

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 8 March 2011

The **SPEAKER (Hon. L.R. Breuer)** took the chair at 11:02 and read prayers.

The SPEAKER: Honourable members, 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.

TERRORISM (SURFACE TRANSPORT SECURITY) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 9 February 2011.)

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (11:03): I indicate that I will be the lead speaker for the opposition on this bill.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much background noise.

Mr GRIFFITHS: There is no intention to move amendments. We will be seeking some explanation during the committee stage on some of the clauses, and I am sure the minister will be able to provide the house and the people of South Australia with some in-depth answers on the Terrorism (Surface Transport Security) Bill of 2011.

There is no doubt that the world is a different place to what it was when we grew up. The terrible things that are occurring around the world are requiring governments to ensure that they provide opportunities for the people who live in and visit those countries to be safe and secure in the knowledge that when they travel—when they fly or go by train—and when they are in large buildings or large events, the risk of any form of terrorism has reduced as much as possible.

Governments around the world have invested significant dollars in ensuring that the safety measures are in place. For those who do travel around, there are so many more people who act in an enforcement mode to ensure that the security and safety of people is maintained, who we do not actually see as they operate in the background. It really does enforce the fact that governments of all persuasions are making every attempt to ensure that their communities are as safe as possible.

I put on record from the start that this bill was introduced four weeks ago by the minister. I am very grateful for the fact that the minister's staff were able to arrange a briefing for me the following week which allowed me the opportunity to review the bill and put a position paper to the opposition. After considering the issues involved and making an attempt to consult with the organisations that the minister's staff indicated were also involved in the consultation, we formed the opinion that it appears as though there are no concerns. However, there will be some areas that we will seek to ask some questions on.

As I understand it, though, the intention of the bill is to apply an act to require certain surface transport operators to implement counterterrorism plans, and that these plans will promote the development of high-security opportunities across South Australia and assist in raising security awareness. Again, that is a need that has to be out there. We had the terrible events of 11 September 2001. Certainly, there has been a direct impact upon Australia with the Bali bombings, where some 88 Australians passed away among over 200 people who were killed in that event. However, we do live in a very safe nation because our government has recognised the challenges and it is determined to use every opportunity.

As I understand it, the Council of Australian Governments has endorsed an intergovernmental agreement on service transport security, which requires all states and territories to implement this legislation. Queensland and Victoria have enacted the legislation already and South Australia's legislation is based upon the Victorian example. Indeed, Western Australia, as I am advised, is considering the South Australian legislation before it introduces its own. This shows that a level of cooperation exists between all the states to ensure that there is some commonality in how this issue is dealt with. One of the reasons for each state having its own legislation is to ensure that there can be no perception that any state is seen as an easier target for any level of terrorism activity.

I do pose some questions, though, if the minister can provide an outline. Some information was provided to me in the briefing, but I would certainly appreciate if the minister could put on the public record the types of organisations (some of their names and the functions that they perform) that he believes he will declare a security identified surface transport operation—I think the term is SISTO—because not all of them are actually transport operators; some of them are events that bring a large number of people together within a defined time period and therefore provide somewhat of a target, potentially.

At the briefing we were told that it would be organisations such as Great Southern Rail, SeaLink, AAMI Stadium (for large events and football being played there), Westfield shopping centres, Adelaide City Council—I would be interested to hear the impact that Adelaide City Council will have on this—and TransAdelaide. Under the bill, these identified operators are required to produce a security plan. In the briefing, I automatically asked, 'On the basis that they do prepare the plan, who then is responsible for ensuring its suitability?' I was told that there is not necessarily an automatic responsibility to provide the plan to the Minister for Transport, or his nominee, for review.

Then I posed the question, 'Therefore, what happens with the plan if it is not checked by another authority to determine its suitability?' A rather surprising comment was made to me, which I am sure the minister will correct when he puts his comments before the house, that the potential did exist, therefore, for the plan to sit in the bottom drawer of someone who is responsible for the business operation. Now, the minister shakes his head, as I did at the time also, minister, so I am sure that you will correct this. It might have been a rather flippant remark and I am sure that will not be the intent of what is created here.

The reason I posed the question is that documents such as that concern me immensely. For this process to work correctly, we have to ensure that it becomes part of the culture of the organisation and that there is a focus from senior management, through the lines of management that exist within the business, to ensure that the impacts are identified and the opportunities to reduce, as much as humanly possible, any possibility of a terrorism event occurring are identified and acted upon. It should become part of the culture of that organisation, as occurs with workers' compensation to ensure the safety of workers within an organisation. It may have been a flippant comment made to me at the briefing, but I would like the minister to provide a bit of an outline about that.

As part of the briefing we were also told that in many cases—because I had posed the question as to what the cost of this would be—these larger organisations have identified that some potential does already exist, and that as part of some contractual agreement that they may have with the governments (federal and state) there is a need to identify anti-terrorism risks and threats within their own management plans and the contractual agreements that they have with those governments. That is why, in many cases, the impost would be on the lower scale, and that is why the preparation of the plan would not come at a significant cost for the business, but I would be interested if the minister could outline some thoughts on that.

I do recognise that major metropolitan public transport providers, who are private operators, have contracts with the government already, and they would have to ensure that these plans are there and are maintained to match the requirements of this legislation. There may be some modification required for those contracts, which are about to be renewed, I think, in the next few months. I am also advised of the safety regulation division within the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure is responsible for ensuring that transport operations are meeting those contractual requirements.

It was rather interesting that in one of the clauses there is an exemption from Freedom of Information Act requests. That did raise some questions within the opposition party room, but it does seem to me that it is appropriate that this be in place. It is important that these plans, once prepared, authorised and then acted upon within organisations, are secure.

Again I pose the question: how do we ensure that that is in place? Certainly, on the basis that they go to the minister's office for review, whoever within DTEI or the minister's office reviews that, there needs to be a security system in place to ensure that there can be no access via any outside source to that information, because security plans are useless if they are freely available. That is why the freedom of information exemption is certainly supported.

There were some questions raised as to how we can try to make this better. I do believe that, given this has occurred around each of the states and territories within Australia and based on

the COAG agreement, as well as using some examples of what is occurring overseas, it has been refined into a process that gives a greater level of security to all involved to believe that, yes, it will work appropriately; yes, the cost impost will be kept to a minimum; and, importantly, that all Australians and visitors to our nation will have confidence in the fact that, when they are involved in these mass transport operations or using a facility that brings a lot of people together, the organisations and the governments providing the services are focused on trying to make sure that they are as safe as possible.

I do not wish to hold up the house for very long with my contribution. I will have questions that I will pose at the committee stage; but I do confirm that the opposition supports the intention of the bill. We do look forward to the passage of this bill and to ensuring that it is enacted as quickly as possible for the safety of all South Australians.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:13): I too rise to speak to the Terrorism (Surface Transport Security) Bill 2011, which was introduced to this house by the Minister for Transport on 9 February this year. The intention of the bill is to require certain surface transport operators to implement counterterrorism plans and assist in raising security awareness in South Australia.

As we all know, with ongoing conflicts overseas for quite a few years now, especially in the Middle East and Afghanistan, the threat of terrorism is always there. I salute our armed forces who are serving both here and overseas. Many of them do many rotations in war zones, and I salute them all. My brother, as I have mentioned in this place before, served in Iraq from September 2005 to March 2006. I certainly salute all the soldiers who have lost their lives in the war against terror and note the sad passing of Sapper Jamie Larcombe in the last few weeks.

As I said, terrorism is something we need to be extremely aware of in Australia. It is good that there are provisions being put in place so that the population can take some responsibility for their activities. Here today we are talking about people involved in transport industries across Australia in that vein.

Targets of terrorism could include mass passenger transport systems because of the potential for a significant level of harm, which could include a large number of casualties, injuries and large economic and social impacts. COAG endorsed an intergovernmental agreement on surface transport security with the primary aim being to implement nationally consistent arrangements to protect the community through strengthening security measures on surface transport systems. Victoria and Queensland have already enacted similar legislation, and South Australia's legislation has been drafted based on the Victorian model. Western Australia is looking to draft legislation based on what comes out of this parliament.

The bill provides the minister with the power to identify operators at risk of a terrorist attack, for example, due to their size, location, iconic status and the number of passengers using the operation. Examples in this state include operations such as Great Southern Rail, SeaLink, AAMI Stadium (Football Park), Westfield, Adelaide City Council and TransAdelaide. All identified operators will have a responsibility under the act to prepare a security plan. The plan does not have to be provided to the minister for analysis and approval. However, there will be provision in the act for the minister to acquire the plan if required.

Many companies already have the requirement to provide a security plan as part of existing contractual agreements with the state government. For example, major metropolitan public transport providers are already required under their contracts with the state government to introduce and maintain counterterrorism measures that match the requirements of this legislation. The safety and regulation division within DTEI is responsible for ensuring transport operators are meeting their contractual obligations.

It is good to see that support in developing effective security plans will be available through the department. This is particularly important to help smaller operators who may not have the staffing levels to cope with the extra compliance required under this legislation; however, it is probably doubtful that operators of that size will be targeted.

Measures are also in place to keep security plans confidential. They will be kept as classified documents and have exemption from freedom of information requests. I believe there has been large consultation with key transport industry players, including operators at risk—as I mentioned previously, operators such as Great Southern Rail, SeaLink, AAMI Stadium, Westfield, Adelaide City Council and TransAdelaide—and there is general support for the bill.

I note that some of the penalty provisions in the bill are significant, that is, up to \$50,000 for some breaches if this act is passed, and that will help ensure that people comply. It is also interesting to note that this is not just about deterring terrorism, but companies need to have a plan in place if an attack occurs so they can recover vehicles and equipment and assist people and passengers, for example, in a passenger rail situation in the event of an attack.

Some people may think terrorism is a long way away, but the world is a very small place. We have seen incidents recently in Asia and bombings in London and other places such as New York. So it can happen anywhere, and we are probably very fortunate in that we live on a very large island, but that does not deter terrorism, so we must be ever vigilant. With those few words, I indicate support for the bill.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (11:19): I will make a brief contribution. It is not the appropriate time to talk about the bigger issue of terrorism per se, but I think it is fair to say that some of the Western nations, in particular the United States, have created their own terrorism problem with their approach, particularly in areas such as the Middle East where they have not been even-handed and where they are perceived as anti-Islam. I think we need to address that particular strategy. We cannot do it for the United States, but we should be seen as being even-handed in our approach to affairs in the Middle East and in the way that we treat and respect people who follow Islam.

As members may know, I am a great train user. I have travelled many times on the interstate trains, and I have always been puzzled as to why security is so open-ended when you travel by train. Once, when I was on the *Overland*, there were gangsters on board—and that is not including myself!—going to a funeral in Melbourne. The reason they travelled on the train was so that they could take their firearms with them, which is very difficult if you fly, and if you go by road you might get pulled over by one of our vigilant police officers. So, we had these characters on the train, who I would describe as gangsters in suits, and they had their firearms with them. At times, there have also been undercover police on the train.

Anyone can walk on to any of those trains carrying whatever they like. You can walk straight into your cabin, or you can walk straight into the seating compartment, and carry whatever you like. That has always surprised me, and I have raised it before but nothing ever seems to be done about it. Likewise, I think a similar situation exists with the bus terminal. It is more difficult on an aircraft because of our security arrangements, but when it comes to rail and bus it is almost open slather.

I think something needs to happen in terms of being more vigilant. We do not want to create a situation where it becomes too costly or oppressive, or too draconian for the ordinary citizen. When I first came to this place, people could walk straight in from North Terrace up to the premier's office. We have had to change our ways here. I know it is painful at times with all of the security, but the reality is that the days of: trust us, and trust anyone coming in, have gone. So, now we do not have people walking straight in from North Terrace and up to the premier's office without going through some security arrangement.

I think this is a necessary measure. As I say, I hope it does not lead to too costly a burden on the operators. It needs to be sensible and not too draconian. One of the great things about Australia is that we do not live in anything remotely like a police state, but we should not be so naive as to think that there are not evil people and fanatics out there, whether they be religious or otherwise, who might wish to do harm to others. I think it is time, particularly for the bus services and interstate trains, that we take a close look at what people can take on board because, on my observation over many years and many trips, there is no restriction on what people can carry and do when they travel by bus or train.

Mr PEGLER (Mount Gambier) (11:23): I support this bill. I think it is essential that we have counter-terrorism plans in place for all of the risk areas that we have. We must address those risk areas and ensure that it does not become too onerous. I also support the fact that these plans must be confidential. We cannot be telling the terrorists what our plans are. Hopefully, we never have to implement these plans. Hopefully, this country can remain a safe place, such as it is now, but we should always have decent plans in place so that we can ensure that this country remains safe. I support the bill.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Elder—Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure) (11:24): I thank members for their contributions. It appears that, although detail is sought,

members are agreed upon the need for this bill. I will make a few short comments because it appears we are going to committee, and we can provide the detail then.

This is a bill that seeks to implement an intergovernmental agreement of 2005. It is addressed to surface transport because that was the subject of the intergovernmental agreement. It is unlike Victoria's broader act, which of course was implemented before that intergovernmental agreement. So, to understand why the bill does this, it is because it is implementing that intergovernmental agreement.

Of course, the bill, if passed, would only be operated where there was a change in the security level, which has not changed since 2003, and I hope it never does. I think it is very important to put on the record that it does not mean that nothing is done until there is a change in the security level. There are regular interactions between government agencies and those bodies that we believe might be at risk of terrorism.

SAPOL has done a number of exercises with a number of private sector people, addressing what might occur and what might need to be done. Of course, within government we have advanced security plans already in place and, in fact, conduct exercises with some of the more likely targets. For example, we have multi-government agency exercises to address what would happen were a security event to take place. So, we do all of that.

To say that these plans would be left in the bottom of the drawer is upsetting to me because that is certainly not the intention of the bill. There is only one reason that these plans are not automatically required to be delivered to the government or checked, and that is that I know that we do not want to create unnecessary bureaucracy or unnecessary red tape.

I know that the former member for Stuart, who was here for a long time, was a great champion of the reduction of unnecessary bureaucracy, and the truth is that a number of the people, the instrumentalities or the businesses that would be declared either contract with the government or are required to have those plans already in their contract. If the government already had plans, it would be peculiar if we were to set up a bureaucracy to check plans we had already drafted, signed off and placed into contract.

There may well be people we have dealt with over a long period of time who are fully aware, through our interaction with them, of what their provisions are. I would absolutely assure the house in debate—and it would not be just me but any minister properly advised—that if it were the case that we did not know whether a business had a sound plan and did not absolutely know that it was a sound plan, then we would require that and review it, because I assure you that everyone is risk averse these days. I have to say that most of the people we would be addressing this to, I can guarantee you, have had this on their mind for some time.

As I said, this is not the first thing that has happened. There has been a long history of interaction between government agencies like SAPOL and some of those businesses, and in fact even local government agencies, about what needs to occur. So, I can assure people that, if there was any doubt at all about what was contained in their plan, it would be caught up, it would be checked by our experts and we would make sure it was adequate for the circumstances.

I close by saying that I hope we never actually have to do this. It will only happen if the level of our security alert were to increase, and that is not something I ever want to see. I thank members for their contribution.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 passed.

Clause 5.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister, I refer generally to subclause (1) and paragraphs (a), (b) and (c). I note that paragraph (a) refers to the requirement for you to 'identify a specified place, activity or system associated with, or relating to, the movement of people or goods by road, rail or water as a security identified surface transport operation'. Can you outline to the chamber some examples of those operations that it is your intention to declare?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I would prefer, if it is okay, to give you the criteria and not name names. In general terms, we would be identifying a land transport agency that either concentrated a number of people in one place, was of an iconic nature or had some other characteristic that, by

pretty objective criteria, would make it a target. We would not be going out and seeking a plan for every bus stop or suchlike. You would understand that significant public transport interchanges and maybe shopping malls that have significant public transport interchanges, large-scale carriers of people or something iconic like the *Ghan* or the *Overland* would come under the criteria.

There is the capacity, if I or a future minister declares someone and they do not think it is right, to have that decision reviewed by judicial review, but I cannot imagine a mistake being made. The criteria are pretty clear. Terrorists are going to go where there are lots of people in one spot or where it causes significant economic damage or where it is an iconic target. Those would be the sort of criteria that we would be looking at.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I do respect that the minister is unable or not prepared to provide specific names and I do respect that confidentiality is important here, but he has certainly provided me with the outline of the areas that will be considered. However, I pose a further question to the minister: because this paragraph relates to the provision of goods and because they are so important to our society, is it also intended to look at goods such as electricity and gas and their transport?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Those matters that you refer to are not, in essence, goods, but fall more under the rubric of essential services. Of course, in the first instance those businesses deal with a regulator who sets, as I understand it, a number of standards. I can bring that information back for you, but as a former energy minister I can assure you that the essential services areas and their requirements have been the subject of focus by governments for a long time. It is a heavily regulated area and I think you will find that, either by regulation or act, there are already requirements upon them. I can get those details and provide them to you if you wish, but it is not necessary to deal with those in this bill.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I did expect that type of answer from the minister because they would have been identified very early on as an area where some security measures need to be imposed. Still referring to subclause (1), paragraph (b) talks about declaring a specified person to be the operator. I presume that you will want to get as high up the food chain as possible, so is it intended that the CEO or the CFO will be the specified person?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: In most cases it would not be a natural person; it would be the body corporate, and the body corporate, I assume, would have the responsibility for nominating the actual human being who deals with that. We would deal with the body corporate. I assume that there would be circumstances where a number of bodies corporate are in a site, so I guess we would be looking for whoever has control of a location or enterprise more than others. For example, the Adelaide Railway Station might have a kiosk. It would not be the kiosk that we go to: it would be to the people who own the railway station.

Mr GRIFFITHS: The reason I pose the question is that the bill refers to 'the person', but it appears as though it is not the person: it is more the organisation itself.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: It is a common phrase that the law refers to a corporation as a legal person. That is what corporations are. There may be cases where they are not corporations, but I cannot imagine where that would be.

Mr GRIFFITHS: The next question relates to paragraph (c) where you specify the period within which the operator must prepare a plan. That leads me to the thought that different time lines are potentially in place for different operators. Can you provide some outline to the house on whether that is the fact?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The time lines might be different because, even though there is general criteria, some operations will be larger and more complex than others and it may be that they will have a more complex issue to deal with than a smaller operation. So, it seems appropriate that there might be different time lines for those bodies. In any case, we would certainly want things to be done as quickly as is reasonably possible.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I respect the fact that there will be different scopes for operations that need more effort to go into them, depending on what their previous contractual arrangements may have already required. However, on the basis that after you issue a notice they have some 14 days to lodge some form of appeal against that, can any appeal they lodge be based also around the fact that, while you and your staff may determine what you believe is the most appropriate time line for the operator, the appeal can actually consider the timing, not necessarily their declaration as a SISTO?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: As I understand it, the provision is not for an appeal but for submissions for us to take into account in making some determination. So, it would not be a process where an appeal is heard. As I said, it is not a formal appeal process which is heard and where submissions would be made. It might be the case where they object to the declaration, but that would not prevent any minister from making that declaration after considering the submissions.

Mr GRIFFITHS: On subclause (2), it was my intention to ask for some more specifics, especially in relation to paragraphs (a) through to (f), but, in recognising the answer that you provided from the very start, I understand that that is a bit difficult. I will just pose a question to you on paragraph (b), 'the number of passengers using the operation'. Again, I respect that there will be different sized organisations, but have you had some preliminary thoughts on a threshold figure for a tourism rail operator or a public transport operation? Do you have some figures for that?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I will think about that and take some further advice. The fact is that one important criteria will be the number of people because, unfortunately, terrorists want to make a maximum impact. There may be other considerations, such as the vulnerability of a smaller group or the iconic nature of a smaller group. There would not be a specific number. There would be circumstances where a smaller number might be susceptible to an order and a larger number might not because of a range of other criteria. So, I do not think we would be tying ourselves up with arbitrary limits.

Mr GRIFFITHS: The reason I pose the question about, for example, whether it could be a tourism rail operator is that they are primarily based around volunteer efforts, and there is already a large amount of accreditation required to ensure their ongoing ability to run their trips. Even though they might be smaller in number, because they do have an iconic status, they would represent in some ways a 'ripe target'. I hate to say that term, but it might be a ripe target for somebody. Would there be a level of assistance provided by DTEI in that case, if you did determine that you wanted to identify them as a SISTO, to assist in the preparation of some form of planning?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: That is something that we can have a look at. We do assist, in any event, through interaction with people like SAPOL on the sort of thing that businesses need to do. That has been an ongoing process for a long time. In relation to things that are an iconic status—and I do not want to insult anyone running any volunteer railways—but I would find it hard to think of a volunteer railway in South Australia that would meet that sort of status. If that were the case, obviously we cannot expect people to do what they cannot do for themselves, but a plan would also be proportionate to the risk and the likelihood. I do not think the Goolwa Cockle Train will be declared.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister, I thank you for the answer. If I could now jump to subclause (4), and specifically as it relates to where the minister provides a notice in writing to the person (being the body corporate), providing that person with 14 days to make a submission. The minister has already referred to the fact that the opportunity for judicial review exists. Are you able to outline for the committee how that process would be undertaken, and who would actually consider it?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The judicial review would be dealt with not by criteria we set, but there is a matter of longstanding remedies available in the court for what used to be referred to as 'judicial error', 'ultra vires' or 'anismic'—asking the wrong question, taking the wrong approach or something like that. It is a limited area of review required, and from memory used to be founded on making what used to be called a judicial error, or an error in law. So you will not find the answer in the bill: you will find the answer in those many sets of precedents in the common law.

Mr GRIFFITHS: In posing this question to the minister, I am presuming that there will be an ongoing level of dialogue occurring with these operators and there will be an acceptance of their need to be declared as a SISTO prior to you actually giving it anyway. It might be a very rare case where an operator may choose to believe that it has grounds for appeal. On the basis that the appeal is lodged, is the requirement that the plan actually be held in abeyance until that judicial review is considered?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: That would be a matter for the court and they would need to seek injunctive remedy. I view would be that it is going to be cheaper to do a plan than to enter into a case of judicial review of doing a plan. It is going to be a lot cheaper, and I cannot imagine anyone doing that.

Clause passed.

Clause 6.

Mr GRIFFITHS: It is a very important piece of legislation. Minister, I do understand the level of upset feelings that you had when I posed an issue before about 'putting it in the bottom drawer,' but I am only repeating to you what was told to me during a briefing. If we could now talk about the counterterrorism plan, can you provide to the committee details of who reviews it to determine its suitability? Is there a statutory requirement for the plan to come back to DTEI (or an office nominated for you) for review, or will some of the operators be determined to be of a lower scale, where there is no need for a review of the plan to actually be undertaken?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The mechanism is by the minister's discretion, to require it to come. As I said, I am not going to be checking a plan that we have already demanded from people when we contract with them, such as some of the bus route providers. I am not going to be asking for a plan that we know we drew up ourselves within the department for departmental services. The approach I would take is that if any operator was sufficient to be declared I would want to be satisfied that we know that they have a plan. If I was not satisfied with that I would want our people to check it.

The expertise is within our department and it is the same expertise that has drafted those provisions in the contracts that I described earlier. If it is not sufficient we have a problem already, but I believe it is sufficient. As I say, from my perspective the key consideration where an organisation declared would be: do we know that they have a plan?

You have to remember that many of those who would be declared are very obvious, as we have a long history of interaction with them and we know very much about what they have already done, but if there was any doubt then we would want to check it. The provision is not there so that we do not know what is in it. The provision is there not to be unnecessarily bureaucratic. I think we can provide you with some commonwealth guidelines. This is an intergovernmental agreement. There are some commonwealth guidelines that we would be looking at in that regard, if you want to have a look at them. It is not very exciting reading though.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I may not have reviewed the legislation to the depth that the minister and his staff have, but I was unable to find a specific requirement that actually talked about the fact of ministerial review. That is why I posed the question. The obvious ones are where contractual arrangements are in place. I understand that completely; no debate. However, I am presuming there will be some operators that are declared that will not have a contract in place, and therefore no formal links with government. Indeed, that is why I am posing the question: because I cannot find it specifically proposed to be legislated.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I am not entirely sure what you mean, but the provision is that the minister may require the production of a plan. I would take advice on the quality of that plan from our experts. I would not review it myself to determine whether I thought it was right; I would take advice.

On whether I or any other minister would ask for that plan, I can tell you my approach would be that I would take no risks. Anyone who is a minister learns very quickly that not taking risks is a very good way to do your job. We rely on advice and if the advice to a minister was that, 'We have declared these people and we do not know if they have a plan,' you are going to be making sure they see it. That is the structure. Any decision made by a minister in this regard will not be made by virtue of their own knowledge of the circumstances, but on the advice of experts.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister, I certainly respect that is how the process should operate. I understand that completely. If I can pose a different question: on the basis that all the plans are in place and have been verified, signed off and everybody is happy, is it an expectation that they will identify a review period and will that review period be consistent across all TANs? Alternatively, will there be identification of some operators being at a greater risk level, in which case they will have a shorter period between which the plan authorisation and the plan review is to be undertaken?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The guidelines in terms of once someone is declared and they have to have a plan. The whole nature of the plan is the risk management strategy so, if there is a change in circumstance, the guidelines contemplate that there is a change in circumstances and obligate the operator to change their plan to manage the risk, and there is significant penalty if they do not do that properly. I think it is probably worth making the point at this time that what we are seeking people to do under this is precisely what a prudent operator does in any operation.

Every operator of a business has risk management: if it is a risk of accident, they have insurance; if it is a risk of terrorism, they have plans; and, if circumstances change, they are

required to change. We do not have a pro forma plan; the plan must suit the particular enterprise and, if the enterprise changes, then the plans should change to manage that risk.

Mr GRIFFITHS: The minister has talked around the question I posed, and I recognise that it is probably impossible to give specifics to it. I suppose I asked the question because for me it is important—as I quoted in my second reading contribution—for it to be part of the thought processes of the organisation or the operator at all times.

It is imperative, to my mind, that it be front and centre that, yes, they have the plan in place, but it is more than just what is written on the paper; it is the way that the business is conducted to ensure that security measures are in place. Because businesses and operations of all kinds have an enormous variety of pressures placed upon them which make it necessary to determine priorities, indeed, of what will be undertaken as part of their operational matters, I consider this to be part of their operational matters also.

The reason I posed the question was to ensure that if there is a regular review period and that if, for some of the more priority operators, it is a shorter time frame for a regular review period—or no matter if it is a longer time—it ensures that it is front and centre with operators. Because I cannot find it in the legislation, I am still interested to hear from the minister where—and I understand that their circumstances will change—the operator will ensure, therefore, that they adjust their plan. Does that mean that the plan goes to DTEI for review again to ensure its suitability again?

I am caught up in a process here to ensure that it is correct, because I want to make sure that there is confidence within the house that, first and foremost, the operators—and we are trying to ensure that the impost is not onerous upon them—have this as part of their mindset to ensure that they provide safe opportunities for people and goods.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Firstly, if we look at subclause (6), there are regulation-making powers, particularly, I think the one you are referring to is (6)(c), 'requiring a plan to be reviewed and updated at specified intervals or following specified events'.

We want to make sure that, while we require people to have proper plans and do proper things, we do not want to be in there attempting to run businesses or interfere with businesses unnecessarily because, I think in all of these matters a balance has to be achieved. If we were being unnecessarily intrusive, I am sure that we would hear from your side of the chamber that we were hurting business when risks were too small. So, in all of these things there is a balance, but I refer you to those regulation-making powers.

Clause passed.

Clause 7.

The CHAIR: May I ask you, member for Goyder, will you be speaking on every clause?

Mr GRIFFITHS: No.

Ms Chapman: Why not?

The CHAIR: Well, your colleague says 'Why not?'

Mr GRIFFITHS: I indicate that I have no questions on clause 8 or, indeed, on clause 11 and beyond.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The CHAIR: I do not think that has anything to do with the surface transport security.

Members interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: The banter across the chamber is interesting. This clause deals with the maximum penalty in place for those that do not comply with the requirements, but can I pose a question and get the minister's response on the record: what are the minister's expectations of the time allowed for the provision of these plans?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I will take advice on that. We are at a security level where no-one will be declared at present. I will probably take advice if the security level changes. I am quite happy to take advice from some of the bureaucrats, but I will do that on advice from those people.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I can certainly understand when you talk about security level changes, but I took this clause as relating to the provision of information for the first plan they have to prepare, no matter what form of review takes place later on. When you declare an operator—be it government-related or not, through contractual situations, or some form of private operator that has an important aspect of what it provides—is it one month, two months, three months, 12 months?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: If I understand it correctly, you are talking about after everything is done and they have been required to develop a plan. Obviously, there are time frames for developing the plan; you are talking about in what time I would expect them to produce a plan.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Yes.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Well, it is not stated in the legislation, but my answer would be—and I will check this with these people—that if it has come after they have had time to prepare the plan as requested, I would expect it to be produced forthwith. I think that having been given a statutory amount of time to prepare a plan—and I think there are differences in that, depending on the seriousness and the depth of the plan—they should be able to produce the plan forthwith.

I guess we turn our minds to what is a reasonable time, in business, to produce something you should already have. My understanding is that they should already have this, so I do not see why they should have any excuse for not producing it forthwith.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I am not sure whether or not the minister and I have crossed wires here. I am actually talking about the provision of the first plan, where you have issued the declaration for them to be a SISTO.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: If we go back, from memory there are earlier provisions that require them to produce a plan within a certain period of time; so they will be given a certain period of time to make that plan. My understanding of clause 7 is that it deals with after those people have been required to make a plan in a certain period of time, and the issue about whether or not we demand the production of it. For example, we might give TransAdelaide a period of time to develop a plan but, knowing that it already has one, we are never going to exercise clause 7, and we are probably not going to give them a lot of time to develop a plan, knowing that they already have one.

My understanding of how it works is that we give a period of time to an organisation, that period has expired, and, on advice to me by the experts that we do not know enough about the plan and should have a look at it, we would expect them to be able to supply it forthwith. I cannot imagine why they should not be able to do that. If someone said, 'Look, the officer in charge of that is away and will be back on Monday,' I think we might be comfortable with that. I do not see why, the earlier period of time having expired (and I cannot imagine we would demand a production before the earlier period of time had expired) it should not be produced forthwith or within a reasonable period of time.

Having given the organisation a period of time to develop the plan, it does not have another period of time to develop it because they have not done it—this is for the production of it. As I said, there are organisations that we can guarantee will not be asked to produce it. If we ask an organisation to produce a plan, I cannot see any reason why it should not be able to do it immediately.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I think the minister and I are at cross-purposes again because I understood everything before clause 7 to set out the requirements for the issues to be contained within the plan and that clause 7 actually sets out the requirement to provide the plan. That is why my question was about clause 7. Clause 7 states:

The operator of a security identified surface transport operation must, at the request of a person authorised by the Minister, provide the person with—

- (a) a copy of the counter terrorism plan...

This is in the first instance and on the basis that you or one of your staff has requested the plan. What is the time frame for that?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: If we go back to clause 5(1)(c), it states:

- (c) specify the period within which the operator must prepare a counter terrorism plan in accordance with this Act.

We would set a time according to the needs of proper judgement. Once that is completed, then clause 7 might require it to be produced. As I say, I do not see why, having been through the period

of time specified in clause 5(1)(c), they would not be able to produce it forthwith. If they were not able to produce it forthwith, I think we would want an explanation.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I confirm that I have no more questions about clauses 7, 8 and 9.

Clause passed.

Clauses 8 and 9 passed.

Clause 10.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Again, we certainly support the inclusion of this clause as it relates to confidentiality because of the absolute need to ensure that no other people without authority gain access to information. I wonder whether the minister can provide an example of somebody making a report on the basis that they feel as though there is an unauthorised copy of a plan floating around somewhere. If it comes into the minister's office, what measures—and I certainly respect the hard-working, efficient bureaucracy that exists within all departments to ensure that there is no possibility of a plan getting out—are taken to ensure that, for example, electronic copies are read only and not items that are able to be forwarded on to anyone else?

You cannot have copies of things floating around like we had with the RAH and where a lot of details contained within a computer disk were subsequently lost. How do you ensure that there is no possibility of that confidentiality being breached?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: You are asking me to ensure that human beings will behave according to law or not make a mistake. I am not going to guarantee that one. This is pretty straightforward and, from memory, it is almost a boilerplate clause. I have seen these sorts of provisions in any number of regulatory acts where companies are required to provide information for the purposes of regulation but which is commercially sensitive and which they would want to protect from competitors. You are asking if I can guarantee that no-one will do that. No, I cannot, but I cannot guarantee it in those 100 other regulatory acts, either. It is certainly not a common occurrence and we would not expect it to occur under this act, either.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (11 to 14) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Elder—Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure) (12:05): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. P. Caica.

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.

(Continued from 8 February 2011.)

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12:08): This is a very curious motion. The motion itself is not curious but why the minister moved it is curious, because the sum of the contribution of the minister in moving the motion is as follows:

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.

The minister has given the house no indication as to why he wants the NRM Committee of the house to inquire into this matter, and he has given no indication as to what plan it should be inquiring into.

My understanding is that the proposed Murray-Darling Basin plan itself will go through a number of processes. The minister has not indicated to the house at what point he would have the NRM Committee of the house start its inquiry. Does it start its inquiry when the authority releases its first draft of the plan? Does it start its inquiry when the authority releases its final draft of the plan, or does it start its inquiry when the federal minister signs off on the final draft or, if the federal

minister, at the behest of the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council, refers the final draft of the plan back to the authority for further considerations, does the NRM Committee wait until that process occurs?

The minister has brought a motion to the house that really is so full of holes that I do not think the house can even have an understanding of what he is asking: simply that the NRM Committee inquire into and report on the proposed Murray-Darling Basin plan when it is released by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority. The proposed plan can be any of those I have just mentioned, because the proposed plan can be at a whole range of stages through the development. If the minister understood the legislation that went through this parliament, probably three years ago, he would have an understanding of the process involved in developing the whole of the basin plan, and he may well have formed his motion to more adequately convey his intent or, alternatively, he might have actually put some further information in explanation of his motion to the house so that the house had some understanding of the minister's intent, because what we have before us is a motion, we do not know what it is referring to, and we have absolutely no understanding of the minister's intent.

The body of work in developing the whole of basin plan is enormous—absolutely enormous. What is the minister proposing? Is he proposing that the NRM Committee of this parliament review all of that body of work? Is he proposing that it does an in-depth study and apprise itself of the veracity of all the background and scientific information behind the plan? Is that what he wants, or does he want them just to have a scant look at it, come out and produce a report which will back up the minister's position? I suspect that that is what the minister is asking for, but for the NRM Committee of this parliament to have a half decent look at the proposed basin plan, whatever that is, it will need, in my opinion, at least additional resourcing, even if it is going to have a cursory study of that because of the enormous body of work involved in producing that plan and the enormous body of material that will actually be contained within that plan.

The minister needs to talk to his colleague the Treasurer and assure the house that, if this motion is adopted and that the committee will indeed look at and report on the whole of the basin plan, there will be a requirement for some additional resources for that committee. The minister should have established some parameters, particularly around time frames. I suggest the committee, certainly with its existing resources, would take a number of years to do a proper review of the whole of the basin plan. Will the minister give any commitments that he will actually take some notice of this review? Will he undertake to accept the recommendations from the NRM Committee? If not, what is the purpose of the inquiry that the minister is asking the committee to undertake?

I want to take a bit of time just apprising the house of where we have come from and where we are at because I think it is important that we have an understanding of what has transpired to date and what is likely to transpire in the future, and that might give us some understanding of what the minister is trying to achieve.

It became evident quite a number of years ago that we were in the grips of a drought. A number of members of the government during that time were claiming that it was a one in 1,000 year drought; that it was much more significant than any other drought in recorded history. I have always disputed those claims, but we were certainly in the grips of a very, very significant drought, and it was having an incredible impact right across our economy, everywhere from home gardeners and domestic water use to major irrigators.

It had a huge impact certainly on the economy, particularly in the Riverland and along the river corridor, principally in the electorate of Chaffey but right down into my own electorate at the Lower Lakes and through the Murraylands. It had a huge impact on those economies, and we were scratching our heads trying, I guess, to manage our way through that drought. A lot of ideas were being thrown around and there was huge sympathy within the Australian public to do something—and do something positive—for the River Murray and the River Murray system.

I think that, for the first time in Australia's history (certainly since nationhood), we had the confluence of significant events: the first one being the drought itself; the second one being the public attitude to the way in which we had treated the river system, and, most importantly, the public attitude in those population centres that determine national policy—in the western suburbs of Sydney and in suburban Melbourne.

There was a time when there was great sympathy within those communities which gave the ability—the political will—to actually do something, and that manifest itself in the then prime

minister of this nation, John Howard, putting \$10 billion on the table to try to address the problems of the river—I would say 'some of the problems of the river'.

We had the confluence of these things at a particular point in time, and it gave us an absolutely wonderful opportunity to do something, to have a new approach to the management of the River Murray and the whole Murray-Darling system for the benefit principally of South Australia, because, being at the bottom end of the river, we were, I would argue, more significantly impacted by the treatment that the river had received over generations than other states.

So, it was imperative for South Australia that we get this right. The opportunity that was before us was squandered because our Premier decided that he wanted to play politics; and, when John Howard and Malcolm Turnbull (the then federal environment minister) were bending over backwards to get agreement from the principal state premiers involved in the river basin states, Victoria held out.

The Labor Party decided—because it held power in all those states—that it would be in its best interest in the run-up to the 2007 federal election that there not be an agreement, that we not be progressing. The Labor Party decided that all those voters in those western suburbs of Sydney and metropolitan Melbourne would more likely vote Labor at the November 2007 federal election if John Howard's plan to save the Murray-Darling system was still floundering, and that is what the Labor Party did. It did not care about the end result. All it was focused on was that November 2007 federal election. As a consequence, South Australia lost an opportunity that only comes around probably once every 100 years.

We went through that election period, we had a change of government in Canberra and all sorts of promises were made. In September last year, when the Murray-Darling Basin Authority handed down its first proposed Murray-Darling Basin plan—the guide to the plan—there was outcry, right across the basin. Because we had taken so much time, we lost the opportunity to do something when there was a political will amongst the voting population. We lost that ability to harness that political will and do something positive. As we saw, after the guide to the plan was handed down, there were people in the streets of irrigation towns and communities burning copies of the plan.

An honourable member: The guide.

Mr WILLIAMS: The guide. They were marching in defiance of the proposals, again politics entered, and the federal minister and the federal government collapsed. The federal government was unable to hold its nerve, and that proposal, as far as it got, was basically scrapped and sent back to the drawing board, so much so that the chairman of the authority which was undertaking the study to develop the plan was forced out of his job. We have now got a new chairman, we have now got—

The Hon. S.W. Key: Didn't he resign?

Mr WILLIAMS: He did resign. Technically, he resigned. His position was made untenable. He had no choice but to resign. He was forced out of his job. We have a new chairman—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I do not think we should be reflecting on the departure of that gentleman since he cannot come in here and explain himself.

Mr WILLIAMS: If the member disputes what I am alleging, the member has an opportunity to—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member is not disputing it. I am disputing a reflection on his character.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am not reflecting on anybody's character, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am reflecting on whether the man in question was pushed or whether he chose to go. I do not think that is something that he can defend himself about, so let us move on.

Mr WILLIAMS: I was moving on, actually, Madam Deputy Speaker. The reality is that the newly appointed chair has expressed a lack of confidence in the rest of the board members, and so it seems has the federal government. So, we are still going nowhere. In the meantime, the will to do something positive has dissipated incredibly.

I know the minister has put in a submission to the authority on behalf of South Australia. The minister's submission basically says that we want the plan as was proposed in the guide to the

draft plan. We want the plan to ensure that we recover 7,500 gigalitres, returned as environmental flows in to the river.

I think there is no will and no ability to achieve anywhere near that. I am just wondering whether the minister's proposal is about having the committee cover off on the fact that we find ourselves in a position where we are seen to be squawking for something which we know full well we are never going to achieve. Notwithstanding there was an opportunity to achieve a fair bit of it at one point in time, as I have just explained, that opportunity was squandered. So we are endeavouring to move forward when everybody else in the nation has decided to walk around the issue; that is what has happened.

One of the things that South Australia can and should be calling for is for the federal government to get on with a major part of the recovery of the basin by ensuring that the works that they claim they want to happen—particularly with regard to delivery of water from the river systems to the farmgate—are planned and completed to save huge amounts of water. Just as the work that should be done on farm needs to be done because it will save a huge amount of water.

The only thing that the federal government has spent money on at this stage is buyback of water and, in some sense, that has been successful as it has recovered a fair amount of water. In another sense, I do not know how successful it has been because there does not seem to be any strategy involved in the buyback. They put out a tender, people apply for the tender, and they accept people's offer of water; there does not seem to be a strategy to ensure that the water is bought where it will give the most benefit. There does not seem to be a strategy to ensure that water bought out of a particular irrigation district does not cripple the irrigators who are left in that district. There does not seem to be any strategy to make sure that this is done in a logical, strategic way, yet it is the only thing the federal government has done in 3½ years.

That is the dilemma we find ourselves in. I believe the opportunity we had has been missed: that the work that has been promised by the current federal government to make some real inroads into the problem to return real water without undermining production is not being done. Before us today we have a motion from the minister, and I will be amazed if anybody in the chamber can understand what he is asking for. As I pointed out, the phrase 'the proposed basin plan' can mean all sorts of things. There is no precision in that statement and there is no indication as to what the minister would have the committee inquire into. There are no terms of reference and there is no commitment to resource the committee for what I believe will be a huge task.

The idea of having the NRM committee of this parliament investigate this issue I think is a good one. I do not have a problem with that, but I do think that the parliament needs to give the committee some terms of reference. It needs to assure the committee that it will be adequately resourced. The parliament needs to give the committee an understanding that the government will take some notice of what comes out of the committee's investigation because, at the moment, we have this request for the committee to go and do something, and it is not much more than that.

With reluctance I inform the house that we will not be opposing the motion, but I am incredibly concerned about the openness of the motion, the lack of clarity, the lack of detail and the lack of understanding of what the minister is trying to achieve in this instance.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (12:29): I rise to speak to this motion as well. I take this motion extremely seriously for three main reasons and I will work through them. First of all, there is a significant stretch of the River Murray and communities in the electorate of Stuart, particularly in the area around Morgan, Blanchetown and Cadell. That area has been particularly hard-hit by the lack of water over the last many, many years. It is a tremendous part of the Riverland and has very proud communities.

I point out that Cadell, I think, has probably been hit hardest of just about any community that I can think of anywhere up and down the River Murray in South Australia. The reason for that is not because there is anything wrong with the community of Cadell; it is a very proud community with a lot going for itself, but it is near Morgan and Blanchetown, which have stronger tourism businesses, connections and infrastructure. They are more reliant on irrigation and primary production than many of the other towns, so they have suffered more because they have a bit less to fall back on.

The difficulties with the River Murray over the last decade, really, but certainly the last five years, have been particularly hard on that part of the Murray and on Cadell. Of course, they welcome the rains—primarily rains in Queensland, it is important to point out—that have come down our way. We have had a lot of good local rain that has helped all sorts of agriculture on either

side of the river, but the extra water that is coming down the river at the moment has been welcomed by everybody, as we know.

Another area within the electorate of Stuart that has really done it tough is the area below Lock 1, downstream from Blanchetown. This is an area that not only suffered from the impacts of their ability to draw water for irrigation and the drought, but they also suffered enormously with regard to the drop in the level. Upstream of Lock 1, while there was reduced flow and reduced water running through the river, they did not lose their level, so tourism was still okay. They certainly went through hard times, probably more because of perception than anything else, and their aesthetic amenity was much better upstream where they did not lose their level but, goodness, below Lock 1, those people really, really suffered.

There was very little rain falling on their country on either side of the river. There were drastic cuts to what they could draw out of the river. Also, right in front of them, they really had the heartbreaking, very obvious hit-you-in-the-face issues of the water just subsiding and subsiding and subsiding. There was a very serious impact on the environment and biodiversity around that area as well, because when the water subsided the animals disappeared, the trees died, salt came through and all of those sorts of things.

From purely a Stuart perspective, I take these issues with the river very seriously, and of course have a particular interest in the minister's motion that the Natural Resources Committee inquire into the Murray-Darling Basin plan. My second main area of interest and reason for wanting to speak at the moment is that I think every single South Australian should have a very serious and a very sincere interest in what is going on with the Murray.

We have seen enormous changes and great difficulty with regard to the drastic cuts in irrigation, lack of water and, most importantly to my mind, the enormous impact on communities and the economy. The communities and the economies of the people who live on and near the river, up and down the full length of it in South Australia, have been really dreadfully impacted. Every South Australian takes an interest in that. I do not know exactly what the number is; the member for Chaffey may well know, but I am sure that 95 per cent, or something like that, of South Australians get their water from the River Murray. So what goes on with the river is, by definition, a statewide issue.

The other thing that is very important with regard to the River Murray, the drought and the lack of flows that we have seen coming from upstream over recent years, and now the tremendous rains that we have had in South Australia and in other places in the country which have led to the river levels rising and the flow increasing, and really boom times for the river, is the whole question as to what is reversible. For over 100 years we have been taking water out of this river, and we have caused difficulty for ourselves as a state and as communities. It is not as simple as to say, 'Well, if we change what we take out of it, if we stop taking it out, if we decrease what we take out, that it is automatically reversible and the environment just goes back to where it was 100 years ago.'

That is not the case. It is certainly not the case in my mind. In fact, we are seeing at the moment in that area, below Lock 1, that I mentioned before, that they were in a diabolical situation in the last few years; now they are in a very difficult situation because of the flooding. This is a vibrant, changing, up-and-down environment, and I think for us to think that we would just put a plan in place that will ameliorate all of that, fix that, get things back to the way we want it to be, even if we knew the way we wanted it to be anyway, is probably a little bit naive.

My second point is that every single South Australian should have a very intense interest in the health of this Murray and, of course, our section of the Murray in South Australia is a key component of the broader Murray-Darling Basin area.

My third reason for wanting to speak today and just say a few words on this is that I am a member of the Natural Resources Committee. There are other members here who may well choose to speak on the minister's motion. The things that I would like to say here from my own perspective as one member—not speaking on behalf of the whole committee, because other members can do that for themselves—is that I do very genuinely appreciate and join with some of the comments of the member for MacKillop that it is very unclear exactly what the minister is looking for this committee to do.

It may well become clearer, and the minister may well tell us in more detail down the track—that would be good—but to say that he would like us to inquire into the Murray-Darling Basin plan is a very broad, wide-open statement. The three key things, I suppose—and there are many—

that I would highlight are: first, which draft of the plan exactly and when it is that he wants us to undertake the inquiry; second, what exactly the terms of reference would be, and it is very important to understand what the terms of reference would be; and, thirdly, what is he likely to do with our recommendations, whatever they may be? And I am not pre-empting what they would be at all.

I would like to have some confidence and I would like to have some commitment from the minister that, if he wants this committee to go through all this work, the recommendations would be listened to, followed and implemented to the best of his ability, because otherwise we would really be wasting our time.

Make no mistake, this would be an enormous job. Hundreds of people and millions of dollars have been spent already into looking into this issue, and that will get us up to a point where whichever draft of the plan the minister would like a committee to look into will be tabled, and then there will be another look at it. It just would not be worth anybody's time to go to all that extra cost, extra trouble and extra time, and the minister would have to find some extra resources for that committee to do it. It just would not be possible to do the work otherwise; but even if the resources were available it just would not make sense to use the resources and get the committee to do it if it was not to follow whatever the recommendations might be that would come out of that committee.

I will leave it at that, but I do have three very strong reasons to have a great interest in this. A significant part of the River Murray is in the electorate of Stuart. This is a statewide issue, and as a member of the Natural Resources Committee—and I do take my participation on that committee extremely seriously, and I know that other members of the committee do too—I think it is important to have the resources, and it is particularly important, minister, to know that whatever that committee recommends—and those recommendations would be coming at the tail end of an enormous amount of work by other people—if it was worth us doing the work, I would like to know that the recommendations would be followed.

Mr VENNING (Schubert) (12:39): I rise to support this motion. I also note that the minister is here—he is still a mate of mine, I think. I know he is on a steep learning curve in relation to issues such as this and maybe that is why—I think, wisely—he has asked the committee to look at this. I think that is something we ought to do a lot more often with things that come into this house. In fact, some of this legislation should go to committees before they are formulated, even if they are a lot less complex than this. I certainly welcome this matter coming before the house because I think it is one of the most important issues this house could discuss because we are all dependent on the river.

I note the speeches of members who have spoken before me, particularly the member for MacKillop. I listened in my office to what he had to say and that is why I was inspired to come down and join the debate.

Members interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I pause for acclamation! When the Howard government was in power in Canberra as the national government of Australia and Prime Minister Howard came out with the \$10 billion plan, we all thought that was great because it was a strong attempt to fix the problem. Not only was there a commitment of the money but it was also taking away the power from the individual states and setting up an individual single body. We all know the politics of water and we know the politics of every state having its point of view. We know the politics of Melbourne getting its own pipeline, which is a disgrace. It has gone on and on and been a total disaster.

The Labor Party, through the state Labor governments (and all state governments then were Labor), I believe, as the member for MacKillop reminded us this morning, deliberately torpedoed that plan. They took it to the election, with the confusion that was going on, and it certainly did not help the then Liberal government win that election, because it didn't. The Howard plan went out with the government, but I think it was a strong move—\$10 billion was a commitment. That is a lot of money. I only wish that had come in because I am sure we would have made much more progress if it had.

I believe we certainly need an independent governing body, with no consideration for state boundaries at all. The people sitting on this administrative group should be there because of their expertise only and nothing to do with state representation—nothing—or, if they are, there should be one representative per state, irrespective of population.

We need to recognise that it is an Australian river and we all rely on it. As the member for Stuart has just said, in excess of 90 per cent of us (including me) depend on it in some way. We have been through a pretty traumatic time in the last two or three years, but now we thank the Lord because we have had the rain and things are okay, but we must not let the opportunity go. The minister will tell me, 'Hang on, just because we have had the rain we mustn't forget what we have just been through. Let's learn from that. Don't sit back on our laurels.'

We have to say, 'We were in dire straits,' and that is why we have built this big white elephant desal plant (which I think we will be paying for forever). I agree we had to have a desal plant—I remind the house that it was our policy first—but it did not need to be as big. So, let us learn from the past. What done is done, so let us move on.

I think now we should be looking to save some of the water that is going to waste. This morning, millions of litres would have gone to the sea. We have to try to use that water, whether it is recharging the aquifers, or whatever. We have to spend a lot more time and effort on research and development of that technology.

In Israel, madam, if you have ever been to Israel—and I suggest people do so if it is safe—you will know that they do not waste a drop. They do marvellous things in a country with a lot less rain than we get, but we have been slack. We have had too much cheap water. We needed to get the message, and in the last three years I believe we have got the message. We have had a very strong message.

A lot of people were very concerned about what was happening, particularly when we had the sprinkler rules. Even the minister got caught for watering his lawn, and there was a real public hubbub about that. This showed how much people were concerned and watching who was and was not watering, and all the rest of it.

Mr Bignell interjecting:

Mr VENNING: Even watering lemon trees, but it went on. It is a big issue and we should not treat it lightly. It is not a frivolous matter at all. I think we all would agree in this place that, after what we have been through, now is the time to say we have to set our house in order for when it happens again. It is going to happen again and we need to have things in order.

We have not built a new reservoir for how long? The journos beat us with that story. We have not built a new reservoir for years. Worse than that, we have not even dredged the ones that we have. Most of our reservoirs would be a third full of silt. They ought to be emptied and dredged.

An honourable member: No.

Mr VENNING: Of course they should. What about some new reservoirs on the back of the Mount Lofty Ranges? There are plenty of opportunities there to put them on any of several rivers, but this is all in the future. In the north of the state, where I come from: Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Whyalla, three of our major regional cities, as we would all know, rely on this river almost 100 per cent. We have the most elaborate pipeline system connecting them to that. It is probably still a world engineering feat having so much pipeline.

Looking at the pipeline, I am concerned that it is looking rather untidy. It could do with a coat of paint. I have never seen it in the condition that it is in today. It was normally kept fresh and spruced up, painted with cold galvanising silver frost. It always looked nice. At the moment, particularly through Spalding and those areas, it looks particularly rusty. That worries me. I feel like getting a paintbrush myself and writing on it, 'This needs painting.' In fact, I will do that.

Mr Goldsworthy: Graffiti.

Mr VENNING: Is that graffiti? The minister will know who did it. The message is: we love the pipeline. I know it is not that pretty, but unlike those wind turbines, which serve a dubious benefit, the pipeline is of absolute benefit and we put up with the inconvenience of having it there because it brings vibrancy to the north of our state.

At Crystal Brook, where our farm has been for six generations, we rely on that water. In fact, every paddock on our farm has a trough in it connected to the Murray River. That is a privilege which we never forget. We never take it for granted when we turn the tap on. We do not rely on windmills any more. Years ago we used to have windmills. We do not have to worry about windmills, which were always a pain and they always broke down on Christmas day. There is always water there, the way it is.

So, I am pleased that the Natural Resources Committee, which is in the very capable hands of some of our most efficient members, will investigate and inquire into the Murray-Darling Basin plan. I think it is a good idea that the minister has done this. I am confident that the committee will do a good job, but I hope that the parliament will supply extra resources because they are going to need it. With one research officer, it is a big task. It is going to be flooded with people wanting to give evidence.

We are going to be watching it very closely, and no doubt the minister will. The minister is smart enough to say that if there is an unpalatable decision to be made here, the committee is going to wear it. That is what politics is all about. I am sure that the minister will feed some information in, both publicly and privately, to the inquiry, things that need to be raised, and he will tell his troops what is to be done. I hope the exercise will be very fruitful.

I hope that recommendations will be made and, most importantly, that the government will take notice of them. I wish the committee all the best. I commend this to the house. My final word is that I would like to see this more often. I think the committees should be used more often to discuss more legislation.

Mr PEGLER (Mount Gambier) (12:48): I support the idea that the Murray-Darling Basin plan must be investigated to ensure that the Murray River is in the best state that it can possibly be and that the state of South Australia is looked after. The one thing I do have a problem with though is that at this stage we have very little idea of what the resources are that will be supplied to the Natural Resources Committee, what the terms of reference for this inquiry are, and does the committee have the time?

I understand that the minister is in an awkward position and that until we know exactly what the consultation process will be with the Murray-Darling Basin plan and what the federal authorities decide on how that should happen, it puts us, in this state, in quite an awkward situation. I believe that, if the Natural Resources Committee is well resourced and has the time, it will be able to conduct this inquiry properly. I certainly support the idea of this inquiry and that the Natural Resources Committee does that inquiry, but we must ensure that that committee is well resourced, with very succinct terms of reference and adequate time frames to ensure that a proper inquiry takes place and it is of benefit to this state. I support the idea of this inquiry.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:50): I too rise to support the Natural Resources Committee being given some extra funds to put, I guess, a complementary submission to the minister's office in relation to the guide for the draft Murray-Darling Basin plan.

The reason I have taken a very keen interest in this is that obviously a significant part of the River Murray in South Australia is within the electorate of Chaffey. Obviously, in Chaffey, Renmark is the oldest irrigation settlement in Australia, and it has a huge amount of history not only in South Australia but it was leading the way over 100 years ago with new technology and also becoming one of the major food bowl areas of Australia.

Looking at the indicative draft plan, there have been a lot of problems with the government's initiation of that plan. What has been highlighted is that the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's guide to the draft was based around the Water Act. Today it is shown that that Water Act had no regard for the social and economic impact not only to the river but to the communities, food production and the people who have been there for over 100 years.

What really alarms me is that the plan was based around science and the science, as well as the government's submission, said that this river, the wetlands, the environment, could take between 10 and 20 years to right itself with the sustained drought. One thing I might add is that 112 years of records show that the last 16 years had above average rainfall. So, we are talking about this sustained drought and record low inflows. Why were their record low inflows? Why was there no water coming over the border to South Australia?

The Murray-Darling Basin draft guide showed that the last 16 years had above average rainfall, and that is a very clear indicator that it is not just the drought that deprived South Australia of water. It is not just the drought that caused South Australia, which is at the end of the river, to receive what it got. What it is showing is that there was an imbalance as to where entitlements were given and where the governments had negotiated South Australia's water away from predominantly the irrigation sector, the food production sector.

The environment has taken a heavy hit with the record low inflows and I think that the minister, his department and his advisers have based their submission on that science. That

science said that, number one, the environment must be looked after. I agree that a sustainable river is what is needed, but there is also a balance within the guide plan and that revolves around the communities, the irrigation sector, the Ramsar-listed sites, a sustainable backwater system and a healthy natural fish breeding program. It revolves around many, many issues and it is not straight out about the environment, the river communities and having food production at the top of the agenda.

What we need to look at first is satisfying the environmental needs. I think that that is a given; I do not think anyone will dispute that, but next, it is about the communities that have been there for over a hundred years. It is about the food. Every time any of us sit down at a table, whether it is for breakfast, lunch or dinner, where does that food come from? Most people take for granted that that food just comes from the supermarket. It is put on their tables, and we rely on having healthy, reliable, pest-free, regulated food. The majority of that food comes from the Murray-Darling Basin.

Again, nearly 90 per cent of Australia's food production comes from the basin, and we have a submission put by this state government that relied on an environmental outcome first with very little regard to food production. I guess it highlights the government's lack of will to support anything more than 67 per cent of irrigators' allocations. I think that is just something that the government continues to ignore. If the government had the will to step up to the plate and support food production and support the communities in South Australia that rely on the river, we would not be in the predicament that we are in today.

Just looking at the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's independent plan, it is a very long way from the truth. The independent plan turned very political the day that it was released. It was put out into the public domain and it was met with fury, anger and disbelief that this basin plan could actually be based around the Water Act with no regard for the people, food or the history that revolved around the river.

They talked about there not being enough social and economic impact assessment done on the draft plan. I find that very hard to believe. I dealt with not only the Murray-Darling Basin Authority people but also with federal government people coming around and doing surveys on the impact and what would be left if the plan was to take back the water that it needed for a sustainable environment.

I just reflect back to the science, which said that it might take between 10 and 20 years for the river to rebuild itself and for the environment to be put back into a sustainable mode. It took four months and we have record inflows into the Lower Lakes that we have not seen since 1994. All of a sudden, we are relying on the science that says that it might take 10 to 20 years for the river and its environment to be put back into a sustainable mode. It just goes to show that a lot of the science that this plan has been based on and the submissions that our state government has put to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority really are flawed.

I think that if the Natural Resources Committee is going to put a recommendation to the state government, it needs to look at the bigger picture. It does not need to be stymied by the scare campaign that, unless we act now and decimate the food production sector and the communities that rely on the river, we will see an unsustainable river for the rest of the days. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

[Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00]

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

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (THERAPEUTIC GOODS AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING NATIONAL LAW (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) BILL

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The SPEAKER (14:02): I draw honourable members' attention to the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day today, which celebrates women's achievements everywhere. When we look at where we came from in 1910 (100 years ago), there were no female politicians in this place and very few female leaders of other organisations. We still have a long way to go and most telling is that today there was some sort of announcement that women were working longer hours than men. Of course, all over the world, women still work much longer hours than men.

International Women's Day also reminds us that many women around the world continue to face inequality. Every day, thousands of women and girls are victims of gender-based violence, including sexual abuse, trafficking and early and forced marriage. Rape is a weapon of war daily.

However, today, I want to celebrate with my sisters what we have achieved and be thankful that many of us now have a choice in our lives. I hope that the future for our daughters and granddaughters will achieve true equality for women.

KANGAROO ISLAND WATER TREATMENT PLANT

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water): Presented a petition signed by 49 residents of Kangaroo Island requesting the house to urge the government to place the water treatment plant away from the rural living zone at a location several kilometres from Kingscote where it will secure Kangaroo Island's future water resources without unduly impacting on so many lives.

ARKARoola WILDERNESS SANCTUARY

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): Presented a petition signed by 26 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to prevent exploration and mining in the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary.

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I advise members of the presence in the gallery today of year 11 students from Westminster School, who are guests of the Hon. Terry Stephens.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

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

TRANSLATORS

In reply to **Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition)** (9 November 2010).

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): I am advised that:

The reduction in supplies and services expenses from 2008-09 is due to the reduction in the use of translators as contract staff. In 2009-10, a casual pool was formed for translators as part of the salaries and wages budget. This resulted in an increase in employee benefit expenses and a decrease in supplies and services.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

In reply to **Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition)** (9 November 2010).

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): I am advised that:

Recoveries are a recoupment of expenditure incurred by the Attorney-General's Department. Recoveries decreased in 2009-10 as there was a reduction in the recovery of salary costs along with a reduction in the allocation of corporate revenue to this program.

SUPERANNUATION BENEFITS

In reply to **Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition)** (9 November 2010).

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): I am advised that:

Superannuation benefits are paid on behalf of Multicultural SA employees to Super SA depending on which public sector superannuation scheme they belong to. This is the same as other public sector employees.

LEASE INCENTIVES

In reply to **Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition)** (9 November 2010).

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): I am advised that:

Lease incentive receivables and liabilities relate to incentives provided to the Attorney-General's Department by building owners as a result of renewing lease arrangements for accommodation. Where the building owner has offered a lease free period as an incentive, a liability is recognised.

As this is an up-front benefit provided by the building owner to the Department, accounting principles require this to initially be recognised as a liability, which progressively reduces over the life of the lease. A lease incentive asset has also been recognised to reflect future contributions by the building owner towards the fit out of the building.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Attorney-General (Hon. J.R. Rau)—

Summary Offences Act—

Dangerous Areas Authorisations Report for Period 1 October to 31 December 2010

Road Block Authorisations Report for Period 1 October to 31 December 2010

Rules made under the following Act—

District Court—Civil Rules—Amendment 15

By the Minister for Urban Development, Planning and the City of Adelaide (Hon. J.R. Rau)—

Development Act 1993—Administration of Annual Report 2009-10

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

Regulations made under the following Act—

Harbors and Navigation—Control of *Caulerpa Taxifolia*—Revocation

By the Minister for Police (Hon. K.O. Foley)—

Death of—Wallace, James Report

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

Health and Community Services—Rights Charter

SA Ambulance Service—Annual Report 2009-10

By the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse (Hon. J.D. Hill)—

Regulations made under the following Act—

Tobacco Products Regulation—Prescribed Actions

By the Minister for Environment and Conservation (Hon. P. Caica)—

South Eastern Water Conservation and Drainage Board—Annual Report 2009-10

By the Minister for the River Murray (Hon. P. Caica)—

Murray-Darling Basin Authority—Annual Report 2009-10

QUESTION TIME**McTERNAN, MR J.**

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:10): My question is to the Premier. Did the Premier's new Thinker in Residence, John McTernan, work in any capacity on the Labor Party's 2010 South Australian election campaign?

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) (14:10): I am very impressed with him. He is—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs REDMOND: You won the election.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Pardon? That's right; we did. May I just say that John McTernan is someone who is internationally distinguished. He is, of course, the founder of the New Scotland Foundation; he has been an adviser to British prime ministers; he has been an adviser to a former British secretary of state for defence. Someone has also told me that he had, in fact, the equivalent ranking of a rear admiral. He has worked for the Secretary of State for Scotland. He has worked as a director of—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: He has been involved with the establishment of the Docklands development in Britain and he has been involved in local government. Last night his speech was outstanding, but do you know something—yes, he is a member of the British Labour Party. Do you know what, we have appointed John Olsen, we have appointed Rob Kerin, we have appointed Dean Brown and David Wotton, and they are members of the Liberal Party.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I guess the point it comes down to is we appoint people on the basis of their ability: great leaders like John Olsen and Dean Brown; great charismatic leaders like Rob Kerin; a wonderful environment minister like David Wotton; and we also had people from that side of the house come and join us. In fact, they came to join us as ministers, because we will seek the best and brightest, wherever they come from, in the interests of the state.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, Minister for Police!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope you have got rid of all your excess energy now and we have an orderly question time from now on.

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Minister for Police, don't spur them on.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, Minister for Police! There will be no arguments across the chamber between the Minister for Police and the Leader of the Opposition. I have warned you both.

CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (14:13): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier update the house on South Australia's efforts to assist the people of Christchurch following the recent devastating earthquake?

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) (14:13): First of all, I was in New Zealand on the weekend and I can tell honourable members that there is, at every level, extraordinary appreciation from the people of New Zealand for the assistance given by Australia during this terrible tragedy in the rescue, relief and recovery efforts, and also a real recognition of the work of South Australians in that process.

It was two weeks ago today that a violent and tragic earthquake ripped through our sister city of Christchurch in New Zealand, changing forever the lives of nearly all of its citizens. South Australia's immediate response was to extend the offer to help in any way we could and it has been heart-warming to see the way in which so many South Australians have generously devoted their time and effort to help the people of our sister city of Christchurch.

Yesterday morning, I had the privilege of attending a briefing session at Bonython Hall at Adelaide University for 170 young university students who had flown in from Christchurch from Adelaide on Sunday afternoon. These young people—mainly first and second year undergraduates—are enrolled at Canterbury University in Christchurch, and in some cases their faculty buildings currently lie in ruins or are in uncertain situations as a result of the violent earthquake 10 days ago.

The Vice-Chancellor of Adelaide University, Professor James McWha—who had previously worked at Canterbury University for 13 years—acted swiftly to provide for and accommodate these students to ensure that their studies are not held up by the rebuilding work that must now go on to re-establish adequate facilities for Canterbury University to continue.

Adelaide University was the first in Australia to put its hand up and organise for a group of students to come out here and make use of the excellent facilities it provides. Within days of the call going out, all 170 students were able either to be billeted with university staff or placed in student accommodation. The speed of organising such a substantial logistical task is a tribute to Professor McWha and his team at Adelaide University.

I hope those students will take a great deal from their 16-week stay here and form strong bonds—indeed, lifetime bonds—with Adelaide as a result. I hope to see them at the various functions—the Fringe and WOMADelaide. Also, of course, I am expecting to see a strong turn-out of the visiting students at the Rugby Sevens given the haka they performed yesterday for us.

I am sure that everyone is going to make these students very welcome. South Australia, of course, has been able to help in many other ways at the request of New Zealand authorities. A team of nine South Australian urban search and rescue specialists flew to Christchurch for 10 days last week to help with earthquake recovery. This group consisted of highly-skilled officers from the Metropolitan Fire Service, the State Emergency Service and the SA Ambulance Service.

I am informed that these urban search and rescue specialists are self-sufficient, highly-trained and well briefed in coping with potentially dangerous conditions in the very sad, ongoing search and recovery of people still missing in the rubble of so many buildings in Christchurch.

Remaining team members of the South Australian Search and Rescue Task Force continue to be on stand-by to assist with any further deployments to Christchurch or elsewhere if requested. In addition, 32 SAPOL officers are continuing to help their counterparts after being sworn in as special officers. I am informed that they are currently working 10-hour shifts, which allows for briefings, transport and deployments.

New Zealand police have also requested another four SAPOL specialists to assist with disaster victim identification. I want to thank—

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Twelve more police are going tomorrow.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I have just been informed by the Minister for Police that another 12 police officers from SAPOL will be departing tomorrow for Christchurch. This, I think—

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Friday, sorry.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Sorry, on Friday. This is a demonstration of our commitment to our sister city. New Zealand has always been there for us in the past as Australians during disasters. The ANZAC tradition continues.

PUBLIC SERVICE REVIEW

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:18): My question, again, is to the Premier. Why has the government engaged new Thinker in Residence John McTernan to conduct the government's seventh so-called independent review of the public sector in nine years, especially as the government announced in the budget exactly what it was going to do to the Public Service?

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) (14:18): I have to say that I wished that the Leader of the Opposition—I missed her this morning at the United Nation's Women's Breakfast, and I missed her last night particularly because I thought she would be there, because it was an outstanding presentation. What John McTernan is working on, and the Thinkers in Residence—let us just go back to some of the things. Out of the residency of Baroness Greenfield we got the Royal Institution of Science in Australia. We also got the Australian Science—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —Media Centre, which links about 500 media organisations to thousands of scientists. Maire Smith's residency led to the development of the biotech incubator. We had Stephen Schneider who shared the Nobel—

Mrs REDMOND: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order, Premier. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs REDMOND: My question was specifically about the current Thinker in Residence—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs REDMOND: —and why the government needed to appoint him to look again at the public sector when it has had six earlier so-called independent reviews of the public sector. The Premier's answer to this point—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs REDMOND: —has gone nowhere near that question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not uphold that—

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Unley! I am listening very carefully to answers today, and questions. I think the Premier's answer is relevant to the question. However, I will listen carefully.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: We know that the Liberals don't like ideas. We know they don't want us to be leaders—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: We know that they do not want our state to move ahead. We know why there wasn't development of the mining industry under the Liberals. We know why we went backwards in terms of jobs under the Liberals. We know why we saw them cutting police under the Liberals. But the difference is, we are bringing people here to advise us and work with us about how we can continue to be leaders in Australia, rather than the followers that the Liberals would have. So, do you want to hear what John—

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

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Point of order: standing order 98, Madam Speaker. The minister must respond to the substance of the question and not debate.

The SPEAKER: Member for Stuart, the problem is that I can't hear a word that the Premier is saying because of all the noise coming from your side of the chamber. I hope you are sticking to the substance of the question, Premier.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, ma'am. What has happened is that we have asked John McTernan not to review the public sector, or the Public Service. What we have asked John McTernan to do is to work with us to help ensure that service delivery to the public is improved even further, and can I just say on that, we have just recently—

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Norwood, you are very loud today, as usual, but louder still.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: So what we are asking him to do is to work with us to improve the services of the Public Service to the public. Let me give you some ideas on that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: They don't want to listen.

The SPEAKER: Premier, have you finished your answer?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: No, ma'am, I haven't. But it is interesting that, recently, the productivity committee and various other national reports have found that satisfaction with the housing trust, with our police and with our hospitals is higher than in other states, but we believe we must continually work to improve them further, and that is why John McTernan is here, and that's why we are very proud to have him as a Thinker in Residence, rather than the alternative, which is basically a party that is moribund of new ideas.

HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

Mr SIBBONS (Mitchell) (14:22): My question is to the Minister for Health. How are state government efforts improving waiting times in the emergency departments of South Australian public hospitals?

An honourable member: This is going to be good.

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) (14:23): Well it is good. I thank the member for his faith.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! You will listen to the Minister for Health.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am very pleased to report that there has been an overall improvement in the average wait times in the emergency departments of South Australia's metropolitan public hospitals, despite what some might be saying. Figures from SA Health show—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: They laugh about patients in emergency departments, Madam Speaker. That's what they do. That is their response. Figures from SA Health show that the average wait time between being triaged and clinical treatment starting across all hospitals has improved from 50 minutes—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Please ask a question about it. I am happy to answer any of your questions. The average time across all hospitals has improved from 50 minutes in 2007-08 to 45 minutes in 2009-10, and the year to date to the end of January this year shows a further

improvement to 41 minutes. So, despite the fact that our emergency departments are getting busier and more patients are going through the door, the average waiting time before treatment (after triage) has continued to fall down.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the deputy leader will be quiet!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: At the Flinders Medical Centre, which was the subject of attention yesterday, average wait times have in fact improved from 39 minutes in 2007-08 to 34 minutes in 2009-10, and 31 minutes for the year to date. That includes the patients, whose photograph was on the front page of yesterday's paper, who, I am told, had already been triaged by the time they got to that state. So, it is 31 minutes from the time that the triage happens to the time that treatment happens. That is a remarkable improvement in that hospital despite the fact that it is undergoing building and construction works at the same time.

In relation to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the year-to-date figure is 43 minutes. The average time that patients spent in the emergency department receiving treatment in the Royal Adelaide Hospital year-to-date is 328 minutes. That is 5½ hours. This compares to a system-wide average time spent in emergency departments of 293 minutes or just under five hours.

Flinders reports that patients are spending less time in the emergency department. In January 2010, admitted patients, that is, patients who ended up being admitted into a bed, spent an average of seven hours in the emergency department. In January 2011, this reduced to five point four. That period of time, of course, is when they are being treated for the cause of the emergency.

This is an outstanding outcome for the Flinders Medical Centre which is currently, as I said, being upgraded as part of a \$163 million redevelopment. It is no secret that our emergency departments are very busy places, and I understand that during the past week or so it has been particularly busy at a number of our city hospitals. However, the average times that I have just quoted show that the system overall is improving.

Yesterday, the shadow spokesman claimed, and it was reported on ABC radio that at the Royal Adelaide Hospital last week the average wait was 18 hours for a bed in the emergency department. That is plainly untrue. I am advised that the actual average emergency department time last week was 5½ hours, and the average wait for treatment to start was 42 minutes. Just to be more—

Mr Williams: After triage.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Patients are triaged as soon as they get to the hospital.

The SPEAKER: Order! Deputy Leader of the Opposition, be quiet.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Just to be more precise about the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the average visit time year-to-date for patients who were admitted was 490 minutes, which is just under seven hours. The average waiting time for patients who are about to be admitted—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: They go through a treatment process, where in the emergency—

Dr McFetridge interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The member for Morphett said that the average was 18 hours. That is a Lib fib—a Lib fib. He said 18 hours. He made it up.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: He said the average time was 18 hours. He is wrong.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I am advised that the actual average emergency department time last week was 5½ hours and the average wait for treatment to start was 42 minutes. On the one

hand, the Liberals complain that the Royal Adelaide Hospital has insufficient capacity, yet on the other hand they attach—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Point of order.

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order: the minister is now debating the answer.

The SPEAKER: I am sure the minister is concluding his remarks fairly shortly.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I conclude with this remark. We have an excellent hospital system in South Australia—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: —which is under pressure all the time from an increasing number of patients. In fact, we are increasing new patient numbers in emergency departments across the board by around about 2 per cent, which is a stunning turnaround in the numbers that were going to the emergency department—it used to be about 5 per cent increase a year. We are now down to about 2 per cent because we have been able to put in place—

Mr Marshall: They've given up waiting. They have a seven-hour wait.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Norwood, you are warned.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: We have been able to put in place measures outside of the emergency department so that patients have other places to go to for attention. Despite the increasing numbers of patients going to emergency departments, we have been able to reduce the waiting times before they start treatment. We have been able to reduce the waiting times before they are admitted, if they have to be admitted. This demonstrates that the strategy that we have in place for running our hospitals is successful.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I wish the member for Bragg would ask me a question along those lines. There is still more to be done and this government is getting on with the job. I compare what we are doing to the other side which has no plans whatsoever other than to oppose infrastructure—

The SPEAKER: Order! Point of order.

Mr WILLIAMS: The minister is again debating the answer to the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think you are debating some of what the minister says across the floor to him also. Minister, have you finished?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I was just making a comparison between what the government's plans are, which is to improve the hospitals—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: It is factual, absolutely factual. They oppose our plan to have a four-hour turnaround in emergency departments for all patients. They oppose that, and we are in favour of it. That is the big difference.

ROBERTS, MS R.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:30): My question is again to the Premier. On what basis has the Premier reappointed his former economics adviser, Ms Rowan Roberts, who resigned from the Premier's office after the 2010 state election? On 30 September last year I asked the Premier a question about whether his former economics adviser Ms Roberts had received the 16-week payout (understood to be some \$37,000) following her resignation after the 2010 state election with her position subsequently being advertised but not filled. The Premier said that he would provide a report stating:

Given that she has not applied for a position on my staff and given that she has married a German economist and is now living in the Black Forest, it does seem a somewhat nebulous question.

No report was ever provided by the Premier and now Ms Roberts has returned from overseas and been reappointed.

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) (14:31): There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. Indeed, I think you should look at your own employment records in terms of the opposition. The fact is that she resigned. She was entitled to a termination payment. She then went to Germany; she got married and went to Germany where—

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Leader of the Opposition!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —she had another position and so did her husband, but she made the decision to come back to Australia. She is outstanding. We are lucky to have her. We have reappointed her. She is terrific. And isn't it great that we have a great economy?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Minister for Police! Be quiet.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens) (14:32): My question is to the Minister for Education.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs GERAGHTY: Can the minister update the house on the response to the draft teacher recruitment policy released for consultation last week?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Science and Information Economy) (14:32): I do work very closely with the member for Torrens and enjoy doing that very much. In August of last year the government issued a discussion paper where we said we would reform our recruitment policy to do a number of key things: one, to give our principals greater say in choosing the teachers that suit their school; the other was an opportunity for temporary teachers to gain permanent employment; the other was to remove the requirement of the 10-year rule for people to be moved on regardless of performance; and finally, to create more opportunities for graduates and early career teachers to gain permanent positions.

So last week we published our draft recruitment policy which, together with the teacher renewal program announced a month ago, promises to deliver on each of these elements. At one and the same time we can give greater say to principals, we can end the 10-year rule, we can provide more permanent jobs for those teachers who have been stuck on contract or relief work all those years. The draft policy is now up for consultation. There will, of course, be discussion; that is the purpose of releasing the draft for consultation.

To give you some flavour of the responses, Mr Jim Davies, the President of the Secondary Schools Association, has indicated that he wants to find ways to keep central placement of teachers to a minimum. We have already started discussions of those matters with him, but he has made it very clear that what we have proposed is a giant leap forward and, from his perspective, that is very welcome. The AEU has welcomed the debate. It is true to say that they have some concerns about the draft policy but also see its benefits, and we will continue to discuss the matter with them. But there has been other feedback which has been mixed, as you would expect, but here is a bit of a sample:

...principals should have the ability to hire teachers as long as they're qualified. They don't need to be in the system, they shouldn't be restricted to be hiring teachers that are already employed by the Department of Education.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I pause to say here that that is exactly what happens now and will continue. The other point is—and this has been described as a backdown to unions:

The unions have wanted to see less flexibility for principals, less flexibility for school communities by having more permanent teachers...

That was another piece of feedback. On the other hand, there was also some feedback which says there is a concern that we are not doing enough for permanency. So, first were backing down to teachers on permanency and then we are not doing enough for permanency. It continues, 'I cannot see how this policy will make more positions permanent.' Then there was another piece of feedback on a different aspect of policy:

Nowhere yet have we heard how these changes will make it easier for principals to hire teachers for the specific needs of their schools.

This, of course, is the whole point of the policy. There is nothing unusual about a series of conflicting and contradictory policy positions, it is just that they all came from the same person.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: Who's that?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The member for Unley. So, the member for Unley has—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: —cunningly adopted every position in this debate. It is a clever tactic for those—

Ms Chapman: Debate!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It means that he's got all of the bases covered just in case there is some movement in the position. Of course, it does not speak for the integrity of his position, but, nevertheless, he has always been a comfortable man having his integrity questioned. Can I say—

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

Mr PENGILLY: Point of order 127: I ask the minister to withdraw those remarks.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: He's not comfortable either, Madam Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. Hill: He looks comfortable.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: He looks very comfortable to me.

The SPEAKER: Order! I am not sure what you have just said. Have you withdrawn your remarks, minister?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes, I am withdrawing if somebody has taken offence to that. There is good news: consultation is still open and there is a website at www.decs.sa.gov.au/teacherrecruitment for feedback. When the opposition has sorted out which of its competing views it is going to adopt, we would be very pleased to hear from them.

Ms Chapman: Are parents allowed to say something?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Parents, of course, are very welcome to have a say, and we would be very pleased to hear what they would like to say. On a more serious note, I am advised that more than 300 responses have been received on the website since last Wednesday, and I would like to leave you with just one, Madam Speaker, because I think it sums up why we are doing what we are doing, and that is this:

I love the idea that we would have some job security. It is so hard to provide continuity in your program when you don't know if you have a job from one year to the next. The Christmas holidays are wasted because you feel unable to plan and prepare, and then if you get placed back in your current school you feel as though you are trying to catch up for all of first term. I love...that Principals—

Ms Chapman: Signed by Michael Wright.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It continues:

I love that Principals can choose staff that suit their site. Teachers have different things to offer, and different schools need different skills and personalities. This will enable Principals to build a stable environment for their students. Students in disadvantaged schools, with different home lives need some stability in their lives and now hopefully, Principals will be able to provide this within their schools. How wonderful would that be for these children and their families?

ROBERTS, MS R.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:38): Can the Premier advise the house, in relation to Ms Rowan Roberts' new position in the Premier's office, whether the position was advertised, how Ms Roberts made her application, or whether she had to apply at all?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier.

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) (14:38): Can I just say, it is really interesting today, the government was told this morning that the questions today would be about the proposed Adelaide Oval, but they have had a big falling out. Where do you stand on the Adelaide Oval proposal?

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order, point of order. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Good deflection!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, Premier!

Mr WILLIAMS: Standing order 98: the minister needs to answer the question.

The SPEAKER: Yes, I uphold that point of order. Premier.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I guess the point is relevant, because all the matters relating to Rowan Roberts and John McTernan were in last week's *Advertiser*, and they just scrambled around with their clippings, hoping that the television stations would think, 'Oh, well, we've got to run with something today.' As for John McTernan's help in the election campaign, we did not need help: we had Stephen Griffiths and Vickie Chapman working for us.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Absolutely working for us—helped us out brilliantly, totally put the kibosh on your election victory. Now, back to Rowan Roberts. The fact that you leaked to us to tell us that you are all over the place on the oval we really appreciate, by the way.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yes, that's right; there are plenty of appointments we can talk about in terms of—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —the Leader of the Opposition's office, or for the big increase in funding for the Leader of the Opposition's office that you requested from me. In terms of Rowan Roberts, the current employment contract for ministerial staff came into effect—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Honestly, we really appreciated Vickie Chapman's help during the election campaign, and we really appreciated Stephen Griffiths' help. We will give them honorary membership of the Labor Party one day.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: No, let's not go too far. They are their thinkers in residence.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: That's right. They are the thinkers in residence for the Liberals. They are thinking, 'We can't let Isobel win so we will come out for the other side in the last week.' The current employment contract for ministerial staff came into effect following the introduction of the Public Sector Management Act of 1995—who was in office then?—

The Hon. K.O. Foley: The Liberals.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —and has been in use since 1997. Who was in office then? The Liberals. The payment provision—that is, the payout provision, the termination provision—was actually put in place by the Liberals. The payment provision has always been contained in the contract and was also a provision in contracts prior to 1995. The standard ministerial contract contains a provision (clause 12.1) that specifies that if the contract terminates by reason of the expiration of the term and the Premier does not provide at least three calendar months' notice of a contract expiration date then (subject to the conditions of clause 12.2 of the contract) the employee is eligible to be paid 16 weeks' salary plus any accrued leave.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Clause 12.2 is specific in that it states that if a recipient of a 16-week payment (made pursuant to clause 12.1) commences employment during that period in an office of profit under the Crown (whether in the Public Service or otherwise) then they forfeit any entitlement to such payment or to such part thereof. Repayment of the appropriate amount must be made in such cases.

These are the same arrangements that applied under the Liberal government. So the opposition is criticising arrangements that the Liberal government set up in this—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: I have a point of order, Madam Speaker. The point of order is relevance to the question. The question was about the re-employment, not about the original payout.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold that point of order. The Premier is talking about conditions of employment. The Premier.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: These are the same arrangements that applied under the Liberal government. In fact, the current form of the ministerial staff contracts was adopted in 1997 under the Olsen Liberal government, and they are the same arrangements that apply to opposition staffers. So, following the March 2010 election—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: And you asked me specifically for more money. You wanted hundreds of thousands of dollars of more money for the opposition to employ more staff—and we are, of course, at the same time, bankrolling the case of Kevin Naughton. Following the March 2010 election, the 16-week period has now expired. Therefore, any former employee who is to be re-contracted would not be required to make any repayments.

Rowan Roberts worked in my office as the economic adviser and received a termination payment in accordance with her contract following the 2010 election. The position of economic adviser was advertised nationally in April 2010 but no suitable candidates were identified. Ms Roberts has been re-employed in my office since 1 February 2011. The terms of her employment are consistent with the previous terms and conditions but taking into account standard movement in relation to public sector salaries.

Ms Roberts is an exceptional public sector officer, and her contribution to public policy development is valued both in government and the private sector. She has a first class honours degree in economics from the University of Adelaide and a master of economics from the Australian National University. She has extensive public policy experience at the Australian Treasury as well as in domestic and international policy institutes.

The payment of a sum of money on termination without notice is not a novel employment arrangement. You set it up and used it in opposition and also in government. So it should not be confused with the payment of an amount of money on account of a redundancy arrangement. Where public servants are paid on account of redundancy, the position is abolished and the former employee receives a payment based on years of service. This can be up to 116 weeks in the public sector compared to a termination of ministerial staff, who do not have permanency, of 16 weeks.

Employees whose positions are declared redundant and the position abolished cannot be employed for several years. This position reflects the size of the redundancy but, more importantly, acts as a check on the abolition of jobs without proper justification. Ms Roberts' positive contribution can be contrasted with the contribution of Liberal staffer Kevin Naughton, who peddled—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —dodgy documents, lies, fakes and forgeries—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —while on the public payroll—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order. The Premier is clearly debating at the moment, Madam Speaker.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

Mr Williams: It's clearly debate.

The SPEAKER: Order! Deputy leader, sit down. It is straying close to debate. Premier, I am sure you are going to finish your answer shortly.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, ma'am. So, did we advertise? Yes. Did we get anyone as good as Rowan Roberts? No. Did we know that she was coming back? No. She is back, and we are really pleased to have her. She makes an outstanding contribution, but we are using exactly the same provisions as were set up by the Liberal Party in government. You hope that the television cameras will ignore that all this has been in the newspapers because you could not get your act together for question time today. Where do you stand on the Adelaide Oval? If you support it, say so now.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PEDERICK: Point of order: relevance, 128.

The SPEAKER: I think the point of order is irrelevant because I think the Premier has finished his answer. He is sitting down.

McTERNAN, MR J.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:46): Supplementary question. At the beginning of his answer just then, the Premier said that they did not need John McTernan's help during the election campaign. In saying that, is he saying that the Thinker in Residence now appointed did not come to South Australia to help in the ALP election campaign last year?

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) (14:46): I think you will find that he was actually in London during those crucial weeks. But can I just say this: Vickie Chapman and Steven Griffiths gave us more help—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PENGILLY: Point of order. The Premier, as every other minister and every other member, knows to refer to a member by their title—the member for Bragg.

The SPEAKER: I uphold that point of order. The Premier knows that. He is aware of that.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I apologise—the member for Bragg and the member for Goyder. Yes, we did see John McTernan in South Australia, and we are pleased that he is back. Can I just say this: during the crucial time in that election campaign, when John McTernan was in London, we got help from Vickie Chapman and Steven Griffiths—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —and my view is that that help was deliberate help to stop another faction and Isobel Redmond—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —getting elected as Premier of South Australia.

The SPEAKER: Premier, I remind you not—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members not to address other members by their names but by their electorates. The Leader of the Opposition.

ROBERTS, MS R.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:48): I again have a question for the Premier. Did the director of the government's Thinkers in Residence program, Gabrielle Kelly, who also happens to be the mother of Rowan Roberts, have any role in Ms Roberts' appointment or reappointment in the Premier's office?

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) (14:48): One person and one person only was responsible for her appointment to my staff, and that is moi.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Davenport and the Minister for Police, order! There will be no quarrels across the floor. If you want to quarrel, go out in the corridor or outside.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (14:49): My question is to the Minister for Health. After nine years in government, why are South Australians being forced to wait on trolleys in the corridors of our major public hospitals?

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) (14:49): I have always liked the way the member for Morphett, as the shadow minister for

health, gets a question about halfway down the list after I have actually given the house the information that is relevant to his question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I refer him to the answer I gave before, when I pointed out—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Morialta!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: As I pointed out to him and to the house earlier on, waiting times have, in fact, reduced right across the board and, in particular, at the Flinders Medical Centre, where—for the benefit of the house I will explain it again—we are undertaking major capital works development to increase the size of the emergency department so that it can adequately deal with the number of people going through that department. As a result of that, some space in the hospital has been temporarily put out of action and a new arrangement put in place so that patients can be properly looked after as they come through.

This has not increased the amount of time the patients have to wait. In fact, as I pointed out, the amount of time they have to wait has come down. In fact, we have recently opened an acute medical unit at the Flinders Medical Centre to allow early admission of patients who go to the emergency department and who we know will need to be admitted. When I went to the hospital and opened this new unit just a few weeks ago, the director of the emergency department told me how remarkably well the system is now working and how pleased she was.

So, rather than spread glib lies about the health system, as the opposition does all the time, I ask it to look properly at what is going on. We have a fantastic health system in our state, and we will do everything we can to make it as good as we possibly can, despite all the opposition spin, fibs, glib comments, exaggerated comments, scare tactics and all the rest of it. Saying that an average patient waits for 18 hours at the Royal Adelaide Hospital is absolutely untrue; it is a total exaggeration, and is typical of the way the opposition deals with this debate.

Of course, when it gets down to it, they have no policies of their own. They are opposed to building new infrastructure for our state, they are opposed to targets for hospital waiting times. They have no policies at all, they rely only on fear and—

Mr PENGILLY: I rise on a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Order! We have a point of order.

Mr PENGILLY: Standing order 98.

The SPEAKER: I think the minister has finished his answer.

HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (14:52): My question is again to the Minister for Health. Will the minister confirm that the Royal Adelaide Hospital, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Lyell McEwin Hospital were all over 100 per cent capacity yesterday, with the Lyell McEwin Hospital being up to 124 per cent capacity?

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) (14:52): They are getting excited over there, Madam Speaker. I can confirm that our hospitals are, from time to time, very busy places. We recognise that, and that is why we are committing ourselves to a record expansion of our hospital system. We are expanding the Royal Adelaide Hospital by building it on a new site, which will be ready by 2015—against the opposition, of course. They wouldn't do that; they wouldn't have a new hospital with new operating theatres, more operating theatres, more emergency department capacity. They would rather have a football stadium on that site.

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order.

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

Mr WILLIAMS: The minister is debating the answer to the question.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold that point of order. The minister is answering in the manner he chooses, and it is relevant to the question. I will listen very carefully.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Thank you, Madam Speaker. What I was saying to the house was that I acknowledge that from time to time there is a spike in patients attending our emergency departments and wanting treatment in our hospitals. That has always been the case in our state. Last week was particularly busy, and I acknowledged that in the media during the course of the week.

The point I am making is that we have a strategy to deal with that which will put extra beds into our system, and that is why we are undertaking major expansion of the Flinders Medical Centre, the QEH, the RAH, the Modbury Hospital, the Lyell McEwin Hospital, and the Women's and Children's Hospital. We also have work happening at the Repat. In addition, we have a whole range of development works in the country and we are also building GP Plus health care centres, in collaboration with the commonwealth GP super clinics, so that we have more out-of-hospital capacity.

All this is about providing extra places where patients can be dealt with. While that is under construction there will be times when hospitals are over capacity, and I acknowledge that. That is why we have a plan to deal with it. That is the simple answer.

HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (14:54): My question is again to the Minister for Health. Will the minister confirm that the emergency department at the Royal Adelaide Hospital is still three nurses below the agreed staffing threshold, and that the government has not yet advertised these vacancies?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Minister for Police, sit down! Minister for Health.

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) (14:55): Of course, as minister I do not go through the appointments process—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: You think I should—that's terrific. That's great—I should be the staffing officer of the health system. That's terrific.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Let me inform the house that, through the enterprise bargaining arrangements with nurses, we have a very strict formula that applies staff to our hospitals. We have a formula approach and every time that we go below that, for one reason or another, the nurses union takes us down to the Industrial Relations Commission. I am absolutely certain that if there was a problem there I would be the first to be told about it by the nurses union. We staff as we need to in order to make sure there is sufficient staff in our hospitals to deal with the patients who come through.

As the comparison with all the other states show, we have more nurses per head of population than any other Australian state; we have more doctors per head of population than any other Australian state; and we also have more beds available per head of population compared to all the other states. We resource our system as we need to. If there are any problems attracting nurses I would be very surprised but if there are I am sure it will be dealt with in the appropriate way.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL ELECTIVE SURGERY

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (14:56): Again, my question is to the Minister for Health. Will the minister confirm that non-life-threatening emergencies, such as broken limbs, are being

delayed at the Royal Adelaide Hospital to allow extra elective surgery procedures to be undertaken to meet government targets?

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) (14:56): I am not aware of any limbs that are not being set because of other pressures but I will happily have a look at the particulars of the example given. Let me explain the way the system works. Essentially, our major or acute hospitals have two kinds of pressures—one is through the emergency department and that, in the case of some hospitals, is 80 per cent plus of the activity that occurs there—and we also try to make sure that people are not kept waiting for elective surgery.

Elective surgery is not elective in one sense but it is planned surgery so it is a surgical procedure which is planned. There are targets set for various levels of acuity so that people who have a particular surgical need should be operated on within a particular time frame. We need to meet those targets just as we need to meet the emergency department targets. Of course, from time to time, there is a compression when the capacity of the hospital is at its limit. When that happens decisions are made about whether elective surgery is deferred or some other arrangements are put in place. Occasionally, we have gone out to the private sector to do some of that elective surgical work.

However, at all times it is about trying to make sure that the patients are given the procedure they need in the appropriate time frame. That is a judgment made every day by the managers, doctors and nurses in our hospitals when they are dealing with the lists of people before them. To say that we should delay elective surgery in order for emergency surgery to occur would be to say that somebody who has been on a list and who is in the theatre primed for operation should be delayed so that somebody who has come in through the emergency department who does not need the surgery at that moment should get priority is a judgment that only doctors can make. It is certainly not a judgment that I would make.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:58): My question is to the Treasurer. Have government representatives had any discussions with the Construction Industry Training Board about transferring around \$3 million from the training fund to the government and, if so, why?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (14:59): I have had some discussions with both the Chairman of the CITB (Mary Marsland) and the CE of the Construction Industry Training Board about issues. I have concerns about the way the levy is expended in that not enough of the levy is expended on entry point training and too much of it is spent on upskilling people already in the industry. I am a bit concerned that there is the potential there for industry, essentially, to cost shift the training responsibilities—which should be their own—onto the levy; and I would like to see more of the levy be spent on new entries into the construction sector.

I have had discussions with the CITB on that basis. Exactly how we achieve that, we are working through those issues with them, and officials from the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology are having discussions with them on an ongoing basis about how we go about that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Flinders.

REMOTE AREAS ENERGY SUPPLIES SCHEME

Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (15:00): My question is to the Minister for Energy. Why did businesses in Coober Pedy and other remote South Australian towns receive only four days notice of large increases in electricity bills, which, in some of cases, amounted to a doubling of those bills?

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs) (15:00): I thank the member

for Flinders for that question. I was actually unaware of the shortness of time that was given over to those consumers, and I will come back to the house with an explanation.

REMOTE AREAS ENERGY SUPPLIES SCHEME

Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (15:01): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. Minister—

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr TRELOAR: My question is—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Flinders, sit down. Your misbehaving is taking up your question time. The member for Flinders.

Mr TRELOAR: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Tourism. Minister, how do you expect a tourism operator in Coober Pedy to absorb a more than doubling of his annual electricity bill from \$320,000 to \$700,000 following the government's changes to electricity tariffs?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Tourism.

The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Urban Development and Planning, Minister for Tourism, Minister for Food Marketing) (15:02): The question is directed towards an increase in the cost of electricity. We need to bear in mind that the reason for the increase in electricity costs probably has a great deal to do with the fact that our assets were sold some years ago by your colleagues, and—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Finniss will stop holding up and displaying material in the chamber.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Have you finished your response, minister?

The Hon. J.R. RAU: Yes.

The SPEAKER: The member for Flinders.

MARINE PARKS

Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (15:03): My next question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. Has the government completed any economic or regional impact modelling to determine the impact of the current marine parks proposal?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (15:03): I thank the member for Flinders for his question and acknowledge his very good representation of the people within the Flinders electorate. There has been a significant amount of debate about the marine parks at the moment. A consultation process is being undertaken. What we are doing, of course, is encouraging—and I would actually encourage the members opposite in turn to encourage their constituents, whether they be commercial fishers, recreational fishers, tourism operators or representatives of the regional communities there, to engage in this process so that the proposed sanctuary zones, in fact, will be those that are determined by the community.

The impact statements will be done once the final determination is made with respect to the sanctuary zones once they are determined, and—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: —of course, that is a requirement that we have committed to. It will be a requirement to do those impact statements. Quite simply, we are not going to do this until such time as there is a landing spot in regards to what the sanctuary zones are going to be. Otherwise, it is a nonsense—just like the Opposition.

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION CODE

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:05): My question is to the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries. Can the minister advise the house why poultry is included on the Property Identification Code (PIC) registration application form, yet owners of properties with poultry and other bird species have been advised by Biosecurity SA staff that they are not required to register their properties?

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: And you're crying 'fowl' are you!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PEDERICK: Item 8 on page 2 of that application form states emphatically that all species must be completed for species to be kept. The species listed includes poultry, both commercial and recreational.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! We will have no more of the Minister for Transport's terrible jokes.

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs) (15:06): I thank the member for Hammond for this particular question and I am looking forward to the Liberal Party making a decision as to whether they are actually going to support the Property Identification Code.

Mr Pengilly: We're consulting with people.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN: On the issue of consultation, I believe the member for Hammond is receiving a large number of emails from industry asking that the Liberal Party support the PIC. On the issue that the member for Hammond has raised, if that advice is being given by the department—and, as the member says, it is incorrect—I will ensure that it is rectified.

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION CODE

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:07): I have a follow-up question to the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries. When does the government expect to introduce Property Identification Code registration fees for poultry? Biosecurity SA brochures on the PIRSA website state that there is no requirement to have poultry property registered. The brochure states, 'At this stage you will not incur the registration fee.' However it is apparent that the intention is to introduce that fee for poultry.

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs) (15:08): Again returning to this particular matter, the member for Hammond is probably aware of the fact that the Hon. Rob Brokenshire has flagged his intention to move a disallowance motion on the PIC fee. The opposition leader, on the Leon Byner show, followed up in support of the Hon. Rob Brokenshire, indicating that the Liberal Party would support—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Point of order.

Mr WILLIAMS: Madam Speaker, the minister is debating the answer to the question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Sit down. I will consider very carefully your point of order. At this stage the minister is answering the question in the manner he sees fit, but I will listen very carefully to his answer.

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN: Madam Speaker, if the Liberal Party supports the disallowance, then the question—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Point of order.

Mr WILLIAMS: Point of order, Madam Speaker: the question is about PIC fees on poultry. It has nothing to do with whether we will support a disallowance or not, and that, quite frankly, is debate.

The SPEAKER: I want to hear the minister's answer on that, because I think he just clarified it then. Minister, would you like to finish your answer?

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN: I reiterate the point that if the Liberal Party supports the Hon. Rob Brokenshire, then there is no PIC fee and the question is purely hypothetical.

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION CODE

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:10): My question is again to the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries. Will the government introduce online registration for the property identification code fee and, if so, when and how will it affect the amount of the fee?

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Northern Suburbs) (15:10): I thank the member for Hammond. I had a discussion yesterday with my departmental officers on this particular issue to see whether we could actually reduce the quantum of the fee. It was a reasonably wide-ranging discussion and we are looking at online registration, but the advice that I was given, member for Hammond, was that the figure, which I believe is \$38 per annum, is probably as fine as we can shave it. But we are considering that option and I believe it will be adopted.

SEAMAN, MR G.F.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education) (15:11): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: South Australia lost one of its closest remaining links to the Playford era with the death on 22 February of Mr Gilbert Frederick Seaman. He was 98. Mr Seaman was government economist and assistant to the under treasurer, Sir Fred Drew, from 1946 until 1960. A fine intellect, Mr Seaman provided the analytical underpinning for the drive and determination of Sir Thomas Playford during the latter's nation building administration.

In 1935, one year before Keynes published his famous work *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, Mr Seaman became the first person to graduate from the recently formed economics faculty at the University of Adelaide. While a firm believer in the efficacy of markets, Mr Seaman, like Keynes, never scrupled to intervene when he thought those markets to be tardy or lacking in vision, and was an enthusiastic supporter of the efforts of his political mentor to supply the infrastructure necessary for the development of the state.

He succeeded Sir Fred Drew as under treasurer in 1960 and remained in that position until his retirement in 1972. He served under five administrations: those of Sir Thomas Playford, Frank Walsh, Don Dunstan, Steele Hall, and then Don Dunstan again. He remained, until the end, a fervent admirer and staunch supporter of Sir Thomas and his approach to government. One of his greatest achievements was the seamless transition to the quite different administration of Frank Walsh.

After 27 years of conservative rule, the incoming government in 1965 held doubts about the extent to which it would be able to rely on the Public Service to carry out its policies. Mr Seaman immediately set about putting those doubts to rest. In the best Westminster tradition, he helped premier Walsh shape a budget which was responsible and which gave effect to the promised expenditure programs of the new government by developing revenue raising measures to match increases in expenditure that were needed.

Following the discovery and development of the gas fields in the state's north, he worked tirelessly to put in place the financing arrangements for the Moomba to Adelaide natural gas pipeline. Premier Walsh came to rely heavily on the advice of his under treasurer and a mutual respect developed between the two men, culminating in the decision to recommend Mr Seaman for the award of Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George, an award duly conferred in June 1967.

After his retirement in 1972, the Dunstan government and its successors retained him as chairman of the old State Bank before its merger with The Savings Bank of South Australia. In that role he managed, with great attention to detail, a program of home lending to low income earners and small businesses, particularly producer cooperatives, largely with funds appropriated by parliament for the purpose. He was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in June 1981.

Given the influence which he wielded, it is surprising that he is not better known. He was indifferent to public recognition but did not, it seems, lack self-confidence. I understand that he was aghast at the suggestion by Premier Dunstan that he should establish an economic intelligence unit in the Premier's department. He reportedly asked 'Why Premier? What would you like to know?'

He was loyal to his staff and attracted loyalty in return. Under him and his successors, Ted Carey and Ron Barnes, I am told, Treasury was a great place to work. Mr Seaman was a regular and enthusiastic supporter of South Australian cricket and took great delight in the successes of the Sturt Football Club sides of the late 1960s.

The state has lost a great servant. I pass on my thoughts to Mr Seaman's family.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

RANN GOVERNMENT

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (15:15): I rise today to grieve about a government that is mired in self-indulgence at the expense of the taxpayers of this state. They either do not see or do not care that the people of this state—the hardworking taxpayers whose dollars go into the budget here—are not prepared to see their hard earned dollars wasted on jobs for the boys or girls, the mates of the Labor Party.

Let's look at the two issues we exposed today in question time. First of all, John McTernan, who came out here from the UK to help the government with their Labor campaign. He helped the government in the 2010 election campaign, then what do you know? A few months later he came back suddenly appointed to the wonderful Thinkers in Residence program. What will he do? He will conduct a review into the Public Service.

The Premier in his answer today tried to paint it as 'improving service delivery' but it is just another name for yet another review of the Public Service. They have already had six of them in the nine years that they have been in office. I have not seen any vast improvement yet. Not only is this just another name for another review, but I do not think there is any doubt that this government has managed to have the worst relationship in history with its public sector. Well do I remember the likes of Jan McMahon and Janet Giles standing on the steps of this parliament not too long ago saying, 'You can't trust this government.' What is more, some of the faithful but timid on the other side went out and mingled amongst them to pretend that they were with them in spirit. But did they vote down what their government was doing? No. They just kept on the same way.

We have to remember that this government promised before the last election no forced redundancies, and they brought down a budget that said, 'We might have to reconsider that,' but remember we were then dealing with a treasurer who said on the record, 'Your problem is you do not have the moral fibre to break your promise.' That is what he said, but I digress.

Really, the point is that this government does not recognise—and either chooses not to recognise or simply is too stupid to recognise—a conflict of interest when it hits them in the face and the fact that the public are not prepared to tolerate behaviour of this kind. It is not sufficient to simply say, 'Well, he did come out here to do this job for the Labor Party during the government's election campaign'—

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

Mrs REDMOND: Well, the Premier certainly did not deny it. Isn't that the 'I don't remember' defence? I have heard of the 'I don't remember' defence.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs REDMOND: I have heard of the 'I don't remember' defence on a number of occasions before.

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs REDMOND: The point is that it is all just a bit too cosy that someone who comes out to help the election campaign suddenly gets the payoff a few months later of a nice little jaunt to Australia which we, the taxpayers of this state, have to pay an inordinate amount for as if there are not people in this state more than willing and more than competent to help with sorting this out. I seem to remember when this government first came in that they set up an economic advisory board to help them do just that, and one of the very first things that that advisory board said to them was, 'We need to sort out the Public Service.' All these years later—nine years today you have been in government—are you celebrating how well you have done? We have got enormous debt, we have got all sorts of problems; but, again, I digress, Madam Speaker.

Again, with Rowan Roberts' appointment, the problem is not the original payout. If Rowan Roberts was genuinely taking a payout at the conclusion of her service with this government and going to live overseas, no problem—perfectly within the rules and the rules are as the Premier said in answer to the question—but, the point is he was dodging the import of the question. We asked about it last September.

Can I remind him what we specifically asked, because we knew back then that there were question marks over this arrangement. On 30 September last year I asked the Premier whether his economics adviser had received a 16-week payout, which, as I said, was about \$37,000, following her resignation. Her position was subsequently advertised, but then not filled—not filled. Now, what does that tell you? Presumably, it means that, first of all, they could not find anyone suitable to fill the position and, secondly, it did not need to be filled because there was no-one needed.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member's time has expired.

Mrs REDMOND: It was always known that she was not needed.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Defence Industries.

OPPOSITION STAFF APPOINTMENTS

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) (15:21): International Women's Day, and the performance of the Leader of the Opposition today is grubby, grubby, grubby.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Madam Speaker, let's talk about a few appointments opposite. I have been treasurer and I have some corporate history and knowledge of what has occurred opposite. If you want to talk about probity and appointments, positions advertised, the leader of the upper house, David Ridgway, came to me—I remember it—he said, 'Kevin, can I have a chat to you?' He said to me, 'Kevin, I can't attract a good enough staff member for me as leader of the upper house on the salary that I'm allocated as the leader of the upper house. Mate'—mate—'can you do me a favour? Can you offer more money? Can I get about another \$10,000 additional to the salary so I can get a better person?'

I know what it is like to be in opposition. It was reasonable, and I thought, 'Well, I don't know whether Isobel's onto this or not, but that is something for the Libs to worry about,' so I agreed to it, and we reclassified that position. From memory, I also did a similar thing for Mr Lucas when he was shadow finance minister—from memory—some years ago. Then, who do we find that they appoint? One Hendrik Gout.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: And members opposite are laughing. Now, let's have a look at probity.

Mr Venning: You are going to attack a staffer.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You led with it—

Mr Venning: A new low.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You led with it, you so and so. Hendrik Gout was writing for *The Independent Weekly* and he wrote week in, week out attacks on the government. What promise was Hendrik Gout on from the Leader of the Opposition in another place? What promise was he on about a paid salaried position and, indeed, an increased paid position?

If you want to come into this place and attack a hardworking economics adviser to the Premier, you will get it back in spades, because I reckon that was dodgy and shoddy. Had the member of the upper house said to me, 'I want to employ Hendrik Gout,' I would have said, 'You would have got him for half the price.' That is what he would be worth. He is one of the most useless journalists I have ever come across. I want to know: was he on a promise from Mr Ridgway? If you want to—

Mr Pederick: When you want it done, you let us know.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Oh! I'll talk about the shadow whip, who came to me wanting a car—a white, chauffeur-driven car—that is what the shadow whip wanted, and you reckon the deputy leader and the member for Davenport didn't go crackers when I told them about that one. He was negotiating, behind your back, with me to get a white, chauffeur-driven car. That is what that member was doing. I want you all to know that. I spoke to your deputy leader and shadow treasurer and they were gobsmacked and put an end to it. So, if you want to talk about grubby dealings, I have plenty to say.

There is a lot more of that that goes on because, if you really want to get down and get dirty and attack staff, I will be more than happy to talk about the sorts of requests I had from members opposite for perks and lurks, and quite inappropriate requests, over the past nine years of my time as treasurer.

Mr Venning: How personal do you want to get?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Exactly.

Mr Venning: Well, I've got plenty on you.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I look forward to it. It will all be lies.

Mr Venning: You know I know.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: It will all be lies.

Mr Venning: We were together years ago, remember?

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Schubert! You will have an opportunity to speak after.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: What, when I offered you the opportunity to be a minister in a Labor government?

The SPEAKER: Order, the Treasurer!

Mr Venning: You were working for Lynn Arnold and I was advising, at a social function. That'll do.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Give it a break, Ivan.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Do you want to talk about the deal I did for your wife with her car?

The SPEAKER: Order! Treasurer, get back to your speech.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: If you want to throw it, I will give it all back in spades.

Time expired.

FINNISS ELECTORATE

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Finnis.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Can we have some order back in this place, please?

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (15:26): Thank you, ma'am. I will be talking about things relating to my electorate, you will be pleased to hear.

The SPEAKER: Good.

Mr PENGILLY: Just let me note, also, Madam Speaker, that I recognise on this International Women's Day the fact that the Liberal Party is the only party in this state that has had a female leader. I think that is worthy of noting today. However, I return to matters more relevant to the electorate.

The state government is currently formulating its budget to come down on 9 June. Can I issue a plea yet again for the government to consider funding rural roads? It is an abysmal situation on both sides of the water in my electorate where the councils are struggling to keep up with the mammoth amount of work required on those roads and, indeed, I do not know where it is going to end if the government does not distribute some of its GST revenue more appropriately across the board to assist councils across the state to do something about their road networks. They are deteriorating rapidly and it is a major cause for concern. So I issue a plea to the new Treasurer to find some money for the councils in my area. Heaven alone knows that Yankalilla and Kangaroo Island councils, in particular, are struggling for funds and the roads are deteriorating at a rapid rate.

The other matter I wish to bring to the attention of the house is the situation in relation to SA Water. Yet again, SA Water rears its ugly head. SA Water has come up with a proposal (which came through the budget process, I might add) to increase the holding capacity out of the Middle River dam for the towns that it supplies on Kangaroo Island, Parndana and Kingscote. I am all in favour of increasing the capacity but the spin job being done at the moment trying to con the good people just out of Kingscote that they can put in bladders, take over some 50 acres, or 20 hectares, of land and make an abysmal mess in the middle of a prime rural zone beggars belief. I believe the people are being conned.

I have held a meeting of constituents. I have discussed the matter with SA Water personnel who have talked to me about it. On the weekend I was approached again by local residents. They think they are being fed a load of hogwash. What it boils down to is that it will cost \$5 million to move this project further out of the town and to add to the infrastructure to get it in. I say to the house, Madam Speaker, that, taking into account the amount of money SA Water has wasted over a period of time, \$5 million is nothing; and, spread over the life of the project, which would probably be a hundred years, it is even less.

A couple of people spoke to me on the weekend about this. They said it is a snow job and they are being conned by SA Water. It is so-called consultation—yet more of this Rann government consultation that doesn't really mean anything. I intend to expose it once and for all in this place as it moves along. I say to the house, loudly and clearly: this project is in the wrong place.

The project is good. I have identified a couple of other areas. It is up to the government to instruct SA Water to get their heads out of the clouds, or wherever else they have their heads, and listen to the local people—not to try to bully and cajole the landowner into selling land that he does not want to sell and not to try to interrupt a rural living zone.

I have discussed this matter with numerous people, and it concerns me greatly that, yet again, it is a bit like the consultation on marine parks that we did not have. We have arrogance taking over with the state government through SA Water in this particular case, trying to bulldoze a project nobody wants in that location and trying to con the public. Well, I am not going to be conned and I know that some of the residents up there will not be conned. I know that Dr John Willoughby, the owner of the land, will not be conned. I know that the local press will not be conned. I say to the government: this is simply not good enough.

This project will eventually come to the Public Works Committee one day when a site is finally found. SA Water needs to be told by the minister, and he has enough headaches at the moment with the Western Mount Lofty Ranges Water Allocation Plan, the marine parks daft draft sanctuary zones, and everything else. He needs to get on top of his portfolio and on top of his

bureaucrats and, in this case, on top of this stupid project location. It needs to be moved some kilometres out of the town of Kingscote on some flat land where it is away from residential areas, away from rural living. It needs to be put out in the general farming area. We should spend the additional money required and make it a project that we can all be proud of.

If I have to come here again and speak about it, I will. It is simply not good enough. It is an outrageous disgrace and it is another example of con politics from SA Water under the banner of the Rann government. I am not going to fall for it and I hope that the people of Kangaroo Island will not fall for any more of this nonsense. It is unrealistic. It is like the marine parks which will become a carbon tax debacle for minister Caica in South Australia.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:31): International Women's Day is a day to celebrate women's achievements, and I acknowledge the example and ongoing support of my staff and friends, colleagues in this place and comrades and former workmates, among them Deidre Tedmanson, who is a former president of the Australian Labor Party in South Australia.

As you said earlier today, ma'am, it reminds us of many women here and around the world who continue to face inequality. They earn less and own less than men and are still under-represented in all spheres, especially politically. Every day, thousands of women and girls are victims of gender-based violence, including sexual abuse, trafficking and early and forced marriages.

Among this year's theme is equal access to education. Education is a basic human right. It is central to economic security and opportunity, as well as sustainable development. Investing globally in girls' education spurs economic growth and political participation. Literacy and numeracy equip women for economic independence, increasing the chances of achieving their full potential.

These notions were a catalyst for South Australian born Muriel Matters, a woman who recognised the importance of early education before International Women's Day was even proclaimed. Leaving Adelaide to pursue a theatrical career in London, Muriel had already championed here the early education of children via the Froebel method. Froebel pioneered kindergartens, a heritage held close by South Australians via the de Lissa initiatives and heritage now housed at UniSA at Magill.

Muriel also adopted Maria Montessori's methods after working with the Italian during World War I while in Spain. Muriel, a product of public school education, also did a great deal of work on the then emerging discipline of elocution, substantially rewriting the syllabus, no doubt using her experience and expertise in the Delsarte method. I would note this here, especially in light of the new found worldwide exposure of Muriel's contemporary at the University of Adelaide, Lionel Logue. They both studied under Mr Edward Reeve.

Muriel worked with Sylvia Pankhurst in the slums of London. Both shared a passion for the improvement of social justice issues that continue to affect women today: equal pay, abolition of sweatshops, better working conditions, rehabilitation of prisoners and better incarceration conditions, education for all and, to that end, Muriel ran Sylvia's Montessori kindy at Bow Street. To place today's circumstances in this historical context, we see that women are still working to achieve equality in a better world.

The Governor-General, Quentin Bryce, has highlighted the fact that Australia is behind other countries in areas of economic participation and opportunity for women. Australia ranks 24th out of 134 countries surveyed in this area. As the Governor General stated, it is indeed disappointing when we look on our past as one of the oldest democracies in the world and one of the first places to grant dual suffrage, something we did here in South Australia in 1894.

Then, as now, domestic violence and alcohol-fuelled violence is of grave concern. The WCTU was an advocate for the vote through Elizabeth Webb Nicholl, who worked with Catherine Helen Spencer and Mary Lee, and all are commemorated here in this chamber by the magnificent tapestry that was worked on by South Australian women to commemorate the centenary of dual enfranchisement in 1994.

As we celebrate International Women's Day today, let us reflect upon the continued devastation to women and children's lives caused by abusive partners. It is estimated that up to 17 per cent of Australian women are affected by domestic violence over the course of their lifetime. Aside from the massive cost to women and children in terms of the impact on their health,

happiness and wellbeing, this issue is estimated to cost the Australian economy in excess of \$13 billion a year.

In the report released by the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse this month, 'Seeking Security: promoting women's economic well being following domestic violence', the need for abusive partners to be made more accountable for their contribution to victims' negative economic outcomes is highlighted. We also need to work with perpetrators to ensure that they gain control of their lives and repair the damage they do to their relationships and people in general. The report also noted that some of the ways to achieve economic empowerment for survivors of abuse may be for creditors to agree to split bills and debts between victims and ex-partners, and that legislators could include economic abuse in domestic violence legislation.

It is clear that government, at all levels, must develop policies that go beyond short-term crisis intervention and support, and ensure that victims can make the transition to sustainable economic futures. Women affected by violence need programs that build their economic capacity and need to access economic opportunities, including job placement programs, low interest loans, and finance for business ventures. They also need better superannuation provisions; currently, they are only around half that of men at payout time. At the local level I would like to recognise the ongoing commitment made by Alana Waters and Maggie L'Estrange of the City of Tea Tree Gully on this issue, and their advocacy and support for women and families in my area through the North-East Domestic Violence Action Group.

I look forward to continuing to work on these important issues and to joining with those attending the International Women's Day luncheon tomorrow in celebrating the achievements made to date, and I thank the organising committee, under Toni Jupe, for organising the lunch, which will be an outstanding celebration equal to the UNIFEM breakfast this morning.

QUARANTINE STATIONS

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:36): My grievance relates to the closing of the night shift at South Australia's quarantine stations, and I am glad to see that the agricultural minister is here to listen to it. I have spoken on this matter before, but I fear the situation is now far more serious. It has recently been put to me that Queensland fruit fly detections and outbreaks have been recorded in more than 80 locations in New South Wales and Victoria this season. There have also been four detections of Queensland fruit fly in Adelaide suburbs this year. In an interview on ABC radio, Biosecurity SA's Geoff Raven said that there had been six detections of fruit fly larvae.

Riverland fruit and vegetable industries are obviously under serious threat now, yet this government is still prepared to compromise the most important part of the state's quarantine efforts—the permanent roadblocks at Yamba and Ceduna. After a question from me in a previous question time, the minister said that he had had consultation with the relevant people. I contacted those groups and those people, and they had no contact with the minister.

These roadblocks have operated 24 hours a day for several decades. Every previous government has found the relatively small amount of money needed to do that, except this government, due to its incompetent budget management and lack of concern for regional South Australia. The government claims that its review of the state's fruit fly program shows a diminished risk if the night shifts at the roadblocks were closed, which is strongly contradicted by South Australia's fruit and livestock industries.

The government's recommendations are also contradicted by the facts: the night shift crew at Yamba continues to intercept and confiscate produce. At the moment it is flat out inspecting trucks bringing wine grapes into South Australia from Victoria for processing in Riverland wineries. More than 200 trucks were inspected by the night shift crews this February, and there are many more to be inspected during the course of the vintage.

The Tri-state Fruit Fly Committee says that a staggering 12 per cent of travellers are carrying fruit and vegetables in and out of quarantine areas. These industries are working very hard to find other aspects of the fruit fly program that could be cut in order to preserve the roadblock night shifts, which demonstrates just how essential the nightshifts are. The Tri-State Fruit Fly Committee chairman was on ABC radio last week saying how much our permanent fruit fly roadblocks are envied by the fruit industries in New South Wales and Victoria, but the government is prepared to close the night shifts at these roadblocks in a blatant attempt to bully industries into paying for those night shifts.

Quarantine is and always has been the government's responsibility. The attempt to make industry pay more is out of desperation from a government that cannot manage its state's finances. Who knows what damage has already been done by the government's announcement on 3 October 2010 that it would close the night shifts? It sent a very bad message to export markets that are worth many millions of dollars, not only to the growers but to South Australia's economy.

The government's review has clearly got it wrong. The risk of fruit fly outbreak which could devastate our fruit and livestock industries is greater than ever. The Citrus Board of South Australia said last week that loss of fruit fly area freedom status in the Riverland could cost the citrus industry alone more than \$4 million in cold disinfestation costs. The bottom line is: do South Australians want to risk biting into a beautiful fresh South Australian peach and eat maggots? Now is not the time to even contemplate a compromise of our quarantine efforts but, instead, put in more resources to strengthen them.

STOKES, MR T.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (15:40): On International Women's Day I wish to commend an ordinary Australian bloke in the south who is doing a wonderful job in standing up against violence against women. He is Todd Stokes, the spokesperson for the new Signatory ClubCONNECT Port Noarlunga Football Club. The member for Mawson has previously spoken about the actions of this club in supporting White Ribbon Day. Last night I was moved to read a speech that Todd gave to the Onkaparinga Collaborative Approach Against Domestic Violence and I want to quote some of it today to show how men can and do stand alongside women in fighting some of the injustices that women encounter in their daily lives.

Todd tells the story of how he came to be active in community issues in the club. He noticed that in the past three years the club lost three players to suicide and he decided that he wanted to do something about it. Todd stated:

I decided that I would run seminars at the club, so I set about organising them. They needed to address some of the major issues in our community, so I decided to run the ones I thought were most pressing. Depression, Domestic Violence, Trent's Story—drink driving, and SAPOL—Save a Mate.

He said he sent out hundreds of emails and, finally, one woman (Andria) stepped forward to say that she would share her story, as Todd wanted to make all these seminars personal. He was very pleased that about 70 people came along to the seminars on depression and against drink-driving but he was very disappointed that there was not so large an attendance at a seminar on domestic violence—although I congratulate Todd on getting 50 people to attend that seminar; that is amazing. It was also the first time that he experienced any hostility. He was really concerned about the fact that this hostility had been shown towards this particular seminar whereas others had been encouraged.

Then a further turn in his story occurred when one of his friends at the club, in the context of the seminars on domestic violence, just looked slowly at him and said, 'My partner hits me.' Todd stated:

Right then and there, I felt that I had been kicked by a horse in the stomach. Those four words had completely changed my thinking. I had decided at that very moment that I needed to make a stand in our club and our wider community, not hide behind the seminars, actually decide that I would stand up and scream if I had to...to end violence towards women, and I would start right now by educating our whole community.

Todd also spoke about how, as a child, he had often seen his older brother act violently towards his stepmother and even though he had issues with his own anger in the past it was never ever towards women. He stated:

In fact never toward any person, normally walls. The violence I saw as a very young child has impacted me for all of my 40 years. Violence towards women in particular, I find abhorrent.

Todd has now become an ambassador for White Ribbon Day. He says that not only does he continue using the seminars but he has also taken to Facebook, which he sees as a fantastic community tool for new and exciting transfers of ideas. With respect to White Ribbon Day and educating men in particular about domestic violence, he says:

In the past the message all too often has gotten lost to the back pages of the media. As community leaders we now have greater access to the young of today. For me changing their attitudes towards women is something I do on a daily basis, whether it's reminding them about events coming up in terms of White Ribbon Day or questioning them directly, if they post a comment that may be disrespectful or abusive. Standing up has cost me nothing.

Todd finishes:

I urge you men in the room to join me, stand along side and swear the oath—
and that's the White Ribbon oath—

never to commit, never to excuse, and never to remain silent against violence towards women.

I thank you, Todd, and all the people who work with you. If only more men were standing with you our world would be a much more peaceful place, and women would be able to be much freer to take their full role in the community.

Time expired.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. P. Caica (resumed on motion).

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:46): I would like to continue, and I start by saying that the guide to the draft plan was met with public outrage. I say again that the way in which the guide to the draft plan was released into the public domain was unprecedented. A percentage of South Australia's entitlement has been put on the table, that is, around 25 per cent has been recommended to be cut from the state's allocation. The question to both the government and to the relative minister is: who is going to bear the brunt and the pain? Who will be asked to give up the water—because that 20 per cent, or thereabouts, is for South Australia's diversion water?

Once again, is the South Australian government going to be a part of that water that is required for the SDLs? That is one of the burning questions. But it appears not. That tells me that irrigators and their communities would be asked to give up more than 50 per cent of their entitlement. Quite frankly, I think it outrageous that this government is prepared to put not only the river communities and the food production of this state on the backburner, but also it is prepared to sit back and watch them self-destruct. Again, I ask the question: what business anywhere in today's society can have half their input taken away and expect to continue?

If the Natural Resources Committee is asked to put a recommendation it must consider the communities, it must consider its people, its businesses and the food production along the river corridor. Food security for all South Australians and communities for the future should be the overarching concern.

This is a one in 100 year opportunity to get this right. With this government's input, as well as independent groups having input into the submission into the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, I think it is vital that we get off on the right foot with the new Chairman, Craig Knowles. I believe that he has good credentials. He is a man who can get the job done and he has proven that in a past life.

Again, one of the recommendations I would like to put to the committee is that, if it is looking for a truly independent submission and if it is looking for a truly independent voice, perhaps it could contact the SARC group in South Australia's Riverland. It is a credible and independent group. It is non-political. It is a group of food producers, members of local government, environmentalists and community leaders. I think that the minister has met with that group before. I think that it has credibility and that it does have a very balanced view.

If the Natural Resources Committee is given the resources needed to get on with this job, to put recommendations to the government, to the ministers and to his department I wish it a fruitful journey. Again, I ask that the communities, the food producers and all the people and all the businesses, as well as the environment and the health of the river, are put on the agenda. We do need a balance there. We do not need a one-sided argument.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:50): I rise to talk about the Murray-Darling Basin plan. When we finally get to an outcome of what we are looking at, it will be interesting to see what the final outcome is from Canberra, where we have the new man in charge who is not confident of his own board, and wondering where it will go. It dismays me that, four years down the track, after the John Howard federal government put \$10 billion on the table to have a red hot crack at fixing the River Murray and the Murray-Darling Basin, we have seen very little money spent.

We have had \$5.9 billion earmarked for irrigation infrastructure upgrades. I have been up through the irrigation areas in the northern basin and southern basin, as I know the member for Chaffey and the member for MacKillop have as well, and it is more than interesting. It is almost outrageous what they seem to use in their systems in the northern basin and southern basin. There are hundreds of kilometres of open channels, such as the Mulwala channel, which I think is well

over 160 kilometres long, and then there are all the feeder channels which come off it near Deniliquin. These systems are replicated right throughout the basin in states such as Victoria and New South Wales.

We have licenses in the Darling side of things—they call them Magic Pudding licences—where, if the water is there, you pump as hard as you can and get what you can, and that is what they are. It is like a Magic Pudding turns up, and that is what they call them. I have noted irrigators in Queensland doing media reports on the television. When asked, 'Have you ever taken water that you shouldn't have?' one bloke looked very coy and said, 'I may have borrowed some for a while.' The simple fact is a lot of this water is unmetered and all we have is a good guess, at times, as to what water is being used.

When I went up north, I found someone with a plane that would fly me up to St George, over all the properties. I know Cubbie Station is the one everyone knows, but Cubbie gets the flak and there are far more that literally harvest water. No pumps are involved. Cubbie corners two rivers—I think they are the Balonne Minor and the Culgoa—and essentially what they do is put a dam around the corner of the river and have a graded funnel heading into their storages, and they just grab as much water as they can.

I recall meeting with graziers in New South Wales, who only get about 40 per cent of the water they used to get on their properties in years gone by, before a lot of it was captured for irrigation. These graziers are managing to turn every megalitre of water into far more value than cotton. I am not going to bag cotton. Cotton is okay if you have the water. If you have the floodwaters, then cotton and rice are both fine, but if it is not there then they are products which should not be grown, and that is why they are opportunity crops.

When you get down to South Australia, where we are supposedly on high security water, there is a major flaw right across the system. For one year in the recent four-year drought, we only received 18 per cent allocation, and yet the Murrumbidgee was on 95 per cent for its high security water. Where is the equity in that? Also along these lines of unequal allocations, the Lower Darling was on 100 per cent allocation. There was not a lot of water, but I just cannot see the equity across the basin, where different levels of so-called high security water are at different levels. That is why there is general security water or low security water. That is the water for opportunity crops such as cotton and rice. So, that is what we have seen in the last four years, before, thankfully, bigger powers than any parliament in this country took over and refilled the river, and it is a fantastic sight to see. I was attempting to ski on the River Murray on Sunday, and it wasn't that successful I must say—

Mr Williams interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Pushed a bit more water down towards the barrages, I think! No, it was much more relaxing on the inflatable three-seater lounge going behind the Mercruiser ski boat, I can assure you.

An honourable member: How big is that?

Mr PEDERICK: A 350 Mercruiser, plenty of punch thanks. It is an interesting sight to see with the black water going down the river, and the dirty water coming down from the Darling. You can see it when you cross the river from the Swanport Bridge or the old bridge going into Murray Bridge. You can see plenty of traces of the dirty water, but I tell you that it is a lot better sight to see than what we have had for the last four years. There are still issues, let me say that, and I know that the minister is aware of the issue of acid sulphate soils and acid issues on the Lower Murray swamps. I know that there is a meeting coming up in Murray Bridge in regards to that but, hopefully, everything goes on track, and that water can be diluted with the flows as it flows out.

But there is so much work to do on those swamps. They were rehabilitated years ago. It was a mismatched affair. Some land was rehabilitated and some land was not. I believe that minister Hill was in charge at the time, and it would have been far better to have had those swamps all managed and rehabilitated together.

Some \$30 million of federal, state and farmer money was spent and, essentially, most of that money has been wasted. We have seen dairy farmers decimated, from about 120 dairy farmers down to about 20. Yes, I will admit that some of that would have been about market forces and the size of operations to remain viable, but it has certainly been some of the decisions in relation to rehabilitation of the swamps that has forced some of those people to go.

We have issues with levy banks falling away, and the government has been tardy in providing funding for repairing levy banks. We have got people with private levy banks that wanted to do work long ago. There were issues about whether they should do it or whether the government should do it. There are issues where the government likes to have the first 50 metres of freehold land by the river, but when it comes to the private levy banks there is no assistance.

Then we get further down the system through to Lake Albert and around Lake Alexandrina, and the carnage, the absolute carnage, that has happened there over the last four years. We had people, at times, spending \$5,000 a week to access water. I must admit that at the eleventh hour, with federal money that came out of some of the original money that John Howard's government put up, and with the state government administrating the money, we got the pipeline through to the Currency Creek and Langhorne Creek winery regions. And, also, with some of that money, we got the pipework down around Meningie, and also along the Narrung Peninsula, and a little bit north of Meningie.

But we still have major problems. We still have issues where we have bunds in the river—bunds at Narrung that should have been long gone—but the minister only decided to write to the federal minister the other day in relation to the \$300,000 needed to remove the bund. And, because that bund has not gone, there are still massive salinity levels in Lake Albert, because it is a dead end lake, there is no outlet at the other end into the Coorong, and it is causing major issues still with salinity, and the ability to freshen that lake up to what was its natural state 95 per cent of the time.

We have seen horticulture disappear from the region around Lake Albert. We have seen farmers struggling, having to dredge out their trenches to get their water into their dairies. We have seen lucerne farmers struggle. All irrigators around the Lower Lakes are having a battle. Yet, with misinformation coming from further up the river that it is all right—that the lakes were always salty and you can just take the salt—well, that is simply not true. Ninety-five per cent of the time those lakes have been fresh.

If people want to talk about issues like pulling out the barrages at Goolwa and letting nature have its go, well, if we are going to go down that path, let's pull the 3,000 other structures out of the river, and all hell would break loose. Yes, it is an engineered system but it is engineered all the way through and it needs more engineering in the Eastern States. We do have the best irrigation systems in the system. We have put in the hard yards, we have worked under the cap, and people have still struggled with not being able to get their high security allocations at an appropriate level to get through.

High security is what South Australia needs because we have so many permanent plantings, and it should be on an equal footing across the basin with other high security water. It disgusts me that what should have happened instead of having these vast inequities between 18 and 19 per cent between our area and the Murrumbidgee, we could have had an equity across the system of perhaps at least 50 or 60 per cent of high security water and given people a fair go to keep going. But for a range of reasons South Australian irrigators were forced to spend hundreds of millions of dollars in the last four years leasing water in or buying water.

It is good to see that the River Murray corridor from the lakes through to the Victorian border is still receiving exceptional circumstances. There always was that year lag with irrigation, I believe, with exceptional circumstances. I fought hard and brought the matter to the attention of the government in 2006 for the dryland areas and then within the year or so the irrigators could tell. They already were in strife in 2006 because that was quite a significant drought.

But what we need to get out of any inquiry is some surety as to where the river is going to be. I asked Mike Taylor, when he was the chair of the authority when they had the meeting at Murray Bridge, how much water would be put back into the system if we put pipes and line channels in the northern basin interstate and in the southern basin interstate? He said we would probably be able to find about 2,000 gegalitres of water. To me, that instantly says there is two-thirds of the minimum requirement, as has been discussed with proponents of the guide to the plan, of 3,000 gegalitres going back to the river.

But what we see is irrigators and irrigating communities—and I can understand why they are upset but they seem not to want to change—upset that all this water will be taken from them without any efficiency gains. I think it certainly could be done. The money has been laid on the table and it should have been done. South Australia has done 99 per cent of what it could do, I believe—probably better than that. There is barely an open channel to be seen in South Australia.

What are minute return channels or inlet channels on the swamps or around the lakes compared to the systems further away?

What do we need if this inquiry does go ahead? We need it to have some teeth because people are sick of talkfests around the river. My heart says to me that they will go on forever, but we need some reality. We need to see where the guide to the plan and the initial plan is going to take us. We do need an environmental outcome for the river but we also need to have a sustainable outcome for the river because we need to sustain our irrigation communities, as the irrigation communities in the Eastern States need to be sustained. I think a lot of the water can be found in efficiency upgrades, and this is where South Australia barely has a drop to spare in any sort of upgrades of this kind, because the efficiencies have been taken.

We have got the issue of our irrigators only being on 67 per cent allocation until the end of June. I believe that is because the government negotiated away their right to get full allocation with carryover policy. Everyone knows in this place—I have spoken on it passionately many times—about the need for environmental water; but there is more water going out the barrages down at Goolwa than is coming over the border. There are about 81 gigalitres a day coming over the border and 85 gigalitres a day going out through the barrages at Goolwa. It is a fantastic thing to see.

Probably less than three days flow across the border would fix our irrigators up to 100 per cent allocation—our irrigators, all the way from the Victorian border down to the mouth. That is certainly what they deserve. In the longer term, we must make sure, especially at this end of the river, that we keep up the fight and that, if we do have a state inquiry into the Murray-Darling Basin plan, it has plenty of resources thrown at it so that we can get a decent outcome, so it is not just another talkfest, and so that we can have some meaningful recommendations that the government will take up to keep up our fight to have equity in the River Murray system.

It has been darn tough four years for irrigators, and they have got some tough times to come yet, but they are all pleased to see more water flowing past their doors. I just hope that, as I said before, we do get the right result for South Australia, that we can work with the other states so that they can find equity in the upgrade of their irrigation systems, so that they can make the water savings and still grow the same amount of food.

I have mentioned the Rorato family in here before, near Deniliquin, who put in drippers one year, and it cost them \$700,000—doubled their efficiency of water use. However, the year the family spent the money they could not use the irrigation system, but, the next year, when he was only on 9 per cent allocation, he could turn that into 10 per cent. That is the sort of efficiency that can be found.

I do not believe for one minute that food security will be the problem in this debate. It is about being efficient with the water use. You can produce more food with less. It is what farmers, even dryland farmers, have had to do for many years to become more efficient as well. I am sure that irrigators across the board can do it. We must do it in a collaborative way and work with the other states, because, as we all know, states have been bickering over the River Murray for over 100 years, and, as I said, I am worried that it will go on for some time yet. We also must not forget the terrible drought we have been in for the last four years.

In my closing remarks I will recount a story about when I met with the Snowy hydro scheme people. The member for MacKillop was there and the candidate for Chaffey (before he became the member for Chaffey) was with us. I said to these people from the Snowy hydro, 'If the Lower Lakes—Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert—were only 30 kilometres from Sydney, would they be in the state they are in now?' which was a devastating state, with sand blowing, the threat of acid sulphate soils. One of those people from Snowy hydro just jumped to his feet and said, 'They'd be pristine.' So, it is about population.

Everyone knows that we are at the bottom of the river. I would like to think there is an approach across the parliament that we all want the right result for the river. We want more than just words. We want to see the recommendations taking in place and we want to see action, because the environment needs a drink, irrigators need a drink, the economy needs a drink. We must make sure that everyone gets equity in the debate. I conclude my remarks.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (16:10): I want to make a couple of points in the first instance and then I will refer to some of the matters and issues raised by the opposition speakers. In the first instance, I thank them for their support. It appears that we are in furious agreement with

each other and I will clarify some of the points that were asked about, but I appreciate the fact that they have indicated support for this motion.

From the time of the establishment of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, South Australia has been a supporter of that authority and the fact that it is to be an independent body to manage the river based on sound science rather than what other speakers have indicated is the parochial state interests that always seem to have prevailed.

Also, as a state government we have indicated that the basin plan, when it is fully developed, must adopt a whole-of-basin approach that acknowledges but transcends state borders. Indeed, its principal aim must be to ensure a long-term productive and environmentally sustainable future for the Murray-Darling Basin, because it is in the interests of all users of the River Murray system that this is achieved.

It is clear that the choice is not between a healthy river and a viable irrigation industry. Without a healthy river, in the long term, the industries that depend on it will decline. We also say that over-allocation upstream must be addressed.

What we are attempting to do through this motion is achieve a bipartisan approach with both sides of the Parliament of South Australia, and we say that is vital to maximising our chances of getting an outcome that meets the needs of the river, our state and the basin as a whole. I think it is important to touch on a few points that relate to what our state seeks from the basin plan.

We say from the outset that the basin plan must balance social, environmental and economic requirements. We also say that flows in the River Murray must be increased and better managed to maintain a healthy working river system all the way through to the Murray Mouth. Also, South Australia seeks a permanent system of environmental flows in the river to the national iconic areas of the Coorong, the Lower Lakes and the Murray Mouth that will restore and, indeed, maintain the health of this system, including during times of drought like those we recently experienced. We also must maintain the delivery of South Australia's annual critical human water needs to the River Murray which, as many speakers have mentioned, supports 90 per cent of the state's population; and this water must be secure.

The river corridor is essential to the state's economy and the basin plan must enable productive and profitable primary industries to continue, and for those communities to thrive. I noted with interest the comments of the member for Hammond who said, and I paraphrase, that there is no doubt that there will still be very much productive land being utilised in the River Murray system during and beyond the final plan that will be in place and that we can do more with the water we have got, particularly in upstream states.

The reductions in the sustainable diversion limits should be fair, and that is what the state government is seeking. It should be fair and reasonable. We also say that South Australia's early actions to cap water use since about 1969, as well as our high level of water use efficiency, must be taken into account in the development of the plan. I will not be going cap in hand and saying, 'Recognise what we do here in South Australia in such a way that causes us to take less effort in developing the plan.' What we say is that, where savings can be found (and we say the majority of the savings with respect to water efficiencies can be found upstream), those benefits should flow through to the rest of the system and be treated as a benefit to the system as a whole, not just to those areas in which those efficiencies are being found.

What we also require is an efficient and open water market that maximises the opportunity for trading within and between basin states, whilst also recognising and protecting the needs of the environment and third parties. We also seek from the basin plan the water quality and salinity management plan that should contain management objectives, targets and policies to protect drinking water, agriculture, recreation and environmental values in South Australia.

On the matter of reductions and diversions in South Australia, I would like to make a couple of comments. As I mentioned earlier, South Australia will bear—and it is only appropriate—its fair share of reductions; however, the plan must recognise, as I mentioned, South Australia's historically responsible behaviour and that our irrigators are, without doubt, the most efficient in the Murray-Darling Basin. Cuts, as I also mentioned, should be shared equitably based on current relative levels of over-allocation.

The state also believes that the plan must take into account the social and economic impacts on water users and communities in South Australia. The quality and security of water that irrigators need can only be met from a healthy river, and the South Australian government will

consider carefully, of course, how to implement any reductions through its water allocation planning processes and it will consult with water entitlement holders.

The plan must also allow for an appropriate period of transition through to any changes that will occur, those changes being a system that will have less water available for current purposes, notwithstanding, again, the comments of the member for Hammond that we support the opportunity to do much more with much less water than is used at the moment.

I will go on to address some of the comments that were made, and I will start with the member for MacKillop. Again, I thank him very much for his indication of support for this motion. However, he did talk about being confused. The member for MacKillop is often confused, and I do not make any apologies for that, but I will try to help him here. We used to have a saying in the fire brigade, 'If you don't want anyone to know anything, whack it on the noticeboard.'

I will just remind the house that, on 25 November 2010, I made a ministerial statement on the Murray-Darling Basin plan. Of course, again, the member for MacKillop raised a point of order even before I had really started, and that point of order was that it is a convention of the house that, when a minister makes a ministerial statement, he hands out a copy of his statement. The Speaker quite rightly said, 'There is a standing order there. Sit down. I can see that he is about to hand them out. Thank you, minister.' The point I am making is that this ministerial statement was handed to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

I will go on to say a bit about that ministerial statement and what it outlined. It was at that time about the next 12 to 15 months when the long-term future of the Murray-Darling Basin would be determined. It went through to talk about our support of the release of the guide to the proposed plan, notwithstanding that we were all somewhat disappointed, if you like, with the processes that were undertaken by the authority with respect to the release of that guide which, on any fair assessment, one might say was quite appalling.

I went on to say that our understanding—and it remains our understanding, with a slight change at the moment—was that the agreement was to not release the proposed plan until such time as the Windsor committee, for want of a better term, had deliberated and provided its advice on this process. We understand that a 16-week public consultation will be undertaken, which is required under the Water Act, when the proposed basin plan is released. That will then be followed by the final basin plan by the end of 2011, but more likely in early 2012.

I also went on to say that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to fix the environmental problems facing the basin, but the main point I made in this ministerial statement was that I had, on numerous occasions, called for a bipartisan approach to an across-the-political-divide on this extremely important issue. During that ministerial statement I notified the house of my intention to move a motion requesting that the Natural Resources Committee inquire into and report on the proposed basin plan when it was released. I then went on to talk about some areas into which the Natural Resources Committee may wish to inquire and consider certain aspects of the proposed plan when it was released. Of course a proposed plan, by its very nature, means that the plan is only proposed: it is not the final plan. That proposed plan will come out and then be the subject of that consultation period.

In the ministerial statement I particularly proposed that the Natural Resources Committee inquire into and consider the following aspects of the proposed plan: the environmental impacts; the provisions for environmental flows in the River Murray system, in particular; the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth; the impact of proposals on the social, cultural, environmental and economic needs of the South Australian community; whether new sustainable diversion limits had been fairly and equitably devised and applied across the Murray-Darling Basin; and, in addition, associated community adjustment issues—that is, the transition, if you like, that needs to be in place.

I went on to say that work on the referral would commence on the date the proposed plan was released, and I concluded by saying that I hoped all members of the house would welcome this move and use the opportunity to work together in a bipartisan way to address what is really the most significant reform that this country has undertaken for any amount of time, and probably the most significant reform from a primary production and environmental perspective that this country has ever faced. I urged that the spirit of bipartisanship be embraced not only in this parliament but also, of course, with our South Australian representatives in the federal parliament.

I guess members are asking what I am going on about in a very long-winded way. The member for MacKillop and others asked, 'What about some terms of reference?' That was detailed

there, but you are damned if you do and damned if you do not. If I put forward what I thought were strict terms of reference for the committee, I would be told to let the committee determine what it should inquire into, knowing full well that the objective was to secure a bipartisan approach from this parliament on what ought to be this parliament's position on the proposed Murray-Darling Basin plan, and, subsequently, the plan when it is released.

That was, and remains, the objective, but we put forward some terms of reference within that ministerial statement, and I hope that has helped the member for MacKillop to be less confused than he was in regard to the content and the thrust of this motion.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: Because the—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you do not have to respond to interjections.

The Hon. P. CAICA: That is right; I do not need to respond. But I do need to be reminded, every now and then, that I do not need to respond. It would be very helpful for you to continue to do that. Another subject—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: So it would be best if the member for MacKillop did not make interjections.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Madam Deputy Speaker, for your benefit, I presume that, when a ministerial statement is made, people will either listen to it or, alternatively, read that ministerial statement. There appeared to be no rhyme or reason, at that stage, for me to regurgitate what I had already provided to the house. However, on the basis of this contribution today, it seems necessary for me to remind the house of what was raised at that time.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: It is quite true. So I hope that the member for MacKillop is no longer confused.

Mr Williams: I am still confused why it wasn't in *Hansard*.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, but we cannot help that. There were also many issues raised by numerous speakers about resourcing. Again, I remind the house that this did not come out of the blue. When I proposed this, I had previously spoken not only to the chair but also to committee members. I met with the Natural Resources Committee and, amongst other things, the issue of resourcing was raised in the context of, 'Well, they're a bit strapped in regard to resources and a bit strapped for time, as well.' So, a commitment was given that my department's (and the whole of government, if you like) coordination of the state government's response to the Murray-Darling Basin plan would be available to them, all the technical information that is required by the committee.

As mentioned by one of the speakers, there is no need to go into it in such a way as to recommence research and inquire into things that have already been done. It makes sense for a committee that is going to report to the parliament—and, hopefully, adopt a bipartisan position with regard to this parliament's view on the Murray-Darling Basin plan—to have access to resources that have already delved into a significant number of aspects that relate to the Murray-Darling Basin plan.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: I have informed the committee. I have informed the chair. I cannot make excuses. I cannot make—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, and as I remember six or seven members of this chamber are members of the Natural Resources Committee. I am happy to come to your party room meetings at any time, if you want, to ensure that you are better informed than otherwise would be the case. The member for Stuart made a very thoughtful contribution, as he always does, and I thank him for that. He also talked about the importance of ensuring that South Australia's water supplies continue and our reliance as a state on the River Murray for a variety of needs, not least of which is our critical human needs.

Along with other speakers, he raised the question about what we would do with the recommendations. Having asked the committee to inquire into this and providing the necessary resources for it to inquire effectively into the areas that have been highlighted, it would be a minister at his peril who did not heed the recommendations, knowing full well that we want to leave this parliament saying, in respect of all future discussions on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's proposed plan and subsequent plan, 'We are at one on this issue. As a parliament we are supporting not only a bipartisan approach but we are supporting the people of South Australia through the bipartisan position that has been developed and supported by this parliament.'

The member for Schubert (and I am pleased that he says he is still a mate of mine because he is a good bloke) made an interesting contribution. He talked about the need to find water savings and define water savings in a variety of areas. I met with two of the opposition's colleagues, upper house members of parliament from Western Australia who were over here earlier this week. It is the second delegation of people from Western Australia who I have met with.

The reason they come to South Australia is that, notwithstanding the fact that sometimes we are very hard on ourselves, we actually lead the nation with regard to not only the way we find efficiencies and efficiently irrigate but we also lead the nation in water recycling and stormwater harvesting. They are suffering in Western Australia, so they came over to learn about what it is that we do here so that they can continue to pursue those matters in Western Australia.

The member for Mount Gambier made a thoughtful contribution, as he always does, and raised the issue of resources, which I think I have addressed in my contribution here today. One of the issues that has been raised (and not just by the member for Hammond but also the member for Chaffey) is that we still face major problems. It is critically important for people to realise that, whilst nature has delivered a significant amount of water, for which we are all thankful, there are still problems associated with what was the unprecedented drought, whether it be the matter of the levy banks mentioned by the member for Hammond, the riverbank slumping or, indeed, the proliferation of acid in the lower swamps area which are the result of water coming into the system.

So, it is a bit much for people upstream to say everything has returned to normal. What we have, thankfully, is a very good system at the moment that is being fed with a lot of water, but the problems associated with the drought will be ongoing for a period of time.

The member for Chaffey raised issues related to, amongst other things, irrigators' needs. He was probably, as is his wont, a little bit melodramatic about other issues with respect to some of the irrigators facing destruction up there because of the decision to keep them at 67 per cent. I have seen the first briefing from ABARE in relation to what is being produced in the Riverland area, and, of course, I want that confirmed by PIRSA with respect to the type of year they have had.

Again, I remind the member for Chaffey and the house that, when meeting with irrigators on my second day back from annual leave, I requested from them the identification of anyone who was suffering with respect to their levels of production as a result of being on 67 per cent. To date I do not think that we have received any information from any of the irrigators about people who are in particular dire straits as a result of the 67 per cent allocation they had been provided with. I am still awaiting that information, if indeed it exists.

What the member for Chaffey did say, which was critically important, was that the proposed Murray-Darling Basin plan needs to satisfy the environmental needs, and I think that we are at one on that, too. If we have a healthy river system the benefits are going to accrue for those people who ply their trade on the river—the irrigators. The member for Hammond also mentioned—and I will paraphrase him here, and I am sure that he will correct me if I am wrong—that dryland farmers have been doing it for years. They know that their level of production is going to increase dependent upon the health of the land that they plough or till.

I was over on Eyre Peninsula just two weeks ago (hosted by the member for Flinders), and I visited a group of young farmers, one of whom was Mr Treloar's brother, but also I met with other young, progressive farmers. I was astounded to see that one of the paddocks of the member for Flinders was trialling production. Most people would know more about it than me, but they had a hostile layer, a clay layer, and that was affecting production.

They chopped up that clay layer and added some organic material to it. The first year after they had done that they had an increase of about 50 per cent in production for that area. The next year was a 300 per cent production increase on the 50 per cent they had already got. My response, of course, was, 'Well, I bet that made the ears of all your neighbours prick up,' because that is a fair increase in the level of production in that trial area.

The point I am making is that, just as is the case with dryland farming and the fact that they are going to improve their level of production, it is dependent upon the health of the land on which they ply their trade, and the same applies to irrigators. We need a healthy system for the most benefits to arise for irrigators in other forms of primary production who rely on that healthy system.

I finish by highlighting a couple of comments made in the member for Hammond's contribution. He highlighted upstream over-allocation and harvesting and the inefficiencies of irrigation practices further upstream, and I thank him for that acknowledgment. I do believe that significant water can be returned to the river through efficiencies in irrigation practices upstream. Again, that is one of the things that this parliament will need to focus on when we say that the Murray-Darling Basin plan—where efficiencies can be found—has those efficiencies or those savings shared across the basin for the benefit of the basin as a whole.

I conclude by thanking members for their support for what I think is a very important motion, but, again, I remind members that comments have been made that hundreds of millions of dollars have been used by irrigators to keep their heads above ground. I just remind the house that it was this government that spent tens of millions of dollars making sure that we purchased water to keep permanent plantings alive in the Riverland during what was the most unprecedented drought in anyone's living memory.

We have been very supportive of our irrigation community. We will continue to be extremely supportive of our irrigation community in recognising the role that it plays for our regional and hence our state's economies. One of the ways by which we can be supportive and show ongoing support of our irrigation community is to make sure that this parliament adopts a bipartisan approach that is being proposed, with respect to the Natural Resources Committee's deliberation on the plan, and, in doing so, show that we not only support irrigators but we support the people of South Australia and support the system as a whole, and we want that system restored to an appropriate level of sustainable health for future generations to be able to enjoy.

Motion carried.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PERSONAL PROPERTY SECURITIES) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 24 November 2010.)

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (16:38): The opposition will be supporting this bill. I indicate that the bill before us today—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, member for Bragg, could you just indicate whether you are the lead speaker?

Ms CHAPMAN: I can, yes, and I am. Actually, I think I will be the only speaker, but my inspiring speech may bring forward others who will be keen to make a contribution. The Statutes Amendment (Personal Property Securities) Bill follows the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Bill, which we dealt with back in September 2009, and that was the first of a proposed series of legislation to effect the decision made at a standing committee of attorneys-general on 6 and 7 August 2009. They, in turn, had made a decision based on the recommendation of a report of the Australian Law Reform Commission back in 1991. So this is stage two of a 20-year-old recommendation, which the Howard government had initiated back in 2007 and then, as I say, over time it reached a standing committee of attorneys-general in 2009.

In principle, the proposal that this legislation continues to endorse is on the basis that the attorney-general of the day had accepted that there would be a benefit in harmonising Australia's laws on secured financing using personal property, and that the transfer of the registration process from a number of different registers that operated in state jurisdictions would offer that harmony. This, presumably, is followed by promises of having a cheaper, more efficient system.

I will not dwell today on whether that will be achieved. Obviously, one hopes that a single national regime which applies consistency across Australia to any transaction that creates a security interest in personal property will indeed follow. I am not confident that it will be any cheaper. I am happy to suggest that what will follow is that a national register will make it a little easier for the institutions that operate across the border.

The new registry will take some time to establish, and so there is a commencement date of, I think, 1 May, and I am advised that that is to facilitate the necessary preparatory work for the

major departments to be in readiness for this transfer. Essentially, that is the closing down of our registers and then going online at the national level.

The opportunity, also, as this progresses, is to contemporise the manner in which we register and make available access to the information on the register. Essentially, this new PPS registry is intended to provide online access and that will, therefore, facilitate 24-hour access to any of the users, and they will be able to register financing statements, attach documents to financing statements, amend existing financing statements, cancel financing statements, manage secured party groups, search the register, obtain search results, and obtain reports.

Again, if the online service is established, and operates well, then one can foresee that 24-hour access to this registry, and being able to obtain this information or change or register that information, will be an improvement for consumers. In South Australia, registries under the Goods Securities Act 1986, the Bills of Sale Act 1886, the Co-operatives Act 1997, the Liens on Fruit Act 1923, and the Stock Mortgages and Wool Liens Act 1924 will all be subsumed.

However, some registries, it is agreed, should be retained and operated by the state. I do not have that list immediately in front of me but, essentially, my recollection from the second reading explanation of the Attorney-General is that these would cover areas of fishing, aquaculture and mining where there is a very specific statute-making provision for the administration of those industries including licensing and permit arrangements, and that is something that will be retained at the state level, both in regulation and administration, including the registry of licences. Essentially, they are in the petroleum, mining, fishing and aquaculture industries.

I understand from the Attorney-General that there may be some further exclusion to cover future indentures relating to the mining industry and, subject to his comments on that, I anticipate that the opposition will also be supporting that.

A concern that the opposition had during the consultation process was that, when it received a briefing on this bill confirming that this was a continuation of a COAG agreement—it was part of the process that was previously started—the only people who seemed to be advised about this new legislation were government departments. The department of transport, which I will use as an example, was quite legitimately and appropriately advised. It holds a number of securities particularly over motor vehicles and, of course, it is proper that it was consulted. Our concern was not that the departments were consulted, but that other non-government agencies were not consulted.

As a result, the Hon. Stephen Wade of the other place made approaches to a number of other organisations. They included the Australian Bankers' Association, the Australian Finance Association, the Co-operative Federation of South Australia, Elders stock agents, Landmark stock agents, and Motor Trade Association. These are all legitimate parties. I now indicate that most of them confirmed that they either did not have a problem with it ultimately or were in support of the legislation.

I place on the record my concern—and I think this is also shared by the Hon. Stephen Wade—that these people were not asked at all in the first place, and they should have been. These people also have to get ready for any change to a national system, especially if their organisations have retained records that have not always been on electronic record. There are plenty of dungeons and basements of buildings full of old security documents, many of which have probably expired in time, but nevertheless it is a process which they need to undertake to go through their documents, just as the Department of Transport has done and has taken a reasonable time to do. So in future we urge the government to properly consult on these matters and not just go to those that they might be directly responsible for such as government departments or agencies or other institutions that are under the umbrella of this parliament.

The other matter I wish briefly to refer to is the question of what is in and what is out. When we debated this matter back in 2009 with the first part of the legislation which identified that there would be a referral of state powers to the commonwealth to deal with this issue, it was made absolutely clear that there was not going to be any change to the definition of personal property. 'Personal property' is goods and chattels and the like but specifically excludes land, which I am sure would be obvious to all members, but it also excludes water and fixtures.

I note from the debate and briefings around the current legislation that there is also some question about whether, in future, fixtures would be included as an entity upon which a personal security might attach. Members would be aware that currently, if one has a piece of real estate and it is improved with a dwelling or a shed or an airstrip or a fence, these are all known as fixtures and

they are excluded for the purposes of being available as security. Largely, the definition of interrelationship there requires that there be some attachment to the land for it to be disqualified from being identified as personal property.

It is fair to say that there is a whole regime of taxes and a whole regime of law which relates to those improvements or fixtures and, therefore, the increased value of the land that is relied upon for the purposes of mortgages or security over that land with improvements. So if there is to be a transfer of what we now know as fixtures into the personal property realm, we open a whole new regime not only of what is available for security and register under this national scheme but what might be taken away, either deliberately or inadvertently, as what is now proper security for existing liabilities which would no longer be covered.

I will give you an example: if a fence on a piece of property is identified as a fixture, the value of that piece of property with the fencing is the basis upon which a loan is advanced to the landowner, that amount takes that value into account, it is secured over the property. If fences transfer into personal property, as part of an increased definition of fixtures, then essentially that would evaporate the value of that security for the purposes of the land mortgage. I hope that is a simple example that illustrates the concern that we would have if there was to be a change of law on the definition of personal security.

Equally, we have other items which may in the future come into fruition as being defined as personal property. One of them, which has been floating around for some time, is the question of water. At present, if you have 10 dams full of water and you have a good rainfall, you cannot go to the bank and say, 'Look, I want you to value my water for the purposes of obtaining a loan.' You can try, but the reality is you will not get a loan based on the value of your water in those dams.

In the event that governments introduce a regime where there is a licence, permit or prescription attached to water in a dam on a piece of property and that the value of that licence, prescription or permit may be able to be transferred, sold or encumbered, then that may well create another entity upon which we would look to enter that in as a piece of personal property; that is, extend the definition to cover it. However, we are yet to see that.

At present, water sitting in someone's tank or sitting in someone's dam is not a piece of personal property as defined for the purposes of registering of securities. Even if it is foreshadowed by governments in the state jurisdictions that they may proceed to enter into or provide for that in the future, then I would be certainly concerned to want to participate fully in the debate as to whether that water should be defined as personal property in those circumstances, and, if it did, whether, in fact, like mining, agriculture and fishing licences, we would retain as a state jurisdiction the right to deal with those.

In anticipation that there may be other amendments to cover that I hope I have made our position clear, that is, we will not be signing up to that until we have had a full debate on it. With those comments, I indicate that I will be supporting the bill and would expect the opposition members to follow suit.

The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Urban Development and Planning, Minister for Tourism, Minister for Food Marketing) (16:53): I thank the member for Bragg for her contribution. This matter, I am pleased to note, is one that in substance finds agreement with the opposition. As the honourable member has noted, it is a matter that has its origin in the processes of COAG and other national bodies.

I just wish to foreshadow to members that I will be seeking to move the bill in a slightly amended form, and I will deal with those proposals in the committee stage, unless people would prefer to me to deal with them now.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clauses 1 to 16 passed.

Clause 17.

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

Page 10, after line 7 [clause 17,inserted section 47]—After line 7 insert:

(2) The Governor may, by regulation—

- (a) provide that this Act is to apply to prescribed bills of sale, or bills of sale relating to property of a prescribed kind, as if it had not been amended by the *Statutes Amendment (Personal Property Securities) Act 2010* (the *amending Act*) or as if specified amendments made by the amending Act had not been made; and
 - (b) make any consequential provision necessary in connection with a regulation under paragraph (a).
- (3) The Registrar may provide such information concerning bills of sale, or other information recorded by the Registrar in connection with registration under this Act, as the Registrar considers appropriate to the person responsible for maintaining a register under another Act if the information is provided in accordance with an arrangement entered into by the Minister with the Minister responsible for the administration of the other Act.

The background to this might be helpful to those opposite. This was, as so many things have been in the last few years, a commonwealth initiative. To the extent that there was consultation in the matter, the consultation was driven by those people who were the progenitors, if that is the right word, of this reform. So it may or may not be that consultation was not as adequate as members opposite might have hoped for but that was not a matter within the control of the government here.

Anyway, this amendment to clause 17 comes about in this way. The reforms are scheduled to commence in October of this year. Information on state registers will be transferred to the personal property securities register and the state registers will close to new registrations. The Statutes Amendment (Personal Property Securities) Bill 2010 will amend relevant legislation to exclude some statutory licences from the operation of the Personal Properties Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2009.

Consequently, bills of sale over excluded licences will not be transferred to the personal property securities register when it commences in October. Arrangements for those interests to be registered elsewhere are underway. Amendments to the Natural Resources Management Act 2004, that will establish a register and regime for dealing with interests over water licences—and I pause here to say it may or may not, depending on what transpires here, and I note the honourable member's remarks about that, but assuming they were passed but not commenced—and similar amendments to the Fisheries Management Act 2007 and Aquaculture Act 2001 are under consideration.

As commencement of the necessary registers and amendments may not coincide with commencement of the PPS reforms, this amendment will ensure that existing and new bills of sale over excluded licences remain and continue to be registered on the bills of sale register until that information can be transferred to the appropriate registers.

So, I guess in answer to the remarks the honourable member made previously in the second reading contribution, there are two separate questions. The first is: what will, in fact, be a licence that is sitting around the place but not picked up yet, and that is a debate that we may well have about water. However, the point we are trying to make here is that, whatever they might be, we do not want them to disappear into a void.

So, this is essentially a preserving provision that says whatever they might be, however they might have arisen (and we are just speculating here that they might arise, conceivably, in an untimely way under the Natural Resources Management Act as a water licence or they might, conceivably, arise under the Fisheries Management Act or Aquaculture Act), if and when those circumstances arise and the transfer across cannot be achieved, there is a repository, if you like, for those rights. So that is the intention of that amendment and I have moved that amendment accordingly.

Ms CHAPMAN: I thank the minister for his explanation and indicate that I will not be holding up the passage of this legislation in this house but, on behalf of the opposition, we will certainly reserve our right to deal with this matter differently in another place. However, I will say this: there seem to be two areas the government is attempting to deal with here. One is items which currently exist on a state register which have not been identified as excluded and may not be picked up. They were found later—and they may only be very small—but they do currently exist and they are going to slip through the net unless we have a catch-all clause. In that regard, I anticipate that the opposition will not be opposing that.

We would have hoped that, by this stage of the progress of investigation of matters, we would have identified what they might be. Nevertheless, the government will have an opportunity to

continue to search for those, and I am sure it would be happy to advise the house if it became aware of them so that they could be picked up at the time we deal with this in another place.

The second area to which I have referred in my second reading contribution is the provision for the transfer to the national body or, in this case, to actually secure it ultimately in a list as an addition to current securities within the categories of exclusion. I am not quite sure which but, either way, they relate to the establishment of a permit, licence or a prescription which is not yet in existence and which we have not yet debated or concluded either by legislation or by some ministerial regulation, namely some subordinate legislation.

Whether they even come into existence is a matter yet to be determined and, if they do, we have the power, as a legislator here, to provide for a statutory amendment bill to cover that. In my view, that is the proper order in which to deal with that. We should not be attempting to have a catch-all clause to cover something that might come into effect between now and October.

The other aspect of that is that I think we need to have a discussion—especially about something as important as water, about which there has been considerable discussion and debate—about whether water is going to be a tradable entity in the future and whether that is water out of the River Murray, out of a bore or out of someone's dam or tank, or anything else. These debates are yet to be had.

Whilst I would personally say that, if there is any kind of prescription or licensing of water, I would be very concerned if we were to transfer the regulation to a national body of any kind. I would certainly argue in my party room the need to secure the management, regulation, administration, support and/or any registration of the licensing here in South Australia.

At the moment, the Natural Resources Management Act and, I think, the Fisheries Act and the Aquaculture Act are the acts being referred to as likely to pick up these permits, licences, prescriptions—whatever they are going to be defined as—between now and October. They are state acts, so I assume that they will be in this tranche of legislation which is currently in the exemptions category.

In any event, in my view, the issue of whether they come within the definition of personal property and then whether they are administered at a state or federal level is something we should debate if and when that comes into effect. So, I just foreshadow that. It may be that my party room has a different view. It may be that persons in another place have a different view, but I simply say that this is the caution with which I approach this amendment. I indicate that I will make no further statement, and perhaps wiser heads than mine in another place will make a contribution.

The Hon. J.R. RAU: As I understand it, there is no intention whatsoever in South Australia—or indeed any other state—to allow the national register to affect water. Every jurisdiction has made it clear that it wishes water to remain a matter for them. The other thing is that the water register, as I understand it, is presently under construction, the legislation for its establishment is already there, so we are anticipating the possible completion of that construction exercise before October, in which case some place where the register can be held will be necessary.

Each of the examples here are examples of things which are intended to be excluded from the national register. These are not things we are wishing to hand over to the national register: quite the contrary. I hope that in some way addresses the matter that the honourable member has raised.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 18 to 53 passed.

New clause 53A.

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

New part, page 22, after line 8—After Part 21 insert:

Part 21A—Amendment of *Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) Act 1982*

53A—Insertion of section 5A

After section 5 insert:

5A—Certain rights etc are not personal property for the purposes of Commonwealth Act

The following are not personal property for the purposes of the *Personal Property Securities Act 2009* of the Commonwealth:

- (a) a Special Tenement;
- (b) a right, entitlement or authority granted by or under this act that is of a kind declared by the regulations not to be personal property for the purposes of the *Personal Property Securities Act 2009* of the Commonwealth.

The specific issue here is in relation to the mining industry, in particular. This is consistent with amendments to the Mining Act 1971 and in response to recent instructions from the Department of Primary Industries and Resources.

The Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) Act 1982 will be amended to exclude special tenements from the operation of the PPS act. In other words, they will continue to be something that we look after. New part 21A is to explicitly comprehend that fact. Provision is also made for further exclusions to be made by regulation, which, pursuant to section 10 of the act, requires agreement of the parties to the indenture.

I think it is fair to say that this is pretty well focused on the Roxby indenture and what might or might not transpire there. Again, the effect of it is to bring that into our orbit as a state, rather than allow it to pass into the PPS arrangements. I believe there has also been a request from BHP that this matter be the subject of an amendment to make clear that position.

Ms CHAPMAN: Again, while the opposition has not considered this specifically, on the Attorney-General's explanation it appears to have merit. It is a matter that has been anticipated. The fact that BHP has asked for it probably indicates its confidence, seeing as the current assessment processes at the Northern Territory, state and commonwealth levels are progressing favourably and it does anticipate some opportunity to have a mining licence issued at the end.

With this further redevelopment, and ultimately the indenture, I assume that will come here for the endorsement of the parliament. In any event, the specific provision for such indentures—either as a special tenement or as an indenture—should indeed remain excluded, as we currently make provision for other mining operations. I do not anticipate that there will be any objection to this in another place.

New clause inserted.

Remaining clauses (54 to 66) and title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Urban Development and Planning, Minister for Tourism, Minister for Food Marketing) (17:12): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

TUCKWELL, MR D.

Mr GARDNER (Morialta) (17:13): I wish to use the opportunity presented by the adjournment debate to recognise the contribution made by a great South Australian, David Tuckwell, who, regrettably, passed away on 6 February this year. David Tuckwell was a man who I met in late 2008 and the brevity of our acquaintance was, I am sure, my loss and quite possibly to his benefit. He gave a great deal to the communities in which he lived and I wish I had had more of an opportunity to know him over a longer period.

He was born on 28 April 1932. His involvement in the community through which I knew him was through Rotary International. He was inducted into Rotary young—in his 20s—in Mount Gambier. Through that community he served for several decades before moving and bringing that country community spirit with him to the city. He was inducted into the Rotary Club of Campbelltown on 7 January 1974—a club that he served with distinction for 37 years, and his contribution to the community of Campbelltown is widely recognised.

David became president of the Campbelltown Rotary Club for the 1984-85 period, and he also served two terms as secretary. Often in this place members make recognition of people whose

service to their community through Rotary has been recognised by being awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship, and, indeed, David was awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship in 1988, and the Sapphire Pin in that fellowship in 2006. He was a very easy man to connect with, and, indeed, he is one of those people who was the life and the heart of his community.

The Rotary Club of Campbelltown keenly feels his loss, but the community spirit that he brought to the club and the activities he was involved with certainly live on through the ongoing work of that club, and it will continue to live on for decades to come through the many members who have been inspired to greater service through knowing David.

David was involved in a wide range of activities through the Campbelltown Rotary Club, including fellowship and encouraging new members to get more involved and contribute more through fundraising, as well as working bees on environmental projects and other community projects whenever he was asked. Over the last three years, finishing in September 2010 (very recently), he was involved with a fundraising activity called the Campbelltown Rotary Outback Experience, which raised significant funds, particularly for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

An auction David organised through the Campbelltown Rotary Outback Experience in September last year alone raised \$25,000 for the flying doctors, and I was pleased to be able to make some small contribution towards that. Indeed, in David's memory, the Campbelltown Rotary Club has donated a further \$5,000 to the important work of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and I think that is suitable recognition for his involvement in that organisation. The Campbelltown Rotary Newsletter described David as follows:

His friendly smile and warm greeting, his willing hand for whatever task came up, his sometimes outspoken but usually logical views on matters controversial, will greatly be missed.

That is certainly true. Every month when the Rotary shed sales were held to raise thousands of dollars for local community projects, David would always get on the ABC early to advertise them, and I understand that he had quite a following of listeners on that community billboard program.

He was certainly taken too soon. At his funeral on 11 February at Darroch House the many people who were touched by David in his personal life, as well as through his outstanding work and contributions to the community, showed their appreciation for David's contribution and his life. He was taken too soon at the age of only 78, but his memory will certainly live on through the institutions to which he gave so much.

TAYLOR ELECTORATE

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (17:19): I rise today to speak on the schools in my area, particularly two which I visited in the last week and which I am growing to know and becoming increasingly fond of. First, I would like to speak on the Virginia Primary School under the good leadership and guidance of its principal, Rebecca Reid-Nguyen. I was fortunate enough to attend the year 7 leadership conference, which they recently held as a whole day event for the year 7 class, and I sponsored that as the local member of parliament as I do with all of the schools in my area. I have offered them a certain amount to provide either awards or student conferences for leadership in the community because I think student youth leadership is an important thing for our community, not just in the school sites but in the broader community, sporting clubs and other environments.

The Virginia Primary School has a very rich and diverse population and the students there are doing an exceptional job. When I spoke to them about what they thought good leadership and good governance was, they were very caring of each other in the way they dealt with each other in potential conflicts, even in the school environment. For example, a boy told me about how he had been playing handball and someone had taken the ball and how they resolved that through non-confrontational methods. They also talked about what they thought were good leadership traits for when they voted on class captains and house captains later that day. It was very encouraging to see young people participating in that way.

I have also been to see this school at the Premier's Be Active Awards last year, and I know they are doing exceptional work in literacy and numeracy at that school. The kids are really thoroughly engaged in it and are doing a great job. So, well done to the Virginia Primary School, its leadership team with Rebecca and the students.

I also would like to speak about a school that is going through the final stages of amalgamation. They opened on a new amalgamated site at the beginning of this year, and that is the Lake Windemere CPC. The minister has kindly supported the community in allowing the name

of Windemere to be used at that site. Previously it was the Direk campus and the Salisbury North West campus that have amalgamated this year. There is a lot of fantastic building going on at that school to increase the capacities and facilities now that it is a CPC.

The new principal, Angela Falkenberg, who the member for Torrens has spoken about recently in a grievance, is a great principal and we are lucky to have her come to the electorate of Taylor and bring her vast experience of working in schools with many challenges to the local area. The Windemere student population and parents are making a fantastic job of the amalgamation process and are forming a new culture on the new site, and I commend them for this. I also thank the education department for giving people in my electorate great hope with greater and better facilities for their children's future.

RUNDLE MALL TOURIST PRECINCT

Ms SANDERSON (Adelaide) (17:23): I rise to further my comments on Rundle Mall that I started as a grievance in the last sitting week. I believe that, because the government now recognises that Rundle Mall is a place of significant interest to our tourists and this position is supported by industry stakeholders and the wider community, the argument that tourists do not come here to shop can also be dispelled by the fact that busloads of cruise ship passengers flooded into the mall on the Sunday when it was opened from nine to 11.

Tourism Australia's *Inbound Tourism Trends* publication gives some extraordinary figures, stating:

Shopping for pleasure is the most popular leisure activity undertaken by international tourists in Australia.

That is 84 per cent of people surveyed. It is way ahead of going to the beach which sits at 62 per cent and way ahead of visiting the markets which sits at 54 per cent. Whilst it is always difficult to assess the actual dollar impact without a comprehensive survey, I understand that over 3,000 cruise liner passengers were in the mall by 9.30am on the day the hours were extended. Five wineries showcased SA's premier wine regions with wine tastings, the Fringe turned on a show, there were jazz bands, and 70 per cent of retailers responded by opening their doors. Mall traffic was up by 20 per cent over the entire day over any given Sunday, which clearly demonstrates that locals were also there to enjoy the carnival atmosphere. Many of the guests commented that Adelaide turned on the best show.

I say to this house that, given the success of the Sunday that we extended the trading hours, as a state, we cannot afford to turn our back on these tourist dollars by keeping our doors closed in future during peak tourism times such as public holidays.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (17:24): Today being the centenary of the first gathering to celebrate International Women's Day, I wish to talk about the women in my electorate and, in particular, two events organised by women in my town which highlight the contribution women are making to my community.

The first event I wish to discuss briefly is the International Women's Day event which was held on 27 February at the Gawler Racecourse, and which was organised by the local International Women's Day committee. Around 200 women, and a few men, like myself, attended the event, and I am proud to say that this event in Gawler celebrated its 10th anniversary, having been established by myself and the then deputy mayor Helena Dawkins some 10 years ago.

The event gives local women the opportunity to hear guest speakers and listen to debates regarding issues affecting the lives of women in the local community. The event is usually arranged around a guest speaker, and this year the guest speaker was Ms Sheree Sullivan. There were student debaters who spoke on a particular topic, and there were a number of singers, whom I will mention a bit later, who provided a great afternoon of storytelling, thought-provoking debates and entertainment.

Former Trinity student Ms Sheree Sullivan told the story about how she and her family became involved in 'Udder Delights', a very successful cheesemaking business in the Adelaide Hills. Sheree talked about her journey of how she, a trained jazz pianist, became a director in the family business that started as a hobby and now employs over 20 people in cheesemaking, retailing and tourism in the Adelaide Hills. Sheree's story was inspirational, and she is a wonderful role model for young women.

As I mentioned, the program also involved a debate with female students from the three local secondary schools, combining to debate the following question: that all future mayors of Gawler should be women. As you can imagine, I was appreciative that this discussion did not take place 10 years ago, as it could have been a bit embarrassing for me. The students did an outstanding job in debating the pros and cons of that argument, and I would like to put their names on record: from Trinity College, Melissa Schild and Famiko Baughan; from Gawler High School, Simone White and Kayla Gaskin; and from Xavier College, Maddy Staehr and Jordan Starick. The event was organised by local identity Judy Gillett-Ferguson.

The students provided some very well-researched arguments, and while the topic had a humorous side, both sides actually raised some very good views. The event was well-attended and I would just like to congratulate the committee who put the event together, and I would like to put their names on record. The International Women's Day committee of Gawler is chaired by Naomi Arnold-Reschke, who is the president of the Zonta Club of Gawler. The committee also consists of Maggie Gregory, also from the Zonta Club of Gawler, Linda Bertram and Joanne McClean from the Country Women's Association, and Win Nicolai and Sonia Cruickshank from the Gawler Girl Guides. Win prepared the afternoon tea for the event, which was well received, and the Girl Guides served the afternoon tea.

Other committee members include Jill Talbot from the Gawler Community House; Judy Gillett-Ferguson from the Gawler Community Gallery; Patricia Dent, a local businessperson; and Louise Drummond, another local businessperson. One of the highlights of the afternoon was the wonderful singing by the Sudanese Christian Fellowship Singers, and they sang both in their traditional language and English, and it was a great afternoon.

The other event I wish to mention is an art exhibition which was opened on Saturday. I was very proud to be asked to open this event, called 'The Connecting Weave, Thread and Culture Eco Art Exhibition', presented by the Ngarrindjeri Eco Art Cooperative. It is an exhibition which pays respects to both Ngarrindjeri culture and also the environment, and is held at the Gawler Community Gallery, Gawler Railway Station. The event was arranged by Jelina Haines, and I would like to congratulate Jelina, because not only is it an excellent exhibition but it also supports women and, in this case, women in art.

The mission of the Ngarrindjeri Eco Art Co-op, which is running the exhibition, is to provide opportunities and assistance to emerging Ngarrindjeri and non-indigenous artists living in the Coorong District and surrounding areas to fulfil their dreams and aspirations as artists. The Co-op achieves this by providing ongoing arts training, opportunities for self-employment, financial independence and clarity of purpose. By promoting financial autonomy, the co-op hopes to improve community health and wellbeing not only amongst women in the Coorong region but also in the Aboriginal community at large.

By using art as a catalyst, the co-op helps empower families and other members of the community who are in need, and ultimately promotes and supports Ngarrindjeri culture. Importantly, the art is not only a fusion of contemporary design and sustainable practices and materials but also the art speaks to us about the stories of Ngarrindjeri people. Storytelling is, unfortunately, a dying art in western culture, as we clamour for technology to find purpose and answers in our lives. The art works prepared by the women of the Ngarrindjeri people tell us about Ngarrindjeri culture, and these important stories need to be told and need to be heard.

Whether the stories are about traditional experience or the transition to contemporary society, as a community we have a lot to learn from this experience. I would like to congratulate these two women's groups for their great contribution to my community.

REMOTE AREAS ENERGY SUPPLIES SCHEME

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (17:31): Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I really do appreciate the five minutes that you have allocated to this.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It was the member for Light who gave you one of his minutes.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Thank you to everybody who has participated in the adjournment debate and left five minutes for me to speak on this extremely important topic, that is, the increase in electricity tariffs to remote communities under the government's Remote Areas Energy Supplies scheme. Firstly, to declare a personal interest, I am a shareholder in a company with two businesses in the outback which will incur higher prices under this scheme, and that same company subcontracts to companies that contract to the government as part of the process. I will

not delve into all the details of that but I am integrally involved in this, and I lived in the outback for seven years and really do understand this system very well.

What I want to say in the limited time that I have available is that I believe that the government genuinely underestimates and really does not understand the impact that this will have on remote communities. There are 13 communities impacted by this scheme, with six of them in Stuart: Marree, Parachilna, Blinman, Manna Hill, Yunta and Cockburn; six of them in Giles: Marla, Oodnadatta, Coober Pedy, Kingoonya, Andamooka and Glendambo; and one of them in Flinders at Nundroo.

Every one of these communities will have to pay increased tariffs both for domestic use and business use and, also, very importantly, for street lighting. I think that is a very important thing that has been underestimated, too. Street lighting is normally provided by progress associations which have to raise community funds, do fundraising and all that sort of thing, so that the streetlights can be kept on. There is nobody else paying for that to happen in these communities.

The very obvious impost, first of all, is on domestic consumption for households. There are some 2,600 customers, I am told, all up across these 13 communities who will be impacted, but it is fair to say that most of these towns—in fact the vast majority of these towns—have very few domestic residents, and it would be a great shame if people cannot stay and cannot live in these towns. With regard to business consumption, it is easy for people who do not understand these communities to just assume that there is a business there, electricity is going to go up, it does not matter, they are there all by themselves, costs go up, they can put their prices up, people have to buy from them, and that is the end of that.

First of all, applying that to the domestic use of the people who live in those 13 towns is incredibly unfair and unrealistic. It is also unrealistic to assume that the businesses can or want to operate in that way and that people do have a choice. With regard to consumption, the vast majority of customers who come to these remote area businesses are tourists, travellers, commercial transport operators or any of those sorts of people. They do have a choice and I can tell you very directly that, if tourists want to head up any of the highways that these towns are on, and pay outrageously high fuel prices and outrageously high prices for other products in the shops, they do not have a choice on the day, but they do have a choice as to whether they will come back, and this is as broad reaching as families making a decision about taking a driving holiday to Ayers Rock with the family or jumping in an aeroplane and going to the Gold Coast. It is those sorts of decisions, that it is very important the government understands, that will be impacted by this issue here.

Another very important issue, too, is the lead-in time. It was less than a week, I believe, that the people who will pay these extra prices were given, from the time the announcement was made to the time the tariffs come into place. I do not think there is anybody in this place who would consider that acceptable, that householders, businesses and progress associations, trying to do community service and provide lighting for their communities, could make the adjustments they need to in that time.

The other thing I would like to say in the short time remaining is that consumption of electricity in outback areas is not a choice. You do not get to say, 'Oh, look we'll leave the air conditioning off, or leave for fridges or the freezers or anything like that off.' Wintertime is extremely cold in the outback, much colder than it is in Adelaide—people need their heaters—and in summertime it is much, much hotter than it is in Adelaide.

If you are running a business you have no choice. If you are in your house, you have very limited choice. Your use of electricity, your choice about consumption, is next to nil in outback areas. This is just the direct impost. This is not a matter of cost going up, making a choice to consume less; people do not have a choice.

At 17:36 the house adjourned until Wednesday 9 March 2011 at 11:00.