak.

Mr Pisoni: We read it on Twitter. We saw it all on Twitter.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley will be quiet. We will have silence or we will leave the chamber.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The member for Enfield was appointed to the position of deputy premier. First elected in 2002, the member for Enfield has held the portfolios of attorney-general, justice and tourism since the 2010 election. As a minister, he has proven his willingness to engage with all sections of the community, particularly those directly affected by his portfolios. He will bring to the role of deputy premier a new and fresh approach, and I look forward to working with him on building South Australia, growing our employment, building infrastructure for the future and delivering better services, including health and education.

The Deputy Premier will continue as Attorney-General, Minister for Justice and Minister for Tourism, as well as taking on urban development, planning and the City of Adelaide, and the new role of Minister for Food Marketing. The planning role is a key role in nurturing and managing growth in this state, particularly, of course, with the 30-year plan for metropolitan Adelaide and also with the establishment of an integrated design commission, while the new role of food marketing is about making the most of our regional food excellence and clean green image, and fits perfectly with his tourism role of marketing our state.

The member for Playford is the new Treasurer, while retaining employment, training and further education.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The new minister—

An honourable member: Where is he?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The new minister, the Hon. Bernard Finnigan MLC, is now the government leader in the Legislative Council, as well as taking on the industrial relations, local government and gambling portfolios. The member for Newland joins cabinet as Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, and Minister for Road Safety, and with a wide brief as minister assisting me as Premier with South Australia's Strategic Plan.

The member for Port Adelaide will take on police, emergency services and motor sport, adding to his defence industries role, and will bring his years of experience assisting me on the Olympic Dam expansion project. Indeed, the Minister for Police and minister assisting me in the Olympic Dam negotiations—and motor sport—will join me with the new minister for Mineral Resources Development in terms of negotiating with BHP Billiton.

I want to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the former deputy premier for his enormous contribution to the betterment of our state.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: As Treasurer, he secured the state's AAA credit rating, while delivering budgets that included the biggest infrastructure spend in the state's history and record commitments to health; a more than doubling of the health budget—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —a massive increase in police resources and other services. The member for Cheltenham, another experienced minister, adds science and information economy to his education duties, which I think is the perfect mix. It is about the link between science and education—of course, future-looking portfolios.

The Hon. Gail Gago now takes on the portfolios of regional development and public service management. I should say—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Some people are about to be warned.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The Hon. Gail Gago now takes on the portfolios of regional development and public sector management. I think it is the first time that I can recall in the state's

history where the minister responsible for the public sector is not actually the Premier, so all of the necessary acts will be designated to the Hon. Gail Gago.

The member for West Torrens and Minister for Industry and Trade will also be the new Minister for Mineral Resources Development. The member for Napier takes on the additional portfolio of energy, and the member for Hartley adds Minister Assisting the Premier in Social Inclusion to her responsibilities, social inclusion being one of the—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —three driving tenets of the government. I also take the opportunity to thank the Hon. Paul Holloway, former leader of the government in another place, for his legendary contribution to the development of the state's mining sector and for his visionary reforms to the state's planning system and the development of the 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide. The mining industry itself gave a politician the Legend of Mining jacket. It is like getting the green jersey or the yellow jersey in the Tour de France, or even better in the Tour Down Under. I also place on record—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members on my left will be quiet.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —my thanks to the member for Lee, a former minister for police, for his contribution and dedication to numerous significant and difficult portfolios over nine years as a minister, including transport, police, emergency services and other areas. He has presided over the biggest increase in police resources. He has tackled hard issues, including reform of WorkCover, and has reformed our workplace safety system. As minister for recreation, sport and racing—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —he has been a fierce advocate for sport at all levels from grassroots to the elite. I know, as a fellow athlete, I look forward to competing with him again.

In the coming days I will be recommending to the Governor—this is an announcement here today—the appointment of the member for Light as my parliamentary secretary, replacing the Hon. Bernard Finnigan MLC. The member for Light will join the member for Mawson as parliamentary secretaries. This will give the opportunity to rearrange responsibilities for the parliamentary secretaries to expand the range of experience. I intend to assign the member for Mawson to the Minister for Health and Minister for the Southern Suburbs. Arguably there are few in politics who could claim to know the South better than the minister and his new parliamentary secretary. Together they will make a formidable team.

The member for Light will be assigned to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. The member's strong interest in the government's extensive infrastructure program will be put to good use. In particular, I expect that the member for Light will play an active role in managing the rollout of our infrastructure investment in the North, including the electrification of the Adelaide to Gawler railway line about which he is a passionate advocate. I congratulate all these appointments, and I am sure all members of this house join me in doing so.

KIMBERLY-CLARK AUSTRALIA

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (14:20): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: As many members of this house are aware, on 25 January manufacturing company Kimberly-Clark Australia announced that, following a global review of pulp and paper tissue operations, it would be closing two aged tissue machines at Millicent by May of this year resulting in the loss of 170 jobs. The company also announced its intention to sell the Tantanoola pulp mill, with the mill to be closed if it is not sold by the end of this year, which could result in the loss of another 65 jobs.

The loss of 170 jobs in any area is a massive blow, but it is particularly devastating for the South-East community as Kimberly-Clark Australia was the largest single employer in the

Limestone Coast region. KCA also contributed \$840 million to regional economic activity, and its operations supported about 850 indirect jobs in the region, many of these being contractors or companies sourcing their main revenue stream from KCA contracts.

The Premier met with representatives from Kimberly-Clark Australia before the announcement of the decision. KCA advised that the current structure of its operations had become unsustainable owing to several factors, including the ageing of their equipment, the high Australian dollar, energy prices and the dumping of international product onto the Australian market. The company advised that nothing could have been done by this government to prevent this decision. It was part of Kimberly-Clark's global restructure aimed at ensuring its long-term future.

Knowing how much this will affect the lives of mums and dads trying to make ends meet and how vulnerable so many of the people in the South-East will be feeling, the state government, in partnership with the federal government, has established a \$17 million regional support package. The federal government will provide \$10 million while the other \$7 million will come from the state government.

The package will offer support to those directly and indirectly affected by job losses. It also aims to boost the economy of the South-East and attract new companies, new opportunities and new jobs. The cabinet yesterday approved the details of the support package, establishing a \$12 million South-East South Australian Innovation and Investment Fund in cooperation with the federal government.

This will be an industry development program aiming to create sustainable jobs in the region and offering a grants program to help smaller businesses expand. The South Australian government will provide \$2 million to the fund, with the federal government to contribute the remaining \$10 million. The full details of the fund are currently being developed together with the federal government, and guidelines for the fund will be announced very soon.

On top of the South-East South Australian Innovation and Investment Fund, the South Australian government will contribute \$5 million to a Labour Adjustment Package. The package will help ensure affected workers and associated contractors and suppliers are given the support that they need to adjust to the impact of this decision. Major elements of the package include:

- recognition of the skills that they have already got;
- help with résumés and job searching;
- career advice;
- training in part or full qualifications; and
- other funded training, such as licences and tickets that they need to get alternative employment.

Representatives from the state government have already been down to the South-East to begin preliminary discussions with the company and with workers. We will continue to work with the company, the commonwealth government, local government representatives, Regional Development Australia and the relevant unions to make sure that affected workers are offered the best possible outcomes in terms of skill recognition, retraining and job placement. I will provide more detail of the KCA Labour Adjustment Package very soon.

The Rann government, together with the federal government, has a very, very good track record of providing help for workers who are affected by production shutdowns. In recent years, both governments have worked together to bring in successful adjustment funds and programs following the closure of both Mitsubishi and Bridgestone. For example, adjustment in innovation programs put into place when Mitsubishi closed its Tonsley Park vehicle assembly plant generated around 1,000 new full-time jobs.

In the closure of the Bridgestone plant, about 78 per cent of workers looking for support in April 2010 were placed in employment by December last year. The house can rest assured I will be making every effort to ensure the workers who are affected by the cuts at Kimberly-Clark Australia can return to the workforce as soon as possible.

QUESTION TIME**TREASURER'S REMARKS**

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:25): My first question is to the new Treasurer. Does the Treasurer still believe that capitalism is a problem in our society, having said in his maiden speech:

The problem is not economic rationalism, but capitalism. This then is the task before this house and our society: to recognise that capitalism is a system with flaws that cannot be overcome.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! You have asked the question; you will listen in silence.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Unley!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (14:26): I have spent the last couple of weeks getting accusations from everyone that I am too right wing and now the opposition are coming out and accusing me of being too left wing.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: It's just absolutely extraordinary; I can't quite get it right. All sorts of things people make in the course of maiden speeches; they refine their views. If this is the best the opposition can throw at me then, please, go for it.

BARTLEY, MR K.

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (14:27): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Can the minister please advise the house what qualities Mr Keith Bartley will bring to the position of Chief Executive of the Department of Education and Children's Services?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Science and Information Economy) (14:27): I was very pleased to make the announcement of the appointment of the new Chief Executive of the Department of Education and Children's Services, the esteemed UK education administrator, Mr Keith Bartley.

Mr Bartley was the outstanding candidate in a strong field of local, interstate and international candidates. When the government commenced its search for a new chief executive, we were trying to consider a number of characteristics that we were seeking in the new chief executive for the ideal candidate. They were, of course, strong administration skills, a reform orientation, powerful communication skills, an educator (somebody with a strong education background), and hopefully also an interest in early childhood development.

We appreciated that these characteristics were unlikely to be found in one candidate. However, we are very pleased to say that Mr Keith Bartley possesses all of these qualities. His whole working life has been focused on education and early childhood services. He has spent 13 years as a high school teacher and school leader, he has run two education and children's services systems in the United Kingdom, he has held a senior position in the UK schools inspectorate called Ofsted, and he is currently chief executive of the General Teaching Council for England, the country's professional standards and registration organisation and the second largest organisation of its sort in the world.

He also has had a long-standing interest in early childhood development, being a trustee of the renowned children's centre called Pen Green. We have had a long-standing collaboration with Pen Green in Britain; it is one of the early examples of the British experience in those integrated children's centres. I have indeed visited it and it is a fantastic example of the sort of reform initiatives we are rolling out across our education system.

His reputation in all of these positions is that of both a very good administrator and a reformer. For instance, he brought together the education and children's services departments in Oxfordshire and he has lived through the 12-year massive period of reform in education in Britain, so he is able to bring many of the lessons that have been learned through that period.

He clearly has a developed and sophisticated view of education and early childhood services, and in this period of real change but also great excitement in education in South Australia, in my view Mr Keith Bartley will provide a substantial contribution to the challenges that we face.

I look forward to him starting his employment in May, but I would also like to acknowledge the excellent work of the Acting Chief Executive, Gino DeGennaro, and express my appreciation for him agreeing to continue in that role until Keith commences.

TREASURER'S REMARKS

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:30): Was the Premier aware that new treasurer Snelling considers the capitalistic system as having 'flaws that cannot be overcome' when the Premier appointed him as treasurer? Previously the Premier revealed that he didn't know that the member for West Torrens had over 60 traffic offences when he appointed that member as the minister for road safety.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

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) (14:30): It is quite clear to me—and obviously the pantomime continues—that this government, like all good governments, is a bridge. We're neither left nor right. We're neither forward nor back. We draw on each of those. So, I'm very pleased that this government is a bridge between capitalism and social democracy.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Croydon! There is no need to respond to them.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (14:31): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. How is the South Australian government assisting in the management of waste and helping to encourage recycling within the state?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (14:31): I thank the honourable member for Reynell for her question. Improving—

Ms Chapman: Have you been recycled?

The Hon. P. CAICA: You've been recycled through that entire side, haven't you? You have been! Improving waste management, in particular, improving recycling, is a key priority for the South Australian government. We know that in order to foster a greater level of recycling in our state, we need to make it easier for people to do so. It is critical that we ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is in place to assist individuals and businesses to recycle more. I am very pleased to advise members that, to date, 19 regional recycling projects have received \$1.7million in funding under Zero Waste SA's regional implementation program.

These regional projects are spread across five local government regions: Murray and Mallee, Eyre Peninsula, Southern Hills, South-East and the Central region. Most of this project funding has been directed to new or improved transfer stations and recycling facilities in rural areas of the state. We know there are challenges being faced in those regions with respect to that type of infrastructure, so it is money well directed.

Further to this, today I am very pleased to announce a further \$1.34 million has been awarded to six applicants under the Zero Waste SA Metropolitan Infrastructure Grants Program. This funding will build on our state's reputation as a leader in recycling and resource recovery. This infrastructure program provides valuable assistance to industry and is aimed at increasing South

Australia's capacity to locally reprocess recycled material into high value, end use products. This grants program also further invests in infrastructure that enables greater use of waste materials. I was very pleased to be accompanied by the Leader at a recycling depot—where I think I contributed more cans and bottles than you did, but still, as a collective, we played our part in that particular recycling process.

Successful applicants in this grants program—and I know that people in the chamber will be extremely interested in this—include Solo Resource Recovery in North Plympton, which is receiving \$300,000 for a major expansion and upgrade of facilities at the Adelaide Waste Recycling Centre. This upgrade involves improving access to the site for a range of resources, including electronic waste, hazardous waste, mixed dry recyclables and organics. The project also includes construction of a large, permanently covered area for organics, including food waste.

Another successful recipient is Adelaide Woodfibre in Port Adelaide. The company is receiving \$230,000 for the reprocessing of masonite sheets into briquette logs, which are suitable for combustion heaters and open fireplaces. Currently, 12,000 tonnes of masonite is stockpiled for processing and 3,000 tonnes is expected to be processed each year. Up to 10 new jobs are created as a result of this particular project.

Propak Industries at Thebarton is receiving \$199,000 for an innovative project to expand the range of a polystyrene-replacement product called 'Bio-Fill'. This is a biodegradable product which breaks down in compost or in water. It replaces polystyrene, which is problematic for householders to recycle, in that it cannot be put into kerbside recycling bins and it is often bulky and takes up space in a waste bin.

The Jeffries group at Buckland Park is receiving \$55,000 for an extra sorting element for the recycled organic screening system plant at the Jeffries' Buckland Park site. Peats Soils and Composting in Willunga is receiving \$300,000 for high-efficiency grinding equipment to increase the quality of organics from kerbside collections. Lucas Waste Management at McLaren Vale is receiving \$250,000 for the construction of an undercover resource recovery facility dedicated to processing household, business, construction and demolition waste.

Funding under both programs has stimulated further investment from recipients who have contributed an extra \$6.86 million towards these projects. These grants are stimulating investment in the green economy as businesses continue to develop markets for new and improved products and increase the effectiveness of their production processes. These programs reflect the government's commitment to continuing to work in partnership with industry and businesses to reduce waste and improve waste management in this state.

FORESTRYSA

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:36): My question is again to the Treasurer. Does the Treasurer support the forward selling of the harvest rights for ForestrySA plantations? The Treasurer was part of the cabinet that the former treasurer said unanimously supported and applauded the decisions in last year's budget.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (14:36): I didn't see that one coming. The arrangement with the forests is there is a regional impact study which is being prepared by consultants who will report back to the government in due time. The decision on the forests has not been finally signed off by the cabinet. We are waiting on—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: There has been no final cabinet sign-off on anything to do with the forests. We are waiting on the regional impact statement to be prepared. When I receive that, I will bring the house up to date on what is happening.

LADDER ST VINCENT STREET

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (14:37): I direct my question to the Minister for Housing. Can the minister update the house on the unique Ladder project that is supporting South Australians who are young and at risk of homelessness?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability) (14:37): Last Thursday, Senator Mark Arbib and I officially opened Ladder St Vincent Street. When the Labor government was elected nine years ago, our Premier was very clear about his vision for South Australia to once again lead

the way in social inclusion and embrace people in our community who, for far too long, had been left behind, left without opportunity, without hope and without a home. Ladder St Vincent Street realises an important part of that vision. This is a joint state/federal government initiative backed by the Australian Football League Players Association—

The SPEAKER: Minister, can we just halt for a minute? There is a photographer taking photos of members of the public. That is not allowed and you will cease doing so. Sorry, minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a joint state/federal government initiative backed by the Australian Football League Players Association and the AFL Foundation, designed to provide opportunities for young people who have not had the family support many of us take for granted. These young people might include those who have been under guardianship of the minister, people who have experienced homelessness or who have had troubled family backgrounds.

Ladder St Vincent Street is our first youth housing model to adopt a 'housing first' principle, where housing is the link to education, training, employment and opportunity. It is a link to a good life. At Ladder St Vincent Street we have taken a piece of history and made it the future, by transforming what was once the Black Diamond Hotel into 23 self-contained apartments, training facilities, offices and shops, and all the while we have preserved the history and character of this beautiful iconic Port Adelaide building. Of course, the transformation has resulted in a number of very modern additions, fixtures and fittings that are now considered important for most young people but would never have been dreamt of when the building was first constructed—computer and internet access, iPod docking stations, a range of features.

While the building will play a big role in helping many young people find their feet, it will be the support they receive through Ladder, the people they meet and the connections they make that will pave a positive path forward for them. Mentoring provided by some of our local sports stars will be critical to this. AFL players, together with Thunderbirds netballers, South Australian Sports Institute athletes and some of our state's best women cricketers will all be instrumental in instilling confidence and hope in the young people living at Ladder St Vincent Street.

I am also pleased that St John's Youth Services is on board to provide that critical 24-hour, seven-days a week support for the residents, support that will not stop when the young person moves on. Ladder is about building independence, developing self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as creating an opportunity. Each young person who lives at Ladder St Vincent Street will have their own lease, pay rent, be responsible for their own unit and for maintaining good relationships with their neighbours, as well as a commitment to being involved in education, work and training.

I understand that a number of local business people have already indicated a willingness to provide opportunities for these young tenants. So many people—too many to mention—continue to invest in this project. The state government has provided \$4 million in capital to make this project possible, as well as the ongoing support services for these young ones.

Ladder St Vincent Street provides a new era in housing in Port Adelaide and our state. It builds on the pride and tradition the area has in helping those who need a hand. One young person who spoke at the launch described Ladder St Vincent Street as a place you want to come home to, not run away from.

LADDER ST VINCENT STREET

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (14:42): I have a supplementary question for the Minister for Housing. How many of these commercial apartments have been leased out?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability) (14:42): Ladder St Vincent was opened on Thursday and, as I understand, these young people are in the process of moving in as we speak.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bragg, be quiet.

FORESTRYSA

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:42): In asking the question to the Treasurer, I congratulate the member for Playford on his elevation to the position. Will the Treasurer guarantee that there will be no adverse impact on jobs and the timber industry arising from the selling of the

harvesting rights of ForestrySA plantations as promised to the parliament on behalf of the government by the former treasurer?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (14:43): There is nothing more I can add to what I have already said. There is a regional impact statement being prepared—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: —that will come before me, and an appropriate decision will be taken to cabinet.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! We can sit here all afternoon if you want to keep chatting.

STORM AND FLOOD ASSISTANCE

Ms FOX (Bright) (14:43): Can the Premier advise the house what assistance has been provided to communities in South Australia—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms FOX: —Queensland and Victoria following recent devastating storms and floods?

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) (14:44): I want to thank the member for Bright for her question. First, on behalf of all South Australians, I send our sincere condolences to all those who have lost loved ones as a result of devastating storms and floods experienced in parts of eastern Australia.

The extent of property and infrastructure damage is almost unimaginable. I am pleased to inform the house of the assistance provided by South Australia following the storm and subsequent flooding in South Australia in December 2010, as well as the recent devastating flooding in Queensland and Victoria.

I was briefed and toured Stockport with the member for Frome, the local mayor, Allan Aughey, the Department for Families and Communities Chief Executive, Jos Mazel, to view first-hand the damage caused by heavy rain and flooding in December. I was shocked by the incredible mess left behind by the worst December rains on record but equally heartened to see the communities and volunteers working together on the clean-up. Once again we pay tribute to our volunteers.

The Minister for Families and Communities took charge of flood recovery to oversee a wide range of recovery efforts across agencies, including ongoing work by Emergency Services volunteers, community assistance and infrastructure repairs. I want to commend the Minister for Families and Communities for her repeated visits to the area.

The state government approved an advance payment of \$250,000 from the local government's disaster fund for the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council to assist with repairing roads and infrastructure and donated \$25,000 to the mayor's flood relief fund. Through the Local Government Disaster Fund the state government also approved the allocation of up to \$150,000 for the undertaking of a detailed assessment of the damage to the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council road infrastructure and to assist the council to prioritise infrastructure replacement.

Payments totalling more than \$66,000 were made to individuals impacted by the flooding. The total was made up of a range of payments, including emergency grants as well as re-establishment grants of up to \$5,600 for contents and up to \$5,600 for household repairs for eligible people in need. Further assistance of \$100,000 for recovery has been approved by the state and federal governments.

The issue of federal disaster relief and disaster resilience is on the agenda for next week's COAG meeting in Canberra. I have already flagged with the commonwealth, through our senior

officers, that this state's intention is to seek a review of the criteria for disaster relief so that it better meets the needs of smaller states and smaller communities. The flooding through Stockport left considerable damage to both council and state-owned infrastructure, but under current disaster relief arrangements, it does not meet the threshold for federal assistance.

The state government also responded quickly to the devastating flooding that has hit Queensland and Victoria. Twenty-five South Australian police officers have gone to Queensland to form part of an anti-looting squad. The Metropolitan Fire Service sent 12 urban search and rescue technicians to Queensland prepared to assist in the location of people who may have become trapped as a result of the floods. The SA Ambulance Service has provided paramedics to Queensland, and as a small example of the wonderful level of commitment we have seen I understand that those on day shift help with the community clean up on their day off.

The SA State Emergency Service deployed a total of 60 volunteers and three staff members to Queensland. The first two groups from the SES were part of the early response into the towns, which were amongst the worst, including Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley, before returning home to be replaced by a third deployment which assisted with the enormous clean-up and recovery effort.

In addition to these volunteers, the SES also deployed volunteers and staff to assist flood affected communities in Victoria. In addition to these deployments, 18 South Australians from state government agencies flew to Queensland to provide assistance to victims in the aftermath of the floods. Their duties included staffing recovery centres and visiting people impacted by the flooding to offer information and support. The SES are now prepared to send four rotations of 30 SES personnel to North Queensland as part of the national response to the cyclone where they will assist with the clean-up effort. The state government also donated \$1 million for the Queensland Premier's Flood Appeal.

Can I just say that I went down to the airport to meet with SES personnel who were leaving to go on the first wave of assistance for the Queensland floods. I met people who had worked down in Penola, and they had worked to assist in the aftermath of the tornado there. I met SES volunteers from Port Lincoln who were going to Queensland, like raring to get on the plane, because they said that when there were the devastating fires that took nine lives on the Eyre Peninsula just a few years ago—in fact, it was the exact anniversary—they got assistance from the Queensland SES and wanted to return the favour. That is the mark of Australians, that is why volunteering and volunteers are the best example of citizenship.

On 6 January I chaired a meeting of the state's Emergency Management Council to discuss potential flooding in the River Murray as a result of floodwaters from New South Wales crossing the border into South Australia. I chaired a further meeting of the Emergency Management Council on 24 January, and invited the six mayors of local councils along the river to attend.

Experts advised us that no populated towns were at risk, but shacks and campsites in low lying areas were still under threat. Flow to South Australia over the next week is expected to be within the range of 75,000 megalitres per day to a maximum of 85,000 megalitres per day as the higher flow arrives across the South Australian border. This compares to 350,000 megalitres a day during the peak of the 1956 flood and 180,000 megalitres during the peak of the 1974 flood.

Nevertheless, the state government has been working closely with the SES to approach the issue of protecting people and property. To date, the SES has been encouraging people to be aware of their personal safety if they are holidaying along the river this summer, with the campaign 'Enjoy the river this summer, but stay safe.' The SES is continuing to consult with all stakeholders to ensure a coordinated and considered approach to this issue. A regional control centre has been established at Berri and a state control centre, which can be activated on a needs basis, has also been established. A state-level incident action plan has also been prepared.

The SES, together with SAPOL and other agencies, is currently monitoring the situation in the north-west pastoral areas of our state, where widespread inundation has occurred as a result of the tail end of the tropical cyclone that devastated parts of northern Queensland. Inundation has also occurred in the north-east pastoral areas and the northern Barossa as a result of the rain experienced over the weekend. Property damage and stock losses have occurred as a result of these two separate weather systems.

Our emergency services also continue to monitor situations in Queensland (including the aftermath left by the tropical cyclone), flooding in Victoria, and bushfires in Western Australia, and

stand ready to again provide assistance if called upon to do so. The last few months have seen our volunteers and staff work tirelessly to provide an invaluable service to the affected communities of South Australia, Queensland and Victoria, and South Australians can be proud of their contributions. I take this opportunity to thank and congratulate all those involved in the relief effort to date.

BUDGET CUTS

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:53): My question is again to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer proceed with cuts to public sector long service leave and annual leave entitlements as outlined in the budget?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (14:53): I was just thinking that I wish Janet Giles had read that maiden speech I made 13 years ago; she might have realised that I have been operating in deep cover all these years, and that I really share her commitment to the revolution.

I share the previous treasurer's commitment to financial sustainability. That means we need to meet all the savings measures that have been set out in the previous budget. As Treasurer, I am committed to meeting those savings.

NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (14:54): My question is directed to the Minister for Youth. Can the minister advise the house of the successful recipients of the very important 2011 National Youth Week grants?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers, Minister Assisting the Premier in Social Inclusion) (14:54): I would like to thank the member for Ashford for her question. I am thrilled to inform the house of the National Youth Week grant recipients for 2011. This is an important initiative funded jointly by federal, state and local governments, and is the largest youth event in Australia, running from 1 to 11 April with the theme 'Own It'.

Last year I was pleased to approve a new competitive application process for National Youth Week grants, which enabled, for the first time, government and non-government organisations to apply for funding. I am pleased to announce today that more than \$173,000 in grant funding for 61 organisations have been approved. I am also particularly thrilled to report that about 70 per cent of the 165 events will be held in regional and remote areas of South Australia, on things like: a day of live music for the district council of Ceduna, \$2,000 to the District Council of the Copper Coast to conduct a two-day, full-day laser skirmish sessions—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, Tom Kenyon said he'd be at that. There is the Goyder regional council, \$4,000 for a 'Skate in the Valley' expo, and it goes on. This funding will no doubt provide increased opportunities for young South Australians. We are absolutely committed to enabling—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: —every young South Australian the opportunity to achieve their potential. We are doing this through policy framework. I was pleased to develop and release last year Youth Connect, where we have highlighted a number of key policy areas, health and wellbeing, education, training and skill development, engagement and participation. I encourage all members in this place to take part. I am very happy to offer any members briefings on events occurring in their area.

PUBLIC SERVICE CUTS

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:56): My question is again to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer be maintaining the government's budget position of cutting almost 4,000 public sector full-time jobs?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (14:56): I do not know how many times I can try and vary the answer a bit to essentially what is the same question. This government is committed to financial

sustainability. I am committed as Treasurer to financial sustainability. I will not allow the state to essentially run up a credit card debt which gets left to our—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I will not—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I will not allow this state to run up a credit card debt which gets left to our children to have to pay, and that is what the opposition would have us do.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

HOSPITALS, FUNDING

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson) (14:57): My question is to the Minister for Health. How will redevelopments planned for hospital facilities in the southern suburbs improve the experience of patients, and has the minister been surprised by some of the reaction to these announcements?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurana—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (14:58): I thank the—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Do you want to hear the minister's answer or not?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the member for Mawson for his first act of assisting me in these areas.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Thank you, very kind. It is a thing a bloke can do. Every single hospital in Adelaide, I am proud to say, is being redeveloped, or will be redeveloped, under this government. In southern Adelaide, work continues on the \$163 million redevelopment of the Flinders Medical Centre, that is renewing all the service areas of the hospital: a new obstetrics wing and cardiac ward have already been opened; a new emergency department is currently under construction; and 12 new theatres will also be built.

Last week I officially opened an expanded intensive and critical care unit, which has increased from 24 to 32 beds and will provide intensive care to more than 2,100 patients each year. At the same time, I opened a new 30-bed acute medical unit, known as an AMU, which was partly funded under the COAG emergency department agreement, and I am very pleased that the commonwealth has provided resources to us to help improve service in our emergency departments.

Acute medical units have the specialist staff and equipment to work alongside emergency department staff to look after patients who are in a stable condition medically, but who may need close attention and treatment for up to 48 hours. Acute medical units are an important component of meeting the government's ambitious target of 95 per cent of patients to be seen, treated and either admitted or discharged within four hours of arrival at an emergency department. I was surprised to hear the opposition spokesperson, the member for Morphett, tell ABC News:

What we're seeing with the acute medical unit in the Flinders Medical Centre is a copying by the Labor Government of South Australia—

that part is true—

of a failed British system.

That part is not true—

This did nothing to reduce waiting times in emergency departments in England.

It defies belief that the opposition spokesman would oppose a policy that is aimed to reduce waiting times. It is also a policy, I have to say, that the Liberal government in Western Australia announced and is implementing, and they announced it before we did, but they were right and we followed suit. It is now a national policy; COAG has taken it up as well. It is less surprising that the opposition spokesman got his facts wrong. He has a track record in that regard.

Data from the UK National Health Service website shows that, by December 2009, 97.82 per cent of patients in England were admitted, transferred or discharged within four hours. As a result of this 'failed policy', 97.82 per cent were admitted, transferred or discharged within four hours. Prior to the introduction of this target, in the time January to March 2003, the figure was 82.4 per cent, so it was a vast improvement as a result of this policy.

The policy works have not been abandoned, as has been suggested by the member, in the UK, but the target has been changed to make it 95 per cent of patients. That is the target we have adopted in our state. It is consistent with what we have adopted, and the reason it was changed in Britain was to reduce the risk of patients being pushed through the emergency department before they are ready to leave. We accept that. That is why we have set a target of 95 per cent. So it has achieved its goal in Britain, and we are very confident it will assist us to reduce waiting times in South Australia, too.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! It is very hard to hear the minister.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: At the Repatriation General Hospital, a \$40 million redevelopment negotiated as part of the COAG health reform package will provide that hospital with a brand new 120-bed facility and combine teaching, research, aged care and rehabilitation services in one location. This is groundbreaking work which will create an absolutely fantastic centre for aged care in our state. It will be built in conjunction with a \$17 million teaching, aged care and rehabilitation facility which will be funded by ACH and Flinders University. The redevelopment will provide more aged care beds in the southern suburbs and expanded rehabilitation services for the veteran community. As I say, this will be a centre of national excellence for treating older people.

Finally, at Noarlunga, planning is well underway for the \$31 million redevelopment of the Noarlunga Health Service which will commence in the 2011-12 financial year. This redevelopment will include the expansion of inpatient bed capacity and the development of four high dependency beds to provide higher level support for surgical activity. The redevelopment will also include improved theatres and a new 16-chair renal dialysis facility, replacing an existing eight-chair facility.

Across the southern suburbs and the rest of the state, we are rebuilding hospital facilities to provide staff the best environment possible in which to treat patients. What this is about is to make sure that we have the best possible circumstances in which the patients of our state can be treated by the outstanding doctors and nurses who we have working for us. I say to the opposition, which continually tries to take political points on every one of these initiatives, tell us what you would do.

ADELAIDE OVAL

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (15:04): My question is to the Treasurer. Given the Treasurer's previous answer where he raised concerns about increasing debt, can the Treasurer confirm that the reason the government is looking at forward selling forestry plantations is to pay for the Adelaide Oval upgrade?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (15:04): It has been nice to get some questions. I have spent the last 12 months waiting for the member for Unley to ask questions about skills, ask questions about training. I have had more questions this question time than I have in the previous 12 months, and I welcome it. Thank you very much, member for Davenport. The state is undertaking one of the biggest infrastructure builds in the state's history. Of course we are going to increase the debt levels because we are rolling out the biggest infrastructure spend the state has ever undertaken.

MARATHON RESOURCES

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon) (15:05): Can the Minister for Mineral Resources Development tell the house what is happening with Marathon Resources' exploration licence in the Northern Flinders Ranges?

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Mineral Resources Development.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Mineral Resources Development, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Small Business, Minister for Correctional Services) (15:05): Thank you, Madam Speaker. First, I would like to pay tribute to the Hon. Paul Holloway in his role as mining minister. I have big shoes to fill, indeed; and I would like to thank the Premier for the opportunity to serve in this capacity.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, a big hole has been left in the ground.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sorry?

An honourable member: Don't worry about it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Carry on? Getting close to Valentine's Day. Getting geared up for those dates? Yes?

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister will answer the question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Following recent reports in the media, I think it is important that, as the new minister, I address the issue of Marathon Resources' exploration licence in the Northern Flinders Ranges. Contrary to some reports, Marathon's exploration licence has been renewed for a period of 12 months from yesterday. The company had originally sought a two-year renewal.

As Marathon remained compliant with the Mining Act 1971 and the conditions of its licence, the government was legally obliged to approve the application for renewal. The exploration licence renewal is, however, subject to even stricter operating conditions in the interests of transparency. The conditions placed on the licence have been made publicly available on the PIRSA website.

I am not going to list them all here, but, as part of the conditions, Marathon must minimise disturbance to the environment, obtain permission of the Director of Mines for new campsites or tracks or the upgrading of existing tracks and allow an inspector to examine the land at any reasonable time.

In addition, pastoral leaseholders must be consulted on Marathon's work program and must be advised of progress at monthly intervals. Importantly, the renewal has been granted without an automatic renewal as a condition of the licence. It is also important to note that what has been granted is an exploration licence. This does not confer any right to mine the area, member for MacKillop.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Bragg!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I was not the minister yesterday.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, under cover of not being the minister, that's right. In addition, Marathon has been advised that the government is considering a range of possible conservation options which may involve exclusion, or limiting of mining, member for MacKillop. The

Northern Flinders Ranges is an area of unique beauty, member for MacKillop, and the government is currently looking closely at all options for the future management of this region.

We will be considering all options, member for MacKillop, to preserve its iconic landscapes, biodiversity, wilderness, and cultural, scientific and tourism values.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I make it very clear, member for MacKillop, that I do not say one thing in private and another thing in public.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We are a government, Madam Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —that welcomes mining investment and the benefits that it brings to South Australians.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: But we are keenly aware—

The SPEAKER: Minister, order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —that it must be balanced with—

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister will be quiet

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —our commitment to environmental protection.

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear a word that the minister is saying and I am sure that no-one else can, either. You will be quiet and listen to him in silence. If you do not want to listen to him, you are quite free to leave the chamber.

Mr PENGILLY: Point of order, ma'am. I can hear him but I cannot understand him.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order and that was very frivolous. Minister, would you like to finish your answer because I am interested in this. It is an issue that a lot of people in the state are interested in.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, I agree. As I said before, I will be very clear. I will not be saying one thing in private and one thing in public. My position will be clear.

Mr Williams: Your point is?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You know exactly what my point is. We are a government that welcomes mining investment—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —and the benefits that it brings to South Australians.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I will. I will say it outside, no problem at all. I will say it everywhere I go. I will not say one thing in private about this issue and another thing in public.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I will be very clear about it, member for MacKillop, but we are keenly aware that it must be balanced with our commitment to the environment and our heritage protection.

ADELAIDE OVAL

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (15:10): My question is again to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer guarantee that the government will not contribute any more than \$535 million to the Adelaide Oval upgrade?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (15:10): That is what the government has indicated is the maximum level it will go to.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SECTOR

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:10): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. Could the minister tell the house what steps he has taken to advocate South Australia's position to the federal government about changes to commonwealth policy that affect our important international education sector?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (15:10): As a matter of fact, I can.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for MacKillop, be quiet.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I thank the honourable member and I would particularly like to thank the Premier for allowing me to continue in this absolutely critical portfolio for our state's future.

As members are no doubt aware, international education is one of South Australia's great recent success stories. Although we have recorded this remarkable success and gained a reputation for educational excellence worldwide, we are aware that we face challenges. The high Australian dollar, increased global competition, recent changes to visa policy for students entering Australia and the reduced skilled migration list are all factors that are making it difficult for students to study here in Australia.

In 2009, the commonwealth government made many changes to the requirements of international students, including financial requirements. Now prospective students from assessment level 4 countries must demonstrate that they can cover their tuition and living expenses for the entire time of their course. For a typical three-year bachelor's degree, this can be in excess of \$100,000.

Other changes include longer visa processing times and less generous post graduation work visas, compared to our competitors like the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. These changes have all had an effect on current and future enrolments for international students.

It is absolutely imperative that South Australia's voice is heard when it comes to anything that might have an effect on this valuable area that generates more than \$1 billion in revenue for our state—

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Norwood!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: —and supports more than 6,500 jobs. Last week I led a delegation of South Australian representatives of the international education sector to meet with the commonwealth Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, the Hon. Chris Bowen, to put forth our views and concerns to the changes that will have a negative impact on the international student market in South Australia and the good reputation of Australia as a study destination.

I was accompanied by Mr Ray Garrand, the Chief Executive of the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology; Professor Peter Hoj, the Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of South Australia (a very good man indeed and a very good vice-chancellor), representing the three universities of South Australia; Mr Gerald Lipman, the Chief Executive of the International College of Hotel Management and representative of the VET sector; and Ms Denise von Wald, the Chief Executive of Education Adelaide.

I can report to the house that minister Bowen was very receptive to the concerns of the South Australian delegation and has flagged his desire to address the needs of the international education sector within South Australia.

Further, my department and representatives of the education sector will be making a formal written submission to the Knight review, which is due to report to minister Bowen and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations, Senator Chris Evans, in the middle of this year. The review aims to improve the quality and integrity of the student visa program. What is disappointing is the way that the opposition spokesman for this area, the member for Unley, would

act to wreck an industry worth more than \$1 billion to the South Australian economy by misrepresenting the data of international students.

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! Point of order, member for MacKillop.

Mr WILLIAMS: The minister is imputing improper motive on an innocent member of the opposition.

The SPEAKER: I don't think that was too bad.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The first time the member for Unley has been called innocent by anyone.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer needs to be careful what he's saying.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Nonetheless, I'll accept it. I have great respect for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and if he thinks the member for Unley is innocent, then I will take his word for it, despite whatever personal misgivings I might have.

As of November 2010, South Australia had a growth rate of 1.8 per cent in comparison to Victoria's decrease of 3.6 per cent and, on average, a decrease of 1.6 per cent nationally. So, the rest of Australia has gone backwards and South Australia has improved the number of students, its growth, in this area. Clearly the member for Unley is a lot more interested in getting a quick media grab. He wants to advance his own leadership interests, more than he is interested in looking after an important sector of the South Australian economy, and the jobs of 6,500 South Australians who rely on this sector.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: As the Minister for Employment, Further Education and Training, I am working with our educational institutions to build this important export industry and to further enhance Adelaide's reputation as one of the world's great learning cities.

COMMUNITY HOSPITAL FUNDING

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (15:16): Will the Treasurer proceed with funding cuts to hospitals in Keith, Moonta, Ardrossan and Glenelg?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurana—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (15:17): I thank the member for Morphett for the question.

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Davenport!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I was looking for the ministerial statement that I was going to give after question time on the very subject, so I might take advantage of the question to provide the information to the house now.

We at SA Health have been working closely with privately-run community hospitals to review local financial and operational arrangements, and support the boards following changes to state government subsidies. I appreciate the community's commitment to these hospitals, and I take the opportunity to thank the board members for the constructive attitude they have shown in reviewing their long-term business plans to set up sustainable services for the future.

Shortly after the budget announcement, Allan Lehman, the Chief Executive Officer of the Glenelg Community Hospital, wrote to the Messenger Press and stated:

I can confirm that the hospital is funded and will continue to be funded via agreements with private health insurance providers.

He continued:

I would like to reassure the community that the hospital is profitable and we are strategically and operationally performing well.

So, that is the first one. When I met with representatives of the boards of the country community private hospitals in October, I offered the Department of Health's expertise in creating a long-term

business platform for each hospital. In this way, each community hospital could create a sustainable service. The then chief executive of the Department of Health, Dr Tony Sherbon, and the Chief Executive of Country Health SA, Adjunct Professor Belinda Moyes, met with the chief executive officers and board members of the three hospitals in November and in early December 2010.

Further, Adjunct Professor Moyes arranged for senior executives from within Country Health SA to visit each hospital. The Country Health SA working party began a partnership with the local hospitals and their boards to review local financial and operational arrangements. I am very pleased to announce today that savings opportunities, potential new commonwealth aged care residential income of substantial size, and revised models of care are being finalised, which will enable the continuation of services for Moonta Health and Aged Care Services and Ardrossan Community Hospital. In fact, both those boards have written to me along those lines. We have also identified savings and increased revenue opportunities for Keith and District Hospital that, if implemented, would make that hospital financially viable in the long term. We are waiting to hear back from them.

ACH Group, a South Australian independent aged care specialist organisation, was commissioned by Country Health SA to visit Keith and District Hospital and review the potential for increasing aged care revenue. ACH Group reported the potential for increasing revenue for commonwealth residential community aged care. The point is that a couple of these hospitals have aged-care facilities but they are not getting the proper funding from the commonwealth because they have not done the paperwork necessary to get that funding. There are substantial revenues available to them which we have helped them identify, and I have to say that they were very pleased by that assistance.

The sum of these initiatives, if achieved, is far in excess of the subsidy that has been removed. As a result of the work that health is doing with them, if they do what we have recommended, they will be better off than if the subsidies had been maintained. This makes them viable, sustainable hospitals without the need for state subsidies.

I also note for the record that Keith and District Hospital will continue to receive \$300,000 from the state government in recognition of the emergency services they provide in the region. So, by working closely with the hospital boards behind the scenes, with quiet discussion between Department of Health officers and the hospital boards, we have come up with some solutions which make those hospitals sustainable.

MURRAY RIVER

Mr SIBBONS (Mitchell) (15:21): My question is to the Minister for the River Murray. What significant risks to the health and sustainability of the River Murray in South Australia have arisen from recent pronouncements of federal Liberal Party policy?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (15:21): Thank you very much, and—

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order, Madam Speaker. I suggest that since the federal Liberal Party is in opposition this question is highly hypothetical and should be ruled out of order.

The SPEAKER: We will listen to how the minister responds to this.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: What we are trying to promote here in South Australia, of course, is a bipartisan approach with respect to the way this river ought to be handled. I would have thought that, at the very least—

Mrs REDMOND: Point of order, Madam Speaker. I am confused as to in what way this minister could possibly be responsible to this house for Liberal parliamentary policy federally.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am still listening to what the minister has to say about this to see whether it relates back to the question, because it is close. Minister.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. If you listen to the question—I know you do not listen very well—it is about the risks. The federal Liberal leader, Tony Abbott, has made some pronouncements today regarding Murray-Darling Basin policy—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: —and they pose extraordinary risks to the interests of all South Australians, including the opposition and the constituents they represent. It would be interesting to know what the state Liberals think, but they do not even want to hear what their federal leader has said or about Mr Abbott's view on this issue. Mr Abbott is recorded as saying:

The largest single saving is \$600 million in deferrals of water buybacks. We're not saying that the money should be spent, but we think that the money should be spent at a time when the Government is not faced with the sort of demands that it currently has.

He goes on, 'There is obviously an abundance of water around right now'—

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order, Madam Speaker. I come back to my earlier point of order. Now that you have had the opportunity to hear the minister, he is obviously answering a hypothetical question about what might happen if there was a change of government in Canberra, and that is not going to happen within the next two years.

The SPEAKER: Minister, be very careful.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, I will be extremely careful. Just to finish off, he goes on to say:

There is obviously an abundance of water around right now. That abundance is not going to go away quickly. We also have the Murray-Darling Basin plan in complete disarray. The buybacks should be part of a sensible plan; they shouldn't just be random ad hoc buybacks, so we are deferring in large measure what is left of the buyback money.

I will get to the point now, and this is the important point. The announcement by Mr Abbott today is simply a cynical exercise by the federal Liberals to use—

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order. Now the minister is debating his answer, and there is no doubt about that, Madam Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I will just remind the minister that he really is not responsible for Mr Abbott's comments. However, the wording of the question is—

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Point or order.

The SPEAKER: We have not answered the other one—'what significant risks to the health and sustainability of the River Murray'. I think that is an important issue for us to discuss. If it relates back to that, then I think the question is in order.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Point of order, Madam Speaker. By your own admission the minister is not responsible, and everything that flows to the answer comes from the point that he is not responsible for the policy they have used to advise the house. The question, with due respect, Madam Speaker, is out of order.

The SPEAKER: My interpretation of it is that he is talking about threats, risks, to the health and sustainability of the River Murray, so I would ask him to align his answer in that way—what could happen.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I will.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: Thank you, Madam Speaker, I will. The risk to South Australia is something—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: You're not interested in it, are you? Madam Speaker, this is the point. We simply cannot afford any further delays in delivering on the commitment to deliver a long-term fix for the River Murray. And—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: Well, we simply cannot afford any—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: Well, it's far better than what you did earlier, mate. Water buybacks—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: I know. Madam Speaker, water buybacks—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: —are an important part of addressing the overallocation of the Murray-Darling Basin waters and putting off this simply brings us closer to the next crisis of the system and condemns the Lower Lakes, the Coorong and the Murray Mouth to further degradation and further economic and social dislocation for those South Australia communities that rely on the river for their livelihoods. We need a bipartisan approach to this, but it appears most likely that this opposition is not interested in the welfare and the wellbeing of our river system.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. That was opinion, the last statement.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (15:27): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer overturn the former treasurer's decision to keep the new Royal Adelaide Hospital plans and costings hidden from South Australian taxpayers and allow scrutiny of the project by the Public Works Committee?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (15:28): I am happy to have a look at this issue. The important thing is this project, the building of the new Royal Adelaide Hospital, will be the most scrutinised project ever undertaken in South Australia's history. I am happy to have a look at it. It is not an intention on my part in any way to in any way frustrate proper parliamentary scrutiny of that project.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (15:28): As a supplementary question, how will it be the most scrutinised project if it does not go to the Public Works Committee?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (15:28): Because it is the most looked at project. It has been talked about. You would have to chop down a forest with the amount of print that there is on this, with the amount—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Look at them! Madam Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Madam Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There will now be order. Let the minister finish his answer.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Norwood! The Treasurer.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Madam Speaker, they are like the gibbons at the zoo. You just listen to them, they remind me of the gibbons at the zoo.

Mr PISONI: Point of order.

The SPEAKER: Point of order.

Mr PISONI: It is unparliamentary for members of parliament—

The SPEAKER: Yes, I will uphold that point of order. Sit down! Treasurer, can you finish your response?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The fact is this is the most—

Mr PISONI: I ask that it be withdrawn. The Treasurer has—

The SPEAKER: Treasurer, can you withdraw your remark?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Madam Speaker, if gibbons are insulted, I withdraw. The simple fact is that this is the most—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Minister for Transport!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: —scrutinised project in the state's history. It has been talked about, it has been endless—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Endless questions have been asked of both the Minister for Health and the former treasurer on this issue. I am sorry if the member for Morphett has fallen asleep for the last four or five years, or however long the project has been talked about. We have been talking about this project and it has been the subject of questions in this place for many, many years.

HEALTH PERFORMANCE COUNCIL

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (15:30): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: On 23 June 2008, South Australia became the first state in Australia to establish an independent body that regularly reviews the performance of its health system. The Health Performance Council, appointed under the Health Care Act 2008, provided their inaugural four-yearly report to me on the performance of the health system and the health status of South Australians on 24 December last year. This government has encouraged external review of South Australia's health system and its performance.

Understanding health systems and measuring performance is a challenging exercise, and I commend the Health Performance Council under its chair, Anne Dunn, on its work. Reviewing a system, particularly one as large and complex as the South Australian health system, will always identify areas that are performing well, areas that require improvement and areas where the reviewer and reviewed interpret the results differently. I am pleased that the report acknowledges the challenges faced by Australian and international health systems and recognises the complexities of these systems.

The Health Performance Council identifies areas where SA Health is performing well. The majority of South Australians, for example, are living longer, and the government is improving services in the South Australian community in the areas of mental health, health protection and promotion, illness prevention and early intervention, chronic disease management, improvements in the safety culture and the monitoring of adverse events. The report also identifies significant investment in capital projects and health service infrastructure and that SA Health is focused on achieving greater sustainability in the delivery of health services.

The report also identifies several areas where SA Health could improve, including the areas of Aboriginal health outcomes, community engagement and the evaluation of programs and outcomes. I have asked SA Health to review these areas and provide comprehensive advice about their intentions.

SA Health has provided an interim response addressing the report's 34 key findings. The response provides SA Health's position for each finding, either outlining the current undertakings and/or planned actions that will address the findings, or explaining the rationale for SA Health's decision not to pursue further action in this area. I have tabled both the Health Performance Council document and the initial response. I will table a final response in parliament before the end of June this year.

Together with the Health Performance Council, the government will continue to strive to improve health services and health outcomes for all South Australians. The report, Reflecting on Results: Review of the Public Health System's Performance for 2008-2010, and SA Health's interim response are an important part of this ongoing process. I commend the report to the house.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

MARINE PARKS

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (15:33): I rise today to talk about a very important, very hot, very topical issue, and that is the implementation of marine parks. Let me just say very clearly again that I am fully in favour of the concept of marine parks. I am on the record; I said that here in parliament on 26 October last year. I have said it many times, as long ago as probably 2½ years ago on radio. The concept of marine parks is very good and I would not actually mind if the whole coastline was a marine park, but we are at the pointy end of this. The key issue is the zoning: where the zones go and what are the exclusions. So we are at that stage now and we are finding out that this is actually a very difficult and very important issue.

Not surprisingly, there is a wide range of scientific opinions on this. It is not hard to find a marine biologist or some other scientist who will tell you that the way the government is progressing at the moment is just right for the environment, just right for society, etc. It is also very easy to find another scientist who will say that it is actually the wrong direction, it is not going to help and it will not achieve the desired outcomes. None of us here are marine biologists or scientists, so we are in the same situation as the normal person on the street, or on the beach or in their boat. Which scientist do you believe?

One recommendation that I have come across, though, which I find very important, is from Dr Melissa Nursey-Bray of Adelaide University, in her report in January this year entitled 'More than fishy business'. In her conclusion she says very clearly that these marine parks will only be successful if they are fully supported by local communities. Clearly, the government has failed this test already.

Community expressions of concern are running rife and rampant; they are coming from all over the place. I also say this is not just a country issue, not just a coastline issue; this is an all-of-South Australia issue. There are people from all over South Australia sending countless letters to the editor to newspapers, both rural and metropolitan. This is incredibly important to commercial fishers and recreational fishers, obviously, because people who will not be allowed to fish are the ones most immediately impacted upon.

The South Australian Sea Rescue Squadron has said that the implementation of the sanctuary zones as proposed by the government at the moment will actually be dangerous for people in their boats using public waters. There are public meetings all over the state rousing with concerns over this issue and, very importantly, it is not just about people who want to go fishing or want to use the waters directly themselves. This is a very important commercial issue. Fishing shops, tackle shops, boating shops, hospitality businesses, accommodation businesses, and tourism businesses of all sorts will potentially be very dreadfully impacted by this. I would say they would certainly be impacted by this if the sanctuary zones that the government has currently proposed stand.

Tens of millions of dollars at least will be taken out of regional and coastal communities. The cost of seafood will go up, as prominent South Australian Michael Angelakis has said, and we will also have increased imports. I am very concerned about what I see as overzealous environmental protection. Let me state again that I am very supportive of the concept of marine parks; it is where the zones go that counts.

Locking South Australians out of the coastline and the water that belongs to them is a very serious issue. I absolutely hate the idea that the government will come along and just say, 'You can go here. You can't go here. You can do this. You can't do that,' and then suddenly people stop having to think for themselves. Good, honest South Australians, recreational fishermen, commercial fishermen, the average family wanting to go to the beach, have their environmental responsibility and their desire to do the right thing taken away from them.

It seems that approximately 20 per cent of the upper Spencer Gulf is going to be dedicated to sanctuary zones. There was a commitment that it would be approximately 10 per cent across all the waters, but 20 per cent in the upper Spencer Gulf is completely unacceptable. I urge the government finally to enter genuine and sincere consultation with people of the upper Spencer Gulf, the fishing industry and people all over this state on this incredibly important issue. What is next? If we keep marching along this road, before you know it people will have to pay to go to the beach.

Time expired.

VIETNAMESE FARMERS' ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (15:38): I rise today to speak about the Vietnamese Farmers' Association New Year's celebration, which I recently attended in late January at the Virginia Community Centre in my electorate. Traditionally, it is an annual event, and I am pleased to have been able to attend for a second time. There were about 400 people in attendance. I was pleased to enjoy the evening with Mr Hieu Van Le, the Lieutenant Governor of South Australia and Chairman of the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, and his wife; the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Grace Portolesi; and the Hon. Jack Snelling, our new Treasurer.

Also in attendance was the new Mayor of the City of Playford, the good Glenn Docherty; Mr Nguyen Thanh Phu, the President of the Vietnamese Farmers' Association of South Australia; Mr Phung Phuong Duy, Chairman of the Organising Committee for the event; and the South Australian President of the Hoa Hao Buddhist Congregation, who I have spoken of in this place before.

The annual event, which brings together members of the Vietnamese community, is very important. In this area, which is dominated by the fruit and vegetable growing areas of the northern plains, the people in my electorate share this event and enjoy attending it. This year they were celebrating the arrival of the Vietnamese Year of the Cat, which is different from the 2011 Chinese Year of the Rabbit, which commenced over the weekend.

During the ceremony, minister Portolesi, in the spirit of 'li xi' (which brings good luck through giving money), presented the Vietnamese community and the farmers' association with a \$3,000 cheque as a grant made towards the cost of the festival under the Multicultural Grants Scheme. This grant brings to more than \$20,000 funds provided to the association through the Multicultural Grants Scheme since 2002.

This year, the Tet Nguyen Dan (or simply Tet) Festival ushers in the Asian spring, and, despite early flooding in October and November, many farmers this year have enjoyed a very profitable year, and they are looking very favourably towards the 2011 farming year. Unfortunately, the recent floods in Queensland and Victoria, whilst they have been bad for those states, may present a good opportunity for South Australian growers to increase their profit margins with respect to cucumbers and the other vegetables they sell to the market because of the flood damage.

The Vietnamese community has been very generous in its support of the Queensland Flood Appeal in South Australia under the leadership of Mr Tran Cong and some of the Vietnamese farmers in Virginia, and together they have raised about \$35,000 for people in the other states who have been affected by flooding.

The Vietnamese Farmers' Association of South Australia was established in 1991 to respond to the needs of the Vietnamese farming community, and the association has around 270 members in the Virginia and wider northern plains area. Membership is on a family basis, so the number of individuals in this association is actually much higher than the 270 I mentioned earlier.

They have been working very hard on fundraising for a number of years towards the creation of a Vietnamese cultural centre, which will be near the Virginia Horticultural Centre in the main street of Virginia. The first building is about to commence very shortly, and they have worked

very hard to achieve this. It is estimated that the building will be built on about 6,000 square metres of association land and will host major functions and regular get-togethers for local farmers. The association also hopes that this will include memorials to those lost in the Vietnam War and possibly house special guests and visitors who come to the northern plains of Adelaide to visit Vietnamese relatives, family and other dignitaries of the area.

Recently, their fundraising activities have been dedicated to the project, and over the forthcoming years they will continue to fund this project. Besides holding fundraising events, such as concerts and dinner dances, they also receive the support of many local businesses. Together with the federal government support secured via the local member, Nick Champion MP (the federal member for Wakefield), the farmers have secured some additional federal funding to assist in this project.

In conclusion, I would like to praise the Vietnamese Farmers' Association of SA for their tireless fundraising efforts towards furthering the strong relationship with the Vietnamese culture and the South Australian community, particularly on the northern plains of Adelaide; and also their generosity with the recent flood donations they have made to those people who have been affected in Queensland and Victoria.

RANN GOVERNMENT

Mr VENNING (Schubert) (15:43): I have been in this place for a long time but I have never experienced or seen firsthand the turmoil inside a ruling state Labor government as we have seen in the last week or so. People are not happy with the performance of this Rann Labor government, especially the electorate at large, including the trade unions. The factional bosses have brought about changes—desperately trying to turn Labor's fortunes around—and especially the bad policies that it has implemented.

I congratulate the Hon. John Rau on his elevation to the Deputy Premier's position. 'At last' we can say. He has been a man of talent. We wondered why he languished on the backbench for so long. He is now the premier in waiting. Or will it be the Hon. Jay Weatherill? He does have talent as well. We know that, but he does not have the factional numbers to enable him to be promoted. But, John, be aware, be alert—I understand he's good at leapfrog.

I also congratulate the Hon. Jack Snelling on his election as Treasurer, and also the Hon. Tom Kenyon—I will watch his progress with interest. To the member for Light, Mr Tony Piccolo, who is here, I give my commiserations. I do not think it is a suitable reward for winning a safe seat and ten months is not long to be in the position of chairman of the Public Works Committee. I also note the promotion of Ms Leesa Vlahos, the member for Taylor, and I certainly wish her well in that position. Being chairman of the Public Works Committee is a very critical job, and we will watch that with interest.

I want to make special mention of the leaving from the ministry of one of its most capable, respectable, professional and cooperative ministers. I am very sad that the Hon. Paul Holloway has thought it necessary to resign. I am curious to know why the leadership allowed this. He should have been asked to stay there until at least six months before the election. I pay a tribute to Paul's work, especially in the planning and mines portfolios. He made the toughest jobs look easy, and I thank him personally for what he delivered for the state, for the people of Schubert and for me. And to think he went to make way for the Hon. Bernie Finnigan. I will never speak ill of any parliamentary colleague, but I very much doubt whether he could hold a candle to the Hon. Paul Holloway.

Between Bernie and Gail, I know my upper house colleagues will welcome the change it really does highlight. In choosing the best people to run the state we leave it to backroom factional bosses to flout their power and promote their factional mates. I also commiserate with and thank the Hon. Kevin Foley. I have known him a long time and wish him well in the future.

I very much welcome today the Minister for Health at last tabling the 'Outline Business Case Barossa Health Service Country Health SA, 7 October 2010'. I am very pleased that after one year and seven months we at last now have this document tabled and we can all now see it, and actions will be taken. I now will invite the minister and others to address this, and invite him to the valley to meet all the stakeholders, and hopefully this project will feature in the next state budget.

I now want to talk about the state economy in general. The results are in, and for the second year in a row South Australia has been ranked as having the highest taxes in the nation. Tax revenue has increased 75 per cent since this government came to office in 2002. The Institute

of Public Affairs State Business Tax Calculator calculates the level of state and territory governments taxes on business. Their most recent report, released on 10th of January, shows that South Australians pay more than double the state and territory average on land tax. Land tax revenue has quadrupled under the Rann Labor Government and we are all feeling the pain.

South Australia's poor ranking somehow shows how out of touch and arrogant the Rann government has become. They released a 'slash and burn' budget in September last year, cutting small funding commitments, such as \$300,000 to the Keith Hospital—which will ensure its closure—in an effort to find savings, and now it has become evident that we are still the highest taxed state or territory in the nation.

What is the Rann Labor Government doing with all the revenue they have at their disposal? They are overspending and wasting money and paying the cost of debt—interest. South Australians are angry, and rightly so, that in the midst of all these cuts they have had to deal with the Minister for Transport is having his office remodelled the cost of \$490,000, and the Premier's department has spent nearly \$250,000 remodelling the CEO's office in the last two years. The Premier's department has also grown by almost 500 staff since 2005, increasing from 630 full-time positions to 1,158. Wow, that is an absolute disgrace.

Time expired.

WOMEN IN SPORT

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:48): Raising the participation and profile of women in sport is an important challenge for governments at all levels. Only 53 per cent of 14 year old girls and 30 per cent of women over 65 participate in organised sport. Only 13 per cent of executive positions in the top 40 sporting organisations are filled by women. Those figures are of course not reflected in calisthenics, the wonderful sport for women and girls with which I have enjoyed a long association.

For a country that loves to celebrate our sporting achievements, it is fundamental that we give all Australians recognition of achievement, and sporting heroes to inspire them. Women have been sidelined and marginalised in Australian sport for far too long. This has been widely acknowledged, including via a Senate committee report on women in sport and recreation in Australia, which was delivered under the Howard government but never responded to until now under the current federal Labor government.

In conjunction with the Office for Women, the Australian Sports Commission provides funding through the 'Sports Leadership Grants for Women' program in five key areas. These are: High performance coaching and officiating; Indigenous women; Women in disability sport; Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and Women in general sports leadership.

The federal government recently funded research into the content and quality of women's sport coverage, which found coverage for women in sport makes up 9 per cent of all sports coverage in Australian television and news current affairs, compared to male sport, with the staggering figure of 81 per cent. Everyone deserves the opportunity to participate in sport and to be recognised for their achievements. In May of 2010 at the Twenty20 World Cup cricket final in Barbados, the loss by the Australian men's team generated far more media coverage than the women's thrilling victory over New Zealand, and that is just one example of under-representation of women in sports reporting.

Coverage of women's sport is at least overwhelmingly positive, far more so than men's sport, though this probably attributable, in part, to the fact that, if you are a woman, you pretty much have to win to have any chance of making the news, whereas male sports will often be covered just for taking place. Men receive more negative press for questionable off-field behaviour, in part because they have a higher profile and are therefore considered public role models in greater numbers. Many commentators have drawn a link between violence against women by sportsmen and the lack of women in visible positions of sports leadership and governance.

Interestingly, just over 20 per cent of national sport organisations have no women director at all. Those organisations include rugby league, rugby union and Cricket Australia. So, as one woman wryly noted, there is also a 'grass' ceiling. At the recent Beijing Olympics women made up 45 per cent of the Australian team and won more than half the gold medals. I refer to a recent press release from the federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner that says:

The achievements of sportswomen are often invisible. On the data available, the coverage of women's sport accounts for just 2 per cent of total sports broadcasting on television, 1.4 per cent on radio and 10.7 per cent of

total sports reporting in newspapers...when the Associated Press named its top 10 female athletes of 2009, two were racehorses...women's participation in sport reflects the issues women face more broadly in society. When we talk about women in sport we often raise the same issues as when we talk about women in the workplace: pay equity; women in leadership positions; discrimination on the grounds of sex; the celebration of a male ideal and the marginalisation of women as the physically weaker and the caring sex.

I would like to put on the record the recent outstanding achievements of some of our state's elite sportswomen. South Australian all-rounder Shelley Nitschke has become the first cricketer to be named Australia's women's international player of the year three consecutive times, recently receiving the award in Melbourne.

It continued Shelley's domination of the award by an elite few, with only four different winners in what is now the 10-year-old history of the honour. Fellow all-rounder Lisa Sthalekar, who claimed the top prize in 2007 and 2008, was runner-up to Nitschke for a third straight year, with Karen Rolton and Cathryn Fitzpatrick the other previous winners. Nitschke also won the International Cricket Council's women's player of the year last year and helped Australia win the world Twenty20 title and reclaim the Ashes. The left-handed batter and left-arm finger spinner polled 76 votes ahead of Sthalekar with 50 and Ellyse Perry on 40. The modest Nitschke amassed 760 runs and an average of 30.4 with the bat, whilst also taking 34 wickets at 17.68, during her 26 appearances for the Southern Stars in the past 12 months.

South Australia has recently returned to Adelaide with the No. 1 track cycling state team in the nation. For the second successive year, the Rendition Homes state team was crowned numero uno, winning the Robina Joy trophy and the Southcott Cup. The team was led by senior coach Tim Decker, with the assistance of David Short and Ben Cook, and I am told the management team was the best in years. Of the 24 medals won, 12 were won by women, and of the 11 gold medals, six were won by women, which is 50 per cent of all the awards won.

Time expired.

WESTERN MOUNT LOFTY RANGES WATER ALLOCATION PLAN

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (15:53): I draw the house's attention to what is going on at the moment in relation to the western Mount Lofty water allocation plan. It is being conducted by the Adelaide Hills and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board. It is interesting that—and I say good on him—Mr Leon Byner of FIVEaa has picked up on this matter and has mercilessly pursued the subject and certain officers that he believes are not acting appropriately.

I am appreciative of the fact that the Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water, etc., chose to meet with me and a deputation of farmers from the Parawa area. Farmers—and I am talking about full-time farmers who provide food and fibre to the world—are greatly concerned by the possible ramifications of some of the ideas that have been floated by this plan.

The members for Heysen, Bragg, Davenport, Kavel and me as the member for Finniss are all getting lobbied heavily by our communities regarding the possible impact. I would argue most stridently that we look after our water resources. That has never been in question. However, the fact of the matter is that, if you live on the land and work with the land—and I am sure that various ministers in this place have been out and about and know the passion that farmers feel for the land—you are not going to do anything stupid to put your water in jeopardy. It just does not work like that.

In my own area, we value water highly and we manage it appropriately. It is simply not good enough to frighten the daylight out of the rural community by putting up preposterous plans in some cases which do not take into account the local geography and the fact that the rainfall pattern has changed, even within a kilometre.

I have a constituent at Mount Alma who has a large area of land—probably one of the largest farms up on those high ranges on the southern Fleurieu, off Inman Valley. He spoke to me at length just recently about his concerns, because his rainfall varies from 40 inches in the old terms back to about 20 inches within two kilometres. The blanket conditions they want to impose is simply just not feasible; it is totally ridiculous. He has put forward his concerns. He is a highly active member of the rural community, and he will be expressing his concerns in a submission. I met him again on the side of the road a couple of weeks ago and he again expressed his concerns.

It is the future of agriculture—in this particular case, it is my electorate of Finniss that is at risk here—and it is the future of the dairy industry, as well as the meat industry and all types of

other industries, but particularly those two. The farmers in those industries are doing it tough enough—particularly the dairy industry—without having a vast imposition put on them under these plans.

On top of that, in the Fleurieu area, we have the Fleurieu swamps which come under the EBPC Act, which is a commonwealth act. They need to be able to put in dams. They do not need conditions that are too stringent. I know of one operator who wants to fill in six dams and put in one of a decent size near the Fleurieu swamp, but it looks like the overbearing bureaucracy will prevent him from doing that. He employs 16 people. Now, he will downsize his operation and possibly go to beef rather than dairy, and that will mean jobs going.

I say to the government: we need to get this right. We have no argument with proper planning for water, but I hope the minister will take charge of this and ensure that we get a sensible outcome, because we have no underground water on the southern Fleurieu. We have underground water further north, we have all sorts of different issues with all different types of water, and one blanket cover does not fit all. That is the important issue. So, I urge the government to take note.

I note that the minister has retained his portfolio, and I just hope that, along with the marine parks debacle—and we will come to that later—he will get hold of this and do something sensible. I urge the government to look at it sensibly.

NAEVUS SUPPORT AUSTRALIA

Mr SIBBONS (Mitchell) (15:58): I would first like to acknowledge the people of the eastern part of our country who have gone through significant and horrific events. We have seen 75 per cent of Queensland under water—it is totally amazing—then be hit by a cyclone. They have been truly horrible events for those people, but I have to say that it does bring out the best in people and it also brings out the worst in people. I just want to touch on some of the good.

My office was a drop-off point for the Shoebox of Love, and there were well over 100 boxes brought in by many people from around the electorate. I would certainly like to thank the organisers and also the wonderful people who donated to help fellow Australians in a time of real need. It is great to see the Australian spirit well and truly alive in Mitchell.

I would also like to touch on another great thing that occurred, which is very significant in my life. Back in 2001 my daughter Danielle was born with a very rare congenital disorder. Back in those days, there was really no support group for this condition, which is melanocytic naevus, but it was congenital. It affects one in 200,000 people in this form.

Back in those days, as I mentioned earlier, there was no support group, and we struggled to find information about what the condition is, what is the prognosis, how will she go through her life, and, in fact, will she continue to have a healthy life. One of the great journeys that we went on was to get in touch and find, through the wonderful world of the web, a group in America, and they indicated to us that there are other people in Australia, which we thought was totally amazing.

Anyway, in 2002 my wife and I set up Naevus Support Australia, a web-based support group for Australians, New Zealanders and those in Asia. We had our first conference in Adelaide in 2004. At that time we had 15 families attend, which was quite amazing. A lot of tears were shed, a lot of hugging, and a lot of relief.

Since then, we have had conferences in Melbourne in 2006, in 2008 we had a conference in Sydney, and in January this year we came back to Adelaide and had our fourth conference. In the conference we had 35 families attending; over 90-odd people attended the conference. Families came from all around Australia to attend the conference, and the conference was for three days. We all stayed at the Marion Caravan Park, which is just outside of my electorate of Mitchell—so we tried to keep as much dough, as close as we could, in the electorate. I have got to say that the caravan park was absolutely sensational.

We had the use of the Flinders Medical Centre auditorium, we used that for a day session with South Australia's leading specialists, dermatologists, social workers and psychologists, which was fantastic for all the participants. We also toured around Adelaide, and we took everybody down to the Port River along the Dolphin Cruise, which was absolutely wonderful as well. Then we went to the Adelaide Zoo to see the new pandas, and everybody enjoyed the experience. We also got the opportunity to have a tour around our great state, which many really enjoyed.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank everybody who supported us at Naevus Support, and I would also like to thank my wife, Michelle, my mother-in-law Marilyn and my father-

in-law Geoff and all my family for their assistance in putting the conference together here in Adelaide. I look forward to the next conference in another two years' time to share further experiences with our naevus family.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (16:04): I advise that I have received the resignations of Mr Piccolo, member for Light, the Hon. Tom Kenyon, member for Newland, and Mrs Vlahos, member for Taylor, from the Economic and Finance Committee.

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs) (16:28): I move:

That Mr Wright, member for Lee, Mr Odenwalder, member for Little Para, and Mrs Geraghty, member for Torrens, be appointed to the Economic and Finance Committee.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (16:04): I advise that I have received the resignations of Mr Piccolo, member for Light, and Mr Odenwalder, member for Little Para, from the Public Works Committee.

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs) (16:04): I move:

That Mrs Vlahos, member for Taylor, and Mr Wright, member for Lee, be appointed to the Public Works Committee.

Motion carried.

TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (16:05): I rise to speak on the Training and Skills Development (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill. This bill essentially seeks to protect the interests of foreign and local students and, apparently, to ensure a satisfactory standard for vocational education through increased powers to the minister and commission and through increased penalties for noncompliance.

Very briefly, the history of this matter is that in 2009 there was a COAG agreement that we have a national approach to our VET regulation. I will refer to that a little later, but suffice to say it seems all the wisdom is in Canberra—although horse flu, coming into Australia under the supervision of AQIS, should tell us that that is not necessarily reliable (namely, that commonwealth departments do it better). There had been general agreement that there be a national regulator, so on 26 November 2010 federal bills were introduced to facilitate that.

What is extraordinary is that this bill was introduced a couple of days beforehand. The minister would have well known that the federal process was underway, that in fact a bill was about to be introduced in the federal parliament to implement what had been an agreement around the country. What is concerning is that, although the McCann report had been prepared subsequent to the humiliating act of the government in exposing the Adelaide Pacific International College for conducting its operations in a manner that ultimately required it to be closed down mid-last year, when they had this inquiry, the minister, in the full knowledge that the federal program, which was supposed to give us a better system, was underway, then saw fit to rush in the state legislation.

That was necessary to effectively restore confidence and ensure there was no negative impact on our international student situation (and, again, I will come to that in a moment). Remember, this bill substantially increases penalties—in fact, it doubles a number of them—and expands powers, giving extra ministerial powers and the like, to be able to effectively scrutinise and regulate the industry.

It is fair to say that vocational training and higher education have always had a national perspective and involvement in regulation of the industry generally. The international student sector, which accounts for more than 6,500 local jobs in this state, is the state's largest service sector export and the fourth largest overall export, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's most recent financial year estimates. There were only three exports that stood ahead

of international education. International students pay full fees for all their courses; they are not subsidised by government.

This is under the mandated federal legislation, under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act, which is administered by Australian Education International, and the AEI is the international arm of the federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. So, we have a structure at present that sets a number of quality standards, which are national, and which apply to us, and which give the state government, through its state department, the responsibility and power to act and to regulate, and, where appropriate, impose conditions, and, where appropriate, suspend, and, where appropriate, shut down completely.

It is not as though there have not been circumstances in this state where that has happened before. I am not here to make any comment specifically about what happened with Adelaide Pacific International College but, suffice to say, from the information that has been provided to us, this was a dodgy operation and one on which the minister's department ultimately acted and probably made the right decisions in the end.

This has happened before. In fact, I notice a former minister for higher education is present. I formerly shadowed this area of responsibility when I first came into the parliament, and I can recall an occasion when she, too, was called upon to make some decisions, quickly, about the alleged conduct of a private provider in South Australia. She did so, following the proper courses, and I think it was universally accepted, certainly on our side of politics, that that was a proper decision that she made when she ultimately acted to not just suspend but to deregulate the operator. That provider was shut down, and in fact my recollection is that she did at the time ensure that those current students enrolled in that provider's service were able to complete their education through other services which her department provided.

She did it properly, and she did it within the current laws, and she did it in a manner which, I think, would behave the current minister to have followed. He does not need Warren McCann, he does not need this act, to have acted in a circumstance to protect us against the conduct of a private operator, who at any time, after following the proper courses, a minister can shut down. It does not stop the minister making a commitment at any time, and in those circumstances he or she will make provision to ensure that the students, or those about to enrol in a service that has operated, are properly provided for and accommodated in other education facilities.

Again, if I recall correctly, under our current law, the current minister did indicate to this parliament when he reported on this matter that that is exactly what he would do to make sure that they were not at a loss. So introducing legal capacities or financial support or measures by which students who might be enrolled and agreed by the practices that are no longer acceptable or of a quality standard are window dressing for what is required to be done here.

What this bill is really about, is not rushing in to make it look like South Australia is actually jumping before the COAG agreement and the federal structure implementation—although it raises some questions about why the minister is not over there saying: 'Look, we have a problem in South Australia. I would like to strengthen up a few things, so can you bring the progress of this matter federally forward a little bit quicker, if this is going to be such a wonderful panacea of resolution and protection to South Australia that we transfer it to a federal regulator and we need to appoint it.'

I say that the law is there; it is able to be acted upon. The humiliation and embarrassment of this particular college operating, quite possibly for longer but exposed under the regime at this point, is one which has prompted this, but this is not the answer. Notwithstanding statements by the minister to this house that the wonderful business of international education in this state is humming along beautifully the issue here has been exposed. That is not his fault personally, because the international student market where people pay fully for their students to travel to another destination in the world has been hit by a number of factors. The United States, when the World Trade Centre towers exploded, not surprisingly took a big hit on their international student market from England and Europe at the time.

Australia, with the exchange rates and the more fragile economic circumstances of countries of origin, particularly in Europe through the global financial crisis, obviously has an impact on the capacity for those countries. In our instance, we are affected by the domestic circumstances that occur in countries that provide us with our greatest number of students, and they are China, India, Malaysia, Korea, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and Indonesia in that order. What is important to appreciate here is that very substantially our source market for

international students is China, India, Malaysia and Korea. Vietnam is improving. But what the minister continues to tell us in the parliament is that everything is humming along beautifully.

In fact, late last year we had a magnificent presentation from him that the universities were confident in their continued growth of the numbers of students coming and that, while there had been some publicity around the income of universities across the country having their income threatened by a demise in university enrolments of international students, he was here to give us comfort and everything was going swimmingly.

But the reality is that, except for having enrolments prescribed as what would be coming up for 2009-10, if he looked at 2011, he would have reported to this parliament that we are in potential trouble. Our major institutions are facing a very difficult period in securing and maintaining the high level of dependency they have on the income from international students. Already last year we saw a 15 per cent drop in enrolments for 2011 in one of our major universities here in South Australia. The University of Adelaide, which I will mention for this purpose, has confirmed to me in writing that while they have been encouraged by their past position and their share of the market they have budgeted this year for 2011:

For prudential reasons, the University's Budget for next year has been based on the assumption that there will be a small drop in our international numbers next year.

They know what the real position is, and the real question is: why is this happening? Obviously international events, events that occur in countries of origin and the exchange rate, which is very important, have an effect given the strength of the Australian dollar.

But I thought the minister's statement today during question time was rather curious seeing we are debating this bill on which he tried to defend the presentation made by the shadow minister. It is actually very serious that the decisions in 2009 of the Rudd (then Gillard) government changed the rules in respect of access of students into our country. International students in most other countries—US, UK, New Zealand, etc.—paid a bond of about \$20,000.

We had of \$25,000 bond. That is money you have to pay upfront in an account to secure the period of time you are going to be here to cover fees, etc. The cost was about \$550 and it took about 90 days, I am told, to process an application. This was when Prime Minister Gillard was one of the ministers in charge of education. We have a situation now where the application time for a student is 12 to 24 months, with a higher level of integrity checks on these students.

There are fees now which require not just \$100,000 but, in some instances, \$144,000 that must be secured in a bond before they even get to open the door; and the fees, of course, are totally out of proportion relative to other countries. Is it any wonder that students who have all the world to choose are choosing educational institutions which are quicker, cheaper and which have far fewer hurdles to jump over? That is obvious.

Denise von Wald came to visit me last year, because I requested a briefing on other matters, which she outlined as CEO of Education Adelaide, a fine cooperative group between local and state governments and the Adelaide City Council particularly. I think she has been a fine activist and advocate for higher education, particularly developing the international market, and she was able to confirm that these impediments at the federal government level were a serious impact.

She did not have to say that; it was pretty obvious in the national press the fear and worry of other universities. But, to her credit, she agreed that one of the important things to do was to get over there (this is last year) to Canberra and sort this out. Minister Evans, I think, is partially responsible for some of this. The immigration decisions are, of course, the responsibility of minister Chris Bowen. Both ministers have areas of responsibility which are having a direct impact on the decisions they have either made or maintained.

The minister told us today what he has done about it. He has had a meeting with a delegation from South Australia—apparently in this last month. That is good; that is a good start. But what he told us today is that the minister responsible has 'flagged his desire to consider'. Big deal! Let's be real here. We must have some action on this, not 'flagged his desire to consider'. What piffle. This is not going to resolve our problem. Our problem is serious, it is real and it is obvious.

If the minister were serious about reassuring the international student market, particularly the parents, he would be making sure that he actually meets not just with the South Australian delegation but all of the representatives of higher education in this country on the doorstep of the

Prime Minister and/or her delegates in relation to these decisions and makes this happen. It is completely unacceptable.

Even the Premier (who used to march in here every day when John Howard was prime minister) would say, 'I've written a letter to the Prime Minister,' about everything—the River Murray, you name it. Everything was going to be fixed by a letter, of course. But at least he had written to him. Four months after I get this advice of the importance of doing this, the minister finally goes and has a talk to one of the federal ministers, and what does he get? He gets a 'flagged his desire to consider'. Really!

We are never going to resolve this problem. This bill will not resolve this problem. This is a serious matter. This is a major industry in this state. It is a very considerable financial aspect for the viability of the institutions of this state—not just the universities and the VET schools and the like but also it flows onto the commitments that parents make when they bring or send their children here for an education in our public or private high school sector, and that is significant.

We want them to go onto institutions here. We want them to undertake study in areas of skills that we might need, etc., or return to their country of origin to provide those services in their own economies and communities. But the health of our community, the financial viability of our economy and, really, the future of our state relies on these valuable industries, and to serve us up this piece of legislation instead of making sure that the federal changes happen in a hurry and remedy the very faults that are currently an impediment to the advancement of this industry and the viability of our institutions is what has to happen, not this bill.

Mr MARSHALL (Norwood) (16:24): It is my great pleasure to rise in the house today and speak on the Training and Skills Development (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill. I certainly support the Liberal Party's position on this bill, which is to ultimately support the bill. However, I think it is important to raise a number of issues regarding this government's performance in the area of vocational education and training.

This is most pertinent on the first sitting day for a very long period of time. We know this government has no interest in any form of scrutiny in the parliament. In fact, in the past 15 months we have had 31 days of question time, and the very first day back after a very long break, the government get to ask themselves a series of Dorothy Dixers. What is one of the very first questions they ask themselves to try and boast to the assembled media that are here on this important day of the opening of the new parliamentary year? They ask about their government's performance in the area of vocational education and training. What a scam! What a scam this is.

We heard the minister for vocational educational and training, the newly-anointed Treasurer for South Australia, talk about the importance of this very special sector in South Australia and, indeed, boast about his performance and this government's performance in this area since they came to power. Well, let me tell you tell you the facts.

The simple facts of the matter are that when this government came to power they put a strategic objective in place, and that objective was to double South Australia's percentage of the national market for international students. How have they gone? Do you know, they do not like that metric that they set for themselves. In fact, in their review at the moment of the state strategic plan they are looking to change that. Why are they looking to change that? Because they failed; it is as simple as that. They have failed.

South Australia has 5.4 per cent of the national share of international students. The way that this government talks, you might think that they have 10, 20 or 30 per cent of this really important growing industry in Australia. No, 5.4 per cent. Correct me if I am wrong, but that is actually smaller than our pro rata entitlements in South Australia. So, far from being a shining light in this area, we are the proverbial dunce in the class in terms of attracting international students to this state.

'Why is this the case?' you may ask yourself. The members for Bragg and Unley have already spoken a lot about vocational education and training, but I put it to you like this: this state government has finite resources. We have heard all about those lately; they have been cutting everything left, right and centre. So, we have got finite resources, but how do we apply those finite resources in terms of vocational educational and training? We basically spend our money on a range of our Premier's pet projects.

Rather than putting money into established, well-regarded international institutions, based and domiciled here, rooted here in South Australia, what do they do? The Premier, as per usual,

loves to jet around the world, shake hands with people from other lands, and he does a deal and spends our money on Carnegie Mellon, Cranfield and University College London. The member for Unley has been very effective as a shadow minister in this area and has exposed the complete and utter bankruptcy of the government and their performance in this area.

There is no doubt that this industry does face some challenges, and we do commend this bill for addressing some of those problems that are facing our industry. There is no doubt that the industry is facing some troubles, but when we look at this state government's performance we do not look at it in absolute terms, because of a declining market and \$100,000 per student, having to put their money up-front, as the minister rattled on about in the house today; we look at it in terms of how we perform relative to every other state that has that Australian dollar and every other state that has those exact same conditions.

How do we go? It is a failure: 5.4 per cent of the national market. It is a complete and utter failure by this government. The government should certainly look at how they spend their finite resources, and stop waxing lyrical and boasting about their performance in this area and start telling us the facts.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (16:30): Many issues were raised by members of the opposition. Unfortunately, very few of them have anything to do with the bill before us. Nonetheless, in the spirit of fraternity and bipartisanship, I will try and address some of the issues which they have raised. If you might indulge me, ma'am, for straying away from the bill, because some of these issues are not actually covered in the bill. Can I say at the outset, what this bill seeks to do is to strengthen the consumer protection features of the bill, to make sure that students in colleges can be reassured of the quality of the education that they are getting, and to enable them to have redress should a college not be meeting the standards that are set.

If I might address the remarks that have been made about international student numbers in South Australia: the fact is that, as I said during question time, compared to what is happening interstate, our international student numbers have been remarkably resilient which, given all the challenges that we face in this area—challenges because of the changed visa arrangements for students who want to come here; the strength of the Australian dollar; and visa turnaround times, which is another considerable obstacle to overseas students, particularly when you compare Australia to our international competitors—those factors make the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada very attractive to international students who are considering where to undertake their education.

The collapse of the Adelaide Pacific International College, I guess, was what prompted me to ask Warren McCann to undertake a review in the way that we regulate these private VET training providers—in fact, not just private VET training providers because these regulations cover TAFE, as well. What came out of APIC, and the lesson that we learnt, was how difficult the current legislative provisions made it for the regulator to quickly intervene in a timely way. There were significant delays of 28 days, from memory, you had to give notice, and you had to give the training provider an opportunity to respond. It made it very difficult for the regulator to intervene to take action against the college in a timely way, and that is what we are trying to address through this bill, as well as the many other provisions.

When this legislation was originally introduced, the private VET market was very, very different from what it is now. It has changed an enormous amount in those few years. It is now a much more fluid market, there are far more entrants so there are far more private VET providers, and they tend to be much smaller organisations than perhaps you would have expected in the past when this legislation was first drafted. So, that is why we are proposing changes to the legislation to really bring the legislation up to date, to enable it to give the regulator the powers that the regulator needs to be able to intervene in a timely manner, and with appropriate penalties as well. That is another important feature of the bill.

I think the member for Unley raised a question about whether, as a result of investigations with APIC, matters had been referred to the police and whether that had been referred to the department of immigration. That is the case, and I mentioned that in a ministerial statement last year, that matters had been referred to both the police and to the federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

The issue raised about the national regulator, and questions about why are we doing this when we are moving towards a national regulator are good questions. The reason why I felt it

important that we move quickly was because, particularly at the time, there was uncertainty about the national regulator, and we were still waiting on New South Wales to pass its referral legislation which will be the trigger for the national legislation to be able to come into effect. That had not happened at that stage. I did not want to sit on my hands because, should we face similar difficulties with other training providers that we did with APIC, the opposition would quite rightly be getting up in question time, asking me question after question about what I was doing.

If I simply said, 'Well, I'm not doing anything because I'm waiting for the national regulator,' I would quite rightly be condemned by the opposition and the public. I was not prepared to sit on my hands and wait for the national regulator. It was important that we took action quickly and introduced this legislation as quickly as we could, and that we brought that legislation up to date so we could deal with the new—I hate the word—paradigm in the vocational training sector in South Australia.

The other point to make about the national regulator is that it actually provides a point of negotiation with the federal government. So, there is the capacity for the provisions in this bill to actually sit side by side. They will not necessarily be completely trumped by the national legislation. There is the possibility there, subject to negotiation with the commonwealth, for some of these provisions to sit side by side with the national regulations.

I hope that answers the issues that were raised by members. I would like to thank my staff, particularly the staff of my department, for their help and the speedy drafting of the bill, and also the staff in my office for their assistance.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clause 1.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have a general question, so I thought it best that I ask it in clause 1. Minister, to facilitate the implementation of the amendments proposed, is it necessary to prepare any amended or new regulations and, if so, have draft regulations been prepared and how quickly can they be available in order to implement these new clauses that we need to deal with?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: Do I take it, therefore, minister, that you are saying, no, it is not necessary to have any other regulatory change?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: No, there are no regulatory changes arising from this legislation.

Ms CHAPMAN: Once this bill has passed the upper house, if that is the will of the upper house, this can immediately progress to the Governor for proclamation; there is no impediment. Is there any other impediment in its being proclaimed, so that the new regime of penalties and powers—if I can put in those two categories—could be effective within days of its progress through the other place?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I do not envisage that there would be any delay, other than what you would normally expect with a piece of legislation like this. The department will have to make some changes. There are resource implications for my department in terms of implementing these changes, and they will have to be worked through, so you would expect some. It will not happen the day after, but it will happen. It will not happen overnight, but it will happen, but there would not be any delay that would be in any way exceptional.

Ms CHAPMAN: The reason I am asking this question is that the pressing nature of this is for the reasons you have outlined and that, really, we cannot wait for the new regime to be set up at the federal level. Not surprisingly, when there is a new regime at a different level of government that does take some time, and they have to do their regulations. Even if each of the divisions or states continued to carry out the function, and they had clear notice of what their job was going to be and had the personnel in place already doing the regulatory work, that would take a little bit of time, I agree.

It seems to me that surely there must be some estimate of time as to the implementation of these that has been provided to you so that you could make the decision about why we would deal with extra resources, put in budget submissions for those and have all the changes within the department that you have referred to, whatever they might be, to actually affect this, given that it is

all going to be redundant at some future date when the federal legislation is passed, which might be this year.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: This will certainly come into effect as quickly as possible. I am very keen for this legislation to come into effect as soon as practicable. As I have already indicated to the committee, I do not anticipate that there would be any delay that would be any different from any other bill which makes passage through this chamber.

Ms CHAPMAN: I had a similar answer from a minister who did not give any indication. Apparently he had not sought at the time any indication from his department as to how long it might take to implement, but it related to the domestic violence bill. That was passed two years ago, I think, as an urgent piece of legislation to protect women and children in the state, amongst other things, and came some years after a barrister had provided a report to the government.

It concerns me that, when I hear from a minister of the urgency of the need for commitment to apply and the expectation that it will be delivered, we still have an answer such as you do not expect any inordinate delay. I do not know what is inordinate delay with this government because there are plenty of bills that are sitting around, even when they are supposed to be urgent, that still have not been implemented.

Sometimes it is because there is difficulty over legislation—that is, the preparation of regulatory subordinate legislation—and sometimes it is apparently because we need to train people up, as we did on the child protection legislation. Sometimes I am told, for example, that with domestic violence it is to do with a need to train the police and the money to do it, and obviously you have to convince the Treasurer to do it, but now that you are the Treasurer, of course, you could deal with that tomorrow. I do not know what the answer is.

I do not know what the answer is. But I will have to be convinced that the minister—if he hasn't got any idea at the moment about how quickly this is going to be implemented—It puzzles me then as to why he has made a decision to press ahead with this if he can't have some assurances from his own department about (a) what has to be done, (b) what it is going to cost and that will be covered, and (c) that it will be implemented properly, before he even made the decision to do all this, rather than actually encourage his federal colleagues to hurry up with the COAG negotiated agreement.

However, now that he is alert to that, I would ask the minister to at the very least, between the houses of this bill, find out the answer to those three questions so that our colleagues in the other place are fully aware of the importance of progressing this bill promptly if that is what is necessary.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: If the member for Bragg brings nothing else to this parliament, she does bring a tremendous talent for splitting hairs. It is quite extraordinary. I stand in awe of her ability to do it. We have moved with this legislation extraordinarily quickly. The McCann review had a very tight deadline in terms of it reporting back. The legislation was very quickly drafted and then released for consultation. The advice arising from the consultation was taken into account, and here we are today, first day back, introducing this legislation.

The points that the member for Bragg makes about other issues I don't think apply here because the fact is that there is a directorate in my department which already exists and which is already resourced to do this, and is basically ready to go to implement this legislation as soon as it makes passage to the legislation.

I am not going to make any promises or try to give timelines. The simple fact is that we have moved extraordinarily quickly on this legislation and, in fact, I would like to thank the public servants in my department and in parliamentary counsel who have enabled us to progress as quickly with this legislation as we have. It is a very, very high priority for me to see this legislation pass through the parliament and proclaimed and implemented as quickly as possible.

Clause passed.

Clauses 2 to 4 passed.

Clause 5.

Mr PISONI: This amendment refers to fines for offences by universities and higher education providers, and I would like to ask the minister how they are monitored. What is the process of monitoring those organisations to ensure that they are not actually committing these offences?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The department constantly monitors not only VET providers but also higher education providers. Every five years, education providers have to be reregistered, so there is a process which enables monitoring to ensure that the provider is doing the right thing, and, as well as that, individual courses are accredited by the regulator as well, and so there is a regular process there.

Mr PISONI: Do Cranfield University, Carnegie Mellon University and University College London fit in that same criteria or is there a special set of criteria for monitoring them?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: That is the case for University College London and for Carnegie Mellon University. It is not the case for Cranfield because Cranfield is not offering Australian courses to Australian students.

Mr PISONI: So are students who attend Cranfield University protected by this amendment to the bill?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I am advised the way Cranfield works is it operates in collaboration with the existing three universities, so it is covered by the accreditation of the three universities that it operates in partnership with.

Mr PISONI: Do Carnegie Mellon University, Cranfield University and University College London present financial reports or annual reports to your department?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: They provide a regulatory annual report to the department, but not a financial annual report.

Clause passed.

Clause 6 passed.

Clause 7.

Mr PISONI: This amendment provides that a commission may also cancel the registration of a training provider on its own motion. Can you explain to the house just what the process is?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The way the existing legislation works is that the regulator only has power to intervene when it is undertaking an existing regulatory action, so when it is accrediting or going through the normal process the powers of the commission to intervene are only actually at those points. What this does is change that, so of its own motion, if the regulator believes there is a problem going on with a particular provider, then the regulator can, of its own motion, intervene and take action.

Mr PISONI: Would that be after some formal process, and what would that formal process be?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Yes, and before it took action, there would have to be some sort of due diligence undertaken.

Mr PISONI: So, if this amendment had been in place for the APIC situation, what would have been done differently? How much sooner would the college have been deregistered, for example?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: This provision would not have related to APIC. What the regulator did with APIC was under a different power under the act.

Clause passed.

Clauses 8 to 13 passed.

Clause 14.

Mr PISONI: Section 36A refers to the appointment of an administrator. The explanation tells us that the administrator must be independent of the minister. What is the process in appointing the administrator? What is the obligation to demonstrate the independence?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Apparently there are guidelines being formulated at the moment about the sorts of things that would apply. The normal sort of provisions would apply. For example, an administrator would not be able to have any conflict of interest. Those are the sorts of things which would be taken into account by the minister in making a determination.

Mr PISONI: What would be considered a conflict of interest? For example, would membership of a particular union be a conflict of interest or would membership of an opposing or competitive organisation be a conflict of interest?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Certainly if it was a competitor organisation that the administrator had some association with, then yes, of course, that would be a conflict of interest. With regard to union membership, for example, if the RTO for which the administrator was being appointed for had some particular role to play in the training of members of that union, potentially these are the sorts of things you have to take into account on a case-by-case basis.

Mr PISONI: Is it intended that the administrator is an individual or a corporation such as an accounting firm or a number of other organisations that might conduct that type of business on a contract basis?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: No, it would be an individual who has a proven record of being able to manage organisations. They may come from an accounting firm or a firm that specialises in these sorts of things, but it will not be the firm who would be the administrator, it would be the individual person who would be appointed.

Mr PISONI: In relation to the commission cancelling the registration of a provider, there does not appear to be a definition of 'bankrupt' or 'winding up order'. Can you clarify this terminology? Is it 'declared bankruptcy' or 'in receivership'? Who will determine the bankruptcy?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: There is just a standard definition of 'bankruptcy' and a standard definition of 'winding up'. It is not a point of contention. There is a well-recognised legal norm when it applies to the definition of bankruptcy.

Mr PISONI: Is there any way of dealing with any potential detrimental effect on enrolled students of registered providers being cancelled at short notice?

The CHAIR: Excuse me. I would just remind the member for Unley that, really, he is meant to have only about three questions on these clauses.

Mr PISONI: That was my last one.

The CHAIR: Is it? Excellent, because you are averaging about five or six, but my raging generosity allows you to have them.

Mr PISONI: I thought it was an average.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: There is the normal tuition assurance scheme which applies to students, and this would be a trigger for that to come into play.

Clause passed.

Clause 15.

Mr PISONI: In talking to stakeholders, it has been pointed out that the terminology 'cancellation', 'qualification' or 'statement of attainment' is a little illogical, and that you cannot cancel a qualification but rather you can cancel the attainment of a qualification or the certificate/parchment, etc. What measures will be in place to ensure that legitimate students are not disadvantaged? The Australian Council of Private Education and Training (ACPET) has pointed out that the cancellation of qualification attainment etc., can seriously hinder the TAS operation. What measures are in place to safeguard against this?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I point out that the provision to cancel a qualification already exists under the act. This is not a new provision. This simply affects the powers of the regulator to cancel, but there already exists that power to cancel a qualification. The member for Unley is incorrect. There are circumstances where you would cancel a qualification, and that is where the qualification has been issued. So, for example, a training provider may provide someone with a qualification which is then found subsequently to be dodgy (for the want of a better word), and, in that case, the regulator would want to use the provisions of this section to cancel the qualification.

Mr PISONI: Were any qualifications obtained at ACPET cancelled for those students who attended?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: None has been cancelled. What is happening is that people have been issued qualifications as an assessment being done to see that they have the requisite skills to warrant the qualification, and the qualification, I think, has been re-issued. So, in those

circumstances where they do have the skills that are necessary for the qualification, the qualification is being re-issued under the powers of the commission.

Mr PISONI: Are they re-assessed?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Yes.

Clause passed.

Clause 16 passed.

Clause 17.

Mr PISONI: Public warning statements. This is supported, of course, in terms of allowing the regulator to list RTOs that have been sanctioned, but how public will the statements be, what is the process and, I suppose, how is the publication of the sanctions handled?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: What this provision is about is, essentially, a consumer protection warning similar to current powers under, I think, our consumer protection laws where, if there is a determination that students might be at risk, a public warning can be made relating to a particular provider.

Mr PISONI: How is that public warning made? Is it an advertisement, a press release or a ministerial statement?

Mr Marshall: I think it will be a Twitter.

Mr PISONI: A Twitter, yes.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Whatever is the best way to get that information out to students. It might be by way of press release; indeed, it might be a Twitter; whatever is the best way of getting the message to students or people who might be affected.

Mr PISONI: Is there any right of reply, either before or after they are named?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I presume a provider that thought that it had been unfairly accused would have every opportunity to go to the media or issue its own statement refuting whatever had been put. APIC did exactly that: they held a press conference refuting what I had said publicly about them.

Clause passed.

Clauses 18 to 20 passed.

Clause 21.

Mr PISONI: In relation to orders for compensation, with regard to compensation being awarded, how does this measure mesh with legislative measures for compensation under state consumer provisions and federal corporations law?

International students are currently protected under tuition assurance provisions of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act at the federal level where they are placed in another college to complete their studies without loss of fees and, if this is not possible, they are reimbursed from the fund. I assume that this further provision is for losses such as equipment, materials or additional charges that might not be covered by the TAS.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: It would be whatever the court deems appropriate compensation in the circumstances. So, in a court handing down a decision about a particular provider, this section gives the court, on top of that, the discretion to award compensation to anyone who might have been affected by the provider.

Mr PISONI: Is that something they will have to initiate themselves as students, and are they covered if the institution is no longer trading in Australia?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The institution would have to be registered with an Australian principal to gain its initial registration. Even an overseas provider has to have an Australian principal in order to be registered here in South Australia. The only circumstances to which I think the member for Unley might be alluding is where bankruptcy is involved, in which case the people for whom compensation had been awarded would become creditors in normal circumstances.

Mr PISONI: So that part of the amendment bill is only good if the company is still trading, basically. If it is no longer trading in Australia, then there is no other recourse, or there is no call or obligation on others to make good those losses.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Bankruptcy provisions would apply when an individual or a company is declared bankrupt. An administrator is then appointed and creditors are allocated what they are owed as much as possible from whatever is left of the entity, so those provisions would kick in in the event of the bankruptcy of a provider.

Mr PISONI: The Tuition Assurance Scheme actually goes beyond that. I cannot remember the name of the company but, when a Japanese-owned English college closed—I think it was early last year—it no longer had any representation in Australia, yet those students were managed and losses were minimised because they were actually able to move to other South Australian colleges to complete their studies. My understanding is that section 44B aims for additional compensation to be made available; however, it is not in the same model as the TAS. There has to actually be an identity to sue, if you like, or claim from in order for this to work.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I point out that the Tuition Assurance Scheme applies only to international students. Domestic students do not qualify to get assistance under TAS. Essentially, what the member for Unley says is correct, but that is the same with anything: if there is no money to recover, you cannot get it. Presumably the organisation would have assets or whatever that would be liquidated, and those funds would be allocated to creditors using the usual formulas. People awarded compensation under this provision would be creditors.

Mr PISONI: Just one final question on this clause, minister. Are you aware if any of the APIC students transferred under the Tuition Assurance Scheme have been forced to pay additional fees that they would not expect to pay if the TAS scheme were working as it was intended, in other words, paying to complete courses at a new institution that APIC had already been paid for?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I am not aware of any students who have been affected in the way the member for Unley said.

Clause passed.

Clauses 22 and 23 passed.

Clause 24.

Mr PISONI: I refer to section 73—Other powers. Will the Australian Council of Private Education and Training, which has advised me that it has been involved in administering the Tertiary Assistance Scheme, have access to records when there will be a need to place a student elsewhere?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Those records are made available to ACPET, or whoever the tuition assurance scheme administrator is.

Clause passed.

Clause 25 passed.

Clause 26.

Mr PISONI: I refer to new section 75B—Offences by bodies and corporate employees. There appears to be a reverse onus of proof where, basically, the employer or the employee appear to be guilty of an offence until they prove otherwise. Are you able to explain whether that is the case and why you have chosen that method, if it is so?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The way this provision would work is, firstly, there would be a prosecution against the body corporate, and if that offence was proven then individual employees may be liable for prosecution themselves. So, there would have to be an offence proved against the body corporate before this provision could come into play.

Mr PISONI: Subsection (3) provides that 'if an employee is guilty of an offence under this act, the employer is liable to the same penalty as prescribed for the principal offence', which is the opposite to what you have just said.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: This provision works both ways. The regulator might take action against the body corporate, and if the body corporate is found guilty then the directors become individually liable to prosecution. Likewise it could work the other way; an individual employee may have action taken against them. In those circumstances the body corporate would

find itself potentially liable to prosecution in the event of the offence being proved. Until an offence is proved, whether it be against the body corporate or whether it be against an individual employee, this provision does not come into play.

Mr PISONI: Looking at parts 3 and 4 of each of those together, I read it as being if an employee is guilty then automatically the employer is liable for the same penalty. So, from what I can gather, it is not up to the regulator to prove that the employer was liable or was involved in the process; it is actually up to the employer to prove that they were not involved or did not know that it had happened. I read it as being a reverse onus of proof; one guilty party automatically ties in everyone else in that organisation, unless they can prove otherwise.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Apparently there is something called vicarious liability. Perhaps the member for Bragg may be able to shed more light on it than I can, but apparently these sorts of provisions are typical of consumer protection law.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, if you are taking over from Kevin you are now vicariously liable for what he did?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Indeed! As I said, the circumstances where they would apply are either where an action might be taken against a body corporate or an action might be taken against an individual employee. If the employee is found guilty of the offence, then the employer is automatically vicariously liable for the actions of the employee, and those are the defences the employer would use to say that the employer had no knowledge of the offence or took reasonable precautions to try to prevent the commission of the offence.

I am also advised that this needs to be read in conjunction with section 75A, which talks about the imputation or conduct of the state of mind. The provisions in that subclause would also affect how this would be applied.

Mr PISONI: So if an employer took action against an employee because they were concerned about their conduct, that could lead them to be in this position. Are they protected under the Industrial Relations Act?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: That would be reasonable precautions and that would be due diligence, yes.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (17:28): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

I would like to thank the officers of my department, in particular Ms Adrienne Nieuwenhuis, who has worked incredibly hard to enable this legislation to be quickly drafted. I thank the opposition for its support, and I also thank Mr Warren McCann, whose report and recommendations are the impetus for this piece of legislation.

Bill read a third time and passed.

CRIMINAL LAW (SENTENCING) (SENTENCING POWERS OF MAGISTRATES COURT) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (17:29): This contribution will be short, which will please the house. We are debating the Criminal Law (Sentencing) (Sentencing Powers of Magistrates Court) Amendment Bill, which is, no doubt, one of the minister's favourites. The opposition understands that this is a very simple bill. It deals with the capacity of the courts to deal with division 2 penalties. Currently, for division 2 penalties the magistrates are restricted to dealing with penalties up to \$150,000.

As a result of changes to the legislation by the government in 2006, I think, that were debated in the upper house in 2007, the penalties in division 2 were increased to \$300,000 and the issue was that the industrial magistrates could only deal with penalties up to \$150,000, which meant those matters would have had to have been dealt with in the District Court. The argument is

that the District Court is overloaded so we should give the industrial magistrates the power to deal with issues up to \$300,000 penalty.

This matter is very simple. It was supported by all parties in the other place. The opposition has had no industry groups oppose the bill and, on that basis, the opposition supports the bill. As that is the only real provision in the bill, I have nothing further to add other than that we support the bill.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (17:31): I thank the member for Davenport for his very succinct contribution to the debate on this bill and I am grateful for the support he has indicated. I will recap a couple of issues very briefly.

This bill will ensure our skilled and experienced industrial magistrates can continue to hear OH&S matters and impose penalties of up to \$300,000 when dealing with criminal offences under the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act. It will also establish a firm foundation for the industrial magistrates to continue their very important work under the nationally harmonised OH&S system due to be enacted by 1 January 2012.

Again, I acknowledge the important contribution and cooperative approach of all organisations and individuals who engaged in the consultation process. The tripartite support from employer groups, employee representatives and government departments has ensured that dramatic shifts in the current processes for dealing with OH&S offences need not occur. Again, I reinforce my thanks to the opposition for its support of this amendment bill.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (17:32): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (REVIEW) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 27 October 2010.)

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:33): As much as I would like to be brief, I suspect I will not be overly brief on this matter. It is a significant matter and there are significant issues in this bill. It is an area of our statutes that I have a great interest in, and have always had a great interest in, and I do not often get the opportunity to talk about things that I really enjoy talking about.

The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: As I have the minister as a captive audience, I might take the opportunity to talk at length on the matter. As to NRM legislation in this state, I have often held the view that we have put far too much emphasis on some parts of the administration of NRM here in South Australia, and to a significant extent I think we have got it wrong.

I want to put it into some historical context because the Water Resources Act 1996, the forerunner to the current NRM act, was probably the reason I came into this place in the first place back in 1997, along with the way the legislation had been enacted and then administered, particularly in the South-East. Since then the NRM Act 2004 picked up basically all of the old Water Resources Act of the mid-90s and some other pieces of legislation and rolled them into one to form what we now call the Natural Resources Management Act 2004 and the whole NRM industry.

In the first instance under the Water Resources Act we had advisory committees throughout the state, certainly in my part of the state in the South-East where water was a significant issue way back then. The Water Resources Act gave us the ability to prescribe areas, but we had already licensed some parts of the South-East, certainly in the Upper South-East around the Keith area, in the Tatiara, the Padthaway area and the Naracoorte ranges, and then we moved to licensing right across the Lower South-East at that time.

We were basically feeling our way a bit as to how we would go about that and how we would administer it, and then we introduced the Water Resources Act which in its original form picked up those water advisory committees but gave it the ability to set up water allocation boards.

One of the first allocation boards, I think, established in this state was in the South-East and that, now with the more contemporary legislation, has been rolled into the local NRM board.

The original concept was to have the boards as a community-based authority, hopefully being used to collect together the thoughts and aspirations of the local community and developing policy and policy decisions around the wants and aspirations of the communities. I argued right from day one that I did not think that was possible to happen when the membership of the boards was responsible directly to the minister, rather than being directly to the community. So I have always argued and always thought that we would have a much more robust involvement of community if those boards, or at least a portion and hopefully at least half of the membership of those boards, was directly responsible to the community by direct election.

To my mind, that has always been a failure of the NRM system that we have adopted in this state. The board membership had absolute responsibility to the minister of the day, so they would just become another tool of the minister. It has been my experience—and I will not go through all the examples—in every instance that the boards would seek to understand what the minister of the day wanted before they would take a decision and they reflected the want of the minister rather than have a genuine consultation with their local community and reflect the want and aspirations of those local communities. It is a serious flaw in the system.

One of the other issues that I have always had significant problems with under this particular act is that we have basically formed another level of government because the NRM boards basically have taxing powers. Now we not only have federal government with its taxing powers, the state government with its taxing powers and policy-making fora, local councils with their taxing powers, we now have NRM boards with quite broad taxing powers. As I say, there is no direct representation from the people they tax. There is a serious breakdown of accountability between the taxed and the decision making around the way those taxes or, in this case NRM levies, are spent.

To my mind it always has been and remains a flawed system and one which, for as long as I am returned to this place by my constituency, is an argument I will continue to make. If we want a system where the minister has total control, where the executive government makes all the decisions through that minister and they have total control, let's have that system and let the minister wear the odium of raising the taxes and of making decisions. Let's get rid of this nonsense where we pretend we have an independent autonomous body that makes the decisions about policy and about taxing.

If we want a system where we have an autonomous independent body, let's remove those parts of the act that establish the boards and replace them with an open and freely elected body: we have to have one or the other. At the moment we have neither but rather a mish-mash in the middle, which to my mind does not really work. That is some of the background I wanted to put to the NRM Act as we see it today.

The manifestation of what I have been saying is that the NRM boards have failed miserably in the functions they are suppose to be undertaking on behalf of who knows whom—on behalf of the minister and the communities they are in. It is hard to even pinpoint who they should be taking these functions on board on behalf of because there is no direct accountability, particularly to the community.

With the bringing together of the various functions, particularly powers and functions that used to be held by the old soil boards and the animal and pest plant boards and bringing them in with the functions held under the old water act and forming NRM functions, it is fair to say that you could go to any rural community in South Australia today and you would quite quickly get a understanding that, particularly the functions with regard to animal and pest plant control, have fallen. The efficiencies of undertaking the functions in that area has dropped off so that the NRM boards seem to be very good at holding meetings, writing reports and doing those sort of things, and seem to be much less well adapted to getting on the ground work done.

In a previous life I served on an animal and pest plant board. I had the pleasure of serving on a board established when the state, in an enlightened moment, took away the powers of individual councils to run that function and forced them to create combined boards across council boundaries. I thought at the time that that worked extremely well. It worked well because, when one council was running its own animal and pest plant board, the experience was that that council did not really use the teeth that it had against its local constituency. When we had a combined board, where we had representatives from two or three councils, it was much more willing to be forceful on

land owners to clean up their act with regard to pest plants and weed infestations, particularly rabbits. I thought that was a system that worked very well. There was agitation to combine, and I know that there was a select committee report of this parliament into combining the various functions that I have already talked about; and, after a time, that did in fact occur.

I think that the attack on pest plants and rabbits, in particular as a pest animal in this state, has fallen away under the NRM regime. I get a considerable number of complaints to my electorate office from constituents about the lack of direct action by the NRM boards and the officers of the NRM boards in this area. I never get a complaint from my constituency about the lack of action of an NRM board to wield a big stick particularly over water matters but over matters which my constituents think are of significantly less importance than the control of pest plants and vertebrate pests.

I will make no comments at all about the various efficiencies of the old soil boards and the new NRM boards in that area because the soil erosion is not something which has been an issue in the vast area of my constituency, certainly in my experience. I do know that some of my colleagues in further northerly parts of the state than that which I know and represent might be able to add something in that area. I do not have any knowledge of that, so I will not go there.

An honourable member: That's a change!

Mr WILLIAMS: I am absolutely delighted to learn that my colleagues over there are listening. For a moment I thought that they had all gone to sleep, which is not what I was trying to achieve, but someone over there is listening. That brings me to water and the way in which the water policy is administered in this state. This has been, obviously, as I alluded to in my opening remarks, a passion of mine, certainly in the time that I have been here and sometime before that.

Indeed, in a small period before I came in here I was a landholder elected member of the South-East Water Conservation and Drainage Board, so I have some experience of the South-East drainage system and, I think, a reasonable understanding of water policy and water management. I am an avid listener to talk-back radio in Adelaide, as I know the minister is.

The Hon. P. Caica: And an avid participant.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am an avid participant, too, minister—just like you are.

The Hon. P. Caica: I never ring in.

Mr WILLIAMS: You never ring in?

The Hon. P. Caica: No.

Mr WILLIAMS: Oh, minister!

The Hon. P. Caica: Of course I ring in, on invitation.

Mr WILLIAMS: No, minister. The minister interjects that he never rings in voluntarily. I find it hard to believe. I seem to recall getting a call on more than one occasion from a radio station in Adelaide asking me to comment on a particular issue and being told that the minister has declined an opportunity to speak on a certain matter. I just get into the topic at hand for a minute or two and the next thing the minister is on the phone. Now I don't know, maybe they just keep ringing you, minister.

The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: You will do your best.

The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: Well done, minister; you almost squirmed out of that one. The point is that, over recent weeks, Leon Byner on FIVEaa, in particular, has been having a bit of a field day regarding some complaints from people in the community about the way officers of the department have been approaching citizens regarding the administration of water policy.

The Hon. P. Caica: Are you going to give us some examples?

Mr WILLIAMS: One of my colleagues, I think, is going to give you significant examples, but I can tell you there are a number of examples where farmers have had armed police arrive on their properties in the company of water bureaucrats. I met with one of my farmers quite recently and why you would need to have an armed police presence to accompany a water policy

bureaucrat on to his property, I do not know. I really do not know, but I may well give you that example.

The Hon. P. Caica: Well, I think you should after what you just said.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am just wondering whether I am going to get time to get to that tonight.

The Hon. P. Caica: We will do it tomorrow.

Mr WILLIAMS: I will certainly give the example tomorrow if I cannot get to it tonight. I think the Byner program made the point quite well that we are putting in considerable effort and using extreme powers for the administration of water policy, when you compare it with the effort, powers and the attitude taken, particularly by our courts, to transgressions in other areas of the law. He refers to things like drug pushers selling drugs, and some of these other criminal activities, where they seem to get off relatively lightly compared with some of the penalties that have been handed out under this particular legislation.

I happen to concur with the conclusion that he—and, I assume, a lot of his listeners who listen to and participate in that program, as the minister and I do quite regularly—has come to on his program. I think that is something that we should be cognisant of. I think we need to put the administration of water policy into perspective regarding the administration of other parts of the law. I think this piece of legislation has a tendency to go way over the top. We are now addressing this bill as a result of a review and I think this is one of the things we should consider as we are going through a series of amendments in response to a review of the way that this piece of legislation has operated since its inception in 2004.

I do not see anything in this bill that, in any way, shape or form, seeks to go down that path. I am not going to go through clause by clause in my second reading, but I certainly intend, in the third reading, to ask a series of questions of the minister on a significant number of clauses, but one of the clauses seeks to delete (I think it is section 72 of the principal act) the section which gives a citizen the right to remain silent if they believe that to do otherwise might incriminate them. I am not a lawyer, but to me it is one of the foundations of our legal system that you have a right to remain silent. In this legislation, we seek to take that right away.

Now, this is a piece of environmental legislation. This is not the criminal law: this is a piece of environmental legislation. I am making the point that I think, in the context of all our statutes, we have gotten a bit carried away with regard to this. I am not suggesting there are not people out there who are transgressing the law or that there are people out there who do not need to be dealt with; I am wondering whether we are dealing with them in a way and a manner that fits the crime. I think that is something that this parliament should seriously consider.

I think I have alluded to this but I have not actually said it in as many words: there is a statutory obligation under section 234 of the Natural Resources Management Act 2004 that has required the government to undertake a review of this legislation, and this bill is a result of that review. I understand that the review made considerably more recommendations than have been addressed in this piece of legislation but, notwithstanding, that is where the bill has come from.

With reference to the bill specifically, I am partly at fault here because I was in the chamber when the original bill went through and I do not recall making a comment along this particular line at that stage. However, it seems to me that, if we are going to put a statutory obligation to review the way a piece of law has performed four or five years down the track, we probably need the review to be more than just what I would call an internal review or a review by the department. We need some instrument such that the review is a bit wider than that, because this bill is all about making the principal act stronger, easier and better for the department to administer. I do acknowledge there are some, but I do not think it addresses too many of the issues that the community has raised about this piece of legislation since its enactment in 2004, presumably.

That is the first point I make, that maybe there should be some obligation in the review to do some quite broad public consultation outside of the department, outside of the NRM boards and that coterie of people who work closely with the NRM boards, in the wider community, and call for submissions from a broader cross-section of the community to have input into the way they see the administration of this act and where it might be improved.

I am sure Leon Byner would love to put a submission to the minister with regard to his thoughts. I did think that Leon Byner was quite unfair when he accused the Liberal Party of being asleep when the principal act went through the parliament. I did ring him up and point out to him

that we moved something like 200-odd amendments to the legislation, and very few, if any, the government actually supported. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

VALEDICTORY SPEECH

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (17:58): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mrs REDMOND: It is really not of any great moment; it is just because I like to be as accurate as I can and I want to make it clear to the parliament. In the valedictory speech that I gave on 25 November, just as we were closing the session for last year, I mentioned two things in which I made an error. One was that I referred to a cut for the funding for library services in this place. That was what I had been told was occurring, but I found out subsequently that there was no cut; it was just that someone who was employed and had gone on maternity leave had a fill-in replacement and that replacement was being moved. So I want to correct the record as far as that goes.

In the same speech, I also referred to a state debt of \$8.6 billion and I want to correct the record, because in the forward estimates the state debt will not indeed reach that level; it will reach \$7.5 billion, but the figure of \$8.6 billion was actually a figure for what our state exports have gone down to since this government has been in power.

At 18:00 the house adjourned until Wednesday 9 February 2011 at 11:00.