

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 24 March 2020

The **SPEAKER** (Hon. V.A. Tarzia) took the chair at 11:00 and read prayers.

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

Parliament House Matters

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SAFETY MEASURES

The SPEAKER (11:01): Before I call any speakers, honourable members, there are a number of matters I would like to draw to the attention of the house. Firstly, I would like to update the house on measures that the President and myself in addition to the parliament's Response Management Committee have put in place in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. I am informed that advice has already been circulated to members, parliamentary staff and also building occupants advising that all public and school tours of Parliament House and functions have been postponed.

Non-access card holders will not be permitted into the chamber public galleries on sitting days or committee public galleries to view proceedings. Access card holders, including the media, will continue to have access to the parliamentary precinct. Until further notice, all parliamentary dining rooms will be closed. The members' bar will provide the standard food and beverage service consistent with a non-sitting day. The Blue Room will provide its current range of food and beverage services. There will be no provision for seated dining in both the members' bar and the Blue Room.

Members and ministers have been requested to please reduce the number of members of staff they bring into Parliament House. Members, including ministers, who wish to have non-access card holders attend Parliament House must first seek approval from the President or the Speaker. Centre Hall has been closed until further notice, and access to the parliament will be via the Old Parliament House entrance.

There will be increased cleaning of surfaces within Parliament House together with the provision of sanitiser at key locations. I ask all members to continue practising the hygiene advice that has been circulated. I remind members and staff of the advice provided by public health authorities as it relates to people who feel ill to stay at home.

Honourable members, I would like to thank the leadership of all sides of the house for taking a bipartisan approach to the issues that confront us in having this parliament operate safely. Members have been advised of a proposed sitting arrangement in the house that will accommodate the established social distancing standards. This arrangement will allow for members to be separated by at least 1.5 metres when seated. I can also advise the house that, should the full complement of members be present, the dimensions of this chamber are sufficient to satisfy the four square metre provision for indoor gatherings of less than 100 people.

Members are no doubt aware that they are required to speak from the places assigned to them in the chamber by the Speaker. I understand that the government may move to suspend standing orders so as to enable ministers and members to speak and conduct business necessary for the continued proceedings of the house from any seat within the chamber. This will enable members to sit, speak and undertake business from any seat in the house while conforming to the requisite social distancing and indoor gathering restrictions.

Bottled water will also be supplied to members of the house, not jugs and glasses, to reduce the risk to staff in handling glassware. I will also allow members to bring their own containers of water into the chamber if they so desire but I do request that any container used is free of any advertising or identifiable markings.

I trust that a common-sense approach will prevail to assist in the house carrying on its business. I thank members for their support.

Parliamentary Procedure

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (11:05): I move:

That standing orders be and remain so far suspended up until and including 26 March so as to enable ministers and members to speak and conduct business from any seat within the chamber.

The SPEAKER: An absolute majority is present. I therefore accept the motion. Is the motion seconded?

Honourable members: Yes, sir.

The SPEAKER: Would anyone like to speak in support of the proposed suspension motion? It has been moved and seconded. There being no speakers, I will put it at once.

Motion carried.

Bills

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY) AMENDMENT BILL

Standing Orders Suspension

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (11:05): I move:

That standing orders be and remain so far suspended as to enable the introduction of a bill without notice forthwith and passage through all stages without delay.

The SPEAKER: There is an absolute majority present. I accept the motion. Is that seconded?

Honourable members: Yes, sir.

The SPEAKER: Are there any speakers? I will put it now.

Motion carried.

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (11:06): Introduced a bill for an act to amend the Local Government Act 1999. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (11:07): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Local Government (Public Health Emergency) Amendment Bill 2020 will amend the Local Government Act 1999 to allow the minister to make a notice that varies or suspends the operation of specified provisions of the act during a public health emergency to allow councils to continue to operate and make critical decisions.

As all members know, we are facing an unprecedented public health emergency. Like state and federal government, councils are now planning how they must operate during the COVID-19 public health emergency. It is critical that they do so that they can continue to provide the essential services that our communities rely on. It is also critical that the state government take the steps that are necessary to support councils to continue to operate and make the decisions that are so vital to our local communities.

One important action that we need to take care of is to simply ensure that councils can continue to meet and make critical decisions. The bill proposes to give the minister a power to make notices that vary or suspend the operation of specific provisions of the act to allow councils to continue to operate and make critical decisions in a public health emergency.

Councils are rightly concerned that public health measures, such as requirements for people to self-isolate or restrictions on gatherings, may prevent council meetings from meeting quorum requirements under the act and therefore prevent critical decisions being made. This concern is generated by the fact that the act requires council members to attend ordinary and special meetings of council in person.

While members of council committees and subsidiaries can participate in meetings through electronic means, this is not available to council meetings to ensure both the highest integrity of council decisions and accountability and transparency of council activities. However, in a public health emergency, our priorities must be balanced.

I therefore propose that if this bill is passed by parliament, after the commencement of the new powers, I will immediately make a notice to allow council members to participate in council meetings through electronic means and make necessary variations to other meeting procedures to enable this. I am also aware that it is possible that, whilst this notice would be made to ensure that councils can meet quorum requirements, a situation may arise where a council or a number of councils cannot make quorum due to illness or other circumstances related to the public health emergency.

As the bill allows for the minister to make a notice varying or suspending the operation of any of the provisions of the act, I would consider making a notice to allow councils to make decisions in quorate, if absolutely necessary. I expect that a notice to this effect would only be made in exceptional circumstances, where a council's ability to form a quorum has been affected by illness and critical decisions must be made, particularly decisions that, under the act, councils cannot delegate to a chief executive officer or another body.

I am also aware that councils have raised concerns regarding their ability to comply with provisions of the act that require council meetings to be open to the public or to hold public meetings as part of required community engagement if restrictions on gatherings are in place to protect public health. It is not reasonable to expect councils to prioritise compliance with these provisions ahead of public health at this critical time.

However, the proposed amendments would allow this matter—or any other that may arise through a rapidly evolving public health crisis—to be addressed through a notice, if it is reasonably necessary. It will be possible to vary or suspend the operation of any part of the act, as necessary, to address public health concerns or to support councils to continue operating as effectively as possible.

I am aware that I am asking members to consider granting the minister a very wide-ranging power. That is why the bill includes several critical restraints to ensure that it strikes a balance between assisting councils and their communities in a responsive and timely fashion while ensuring that this power is used appropriately.

The first of these measures is that the minister will only have the power to make a notice when a public health emergency has been declared under section 87 of the South Australian Public Health Act 2011. The bill does allow for a circumstance where a public health emergency has been superseded by a declaration under the Emergency Management Act 2004; however, a notice cannot be made until a public health emergency has been declared.

Secondly, while a notice may specify a period for which it is in effect, it is important to note that all notices cease to have effect 28 days after the cessation of all declarations relating to the emergency to which the notice relates. Therefore, it will not be possible for a minister to make a notice that has longer-term impacts on the operation of the act.

The bill also allows for notices to be disallowed by parliament, under the Subordinate Legislation Act 1978. This will ensure the proper scrutiny and, if necessary, change of any notice made by the minister. The minister will also be required to consult with the Local

Government Association before making a notice and cannot make a notice that imposes restrictions or limitations on the power of a council to impose rates and charges on land within its area. Finally, the notice can also include conditions that councils must comply with. I expect that these can be used to protect the openness and accountability of council decisions, if necessary.

I emphasise that this bill is brought before members for one reason: to enable councils to continue to operate effectively and make critical decisions during periods of public health emergencies. I would also like to add that this bill has been worked out in conjunction and lock step with the Local Government Association. They were the ones who came to us seeking this amendment. We know today that there is at least one notice that we need to make under these provisions in relation to councils still being able to meet. In discussions, even in the last two hours, there have been a number of other circumstances in relation to council business that will need to be explored over the coming weeks, and notices to be made under this provision, in order for councils to continue to function.

We are seeing, for instance, that state and federal governments around the country have delayed budgets. The Local Government Act provides for some very specific budget setting and process parameters that local governments need to operate within. This is an area that may need to be looked at and where it is important that this bill is able to be utilised. There have been concerns raised in the last 24 hours in relation to consultation requirements on a number of other matters, such as disability inclusion plans and others, and local government, through the LGA, have again come to us, seeking to have those concerns looked at.

It is very clear that this is an evolving health emergency that is going to require nimble action. What this provision does is provide the ability for local government to continue to operate to provide the essential services that we need them to operate under, whilst at the time ensuring that there are appropriate safeguards in place for this. I commend the bill to members. I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary 1—Short title 2—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Local Government Act 1999*

3—Insertion of section 302B

This clause inserts a new section in the Act allowing the Minister, by notice, to vary or suspend the operation of provisions of the Act if that is reasonably necessary in response to an emergency that has been declared as a public health emergency (whether or not that is subsequently also declared under the *Emergency Management Act 2004*). The notice may apply to specified councils, or classes of councils, or to all councils and may operate subject to conditions. The notice is disallowable and may operate for up to 28 days after the end of the period of the declared emergency, provided that the variation or suspension of the specified provisions remains reasonably necessary as a result of the declared emergency.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (11:14): Mr Speaker, I am the lead speaker and I indicate that, subject to discussions in the committee stage and perhaps amendments by the government, which may be foreshadowed, the opposition will be supporting the bill.

This proposal was flagged in the media a week to 10 days ago. The bill does go a bit further than was originally flagged in that media statement. Having said that, as the minister has indicated, the health emergency is an evolving matter and certainly the opposition will work with the government in a very constructive way to ensure that we keep our community safe.

For local government, that means that councils must be able to act very quickly at times and respond to emerging issues. While these powers would not be granted in a normal situation to a minister, certainly under the extraordinary circumstances in which we find ourselves at the moment, and right across the globe, we will consider those things.

That said, I agree with a lot of what the minister has said, but I indicate that we have to ensure that we have appropriate checks and balances because unfettered power can actually be open to abuse. I am not suggesting that the minister or any council would do that, but we need to

make sure that we scrutinise the bill appropriately without unnecessarily delaying it. I put on the record that we will not act in a way that would in any way impinge upon either the minister's or the councils' ability to react quickly to an emergency situation or an emerging crisis. We have indicated that to the minister.

We have been having ongoing discussions with the minister's office. I thank the minister's office for those discussions. It would be fair to say that we have actually brought a few improvements to the bill as well. In fact, the original draft bill, which was approved by cabinet, did have an error in it, which one of my colleagues was able to pick up, and we gave some constructive feedback to the minister.

I have also discussed this with the LGA. We have put some suggestions regarding amendments to the bill to both the minister and the LGA. Some of those amendments have already been carried and are in the bill as presented to the chamber today. I thank the minister for taking those suggestions on board. I understand that there are a couple of other suggestions that have now been discussed within his office in terms of providing those initial checks and balances, which will not in any way impinge or fetter the minister's or councils' ability to act as required.

Those are the only comments I want to make, as I do not wish to delay the bill. I ask that we go through a quick committee stage to clarify some issues and also the minister can indicate where he is at with the further amendments, which would ensure that the bill passes the chamber before lunchtime.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (11:18): I rise to support the speedy passage of the bill through the house. I note the remarks of the minister on introducing the bill. I recognise and acknowledge the opposition's support for the speedy passage of the bill and the contribution of the member for Light to that end.

I want to highlight that these are measures to respond to extraordinary times. To emphasise that point I refer specifically to the provisions of section 87 of the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 that provide for public health emergencies. I do that for the purposes of the record and for those who may be following parliament in these days that are particularly testing for public authorities. Section 87 provides for the declaration relevantly of an emergency as a public health emergency. It provides for the chief executive to make that declaration, with the approval of the minister. As South Australians will be aware, such a declaration has been made in response to the emergency that faces us in dealing with the coronavirus COVID-19.

In such circumstances the new section 302B, which is the subject of clause 3 of the bill, will provide additional powers to the minister by notice in a *Gazette* to suspend or vary specified provisions of the Local Government Act 1999. The minister has already outlined the practical purposes for which such a notice varying or suspending those provisions would, in all expectation, go to in the first instance at least. This is all about making sure that local government continues to function. It is all about facilitating the capacity for local councils to meet in order to carry out necessary business, and that includes, as the minister has adverted to, the basic financial functioning, the making of budgets and so forth.

I note, and the minister has already made reference to this as well, the important requirement that the minister consult with the Local Government Association before making a notice under this section. I note as well that that has occurred already in relation to the formulation of this bill. I am pleased that that has occurred, and note that that provision will apply when notices are contemplated and prior to a notice being made.

It is also important to note that, in the course of addressing what these new powers will provide for in section 302B, they will apply for a period that is specified but, in all events, will end 28 days after the cessation of all relevant declarations relating to the emergency to which the notice relates. Clearly, both the power and the period during which the notice will apply, once made, are tied to the relevant public health emergency. It is for that reason that I emphasise at the outset the importance of understanding the connection to section 87 of the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 and to the relevant periods during which that may apply.

These are extraordinary circumstances. The parliament meets in these circumstances in order to enact provisions necessary for the orderly continuation of government, public and civic life. This is one such provision. I anticipate that during the course of the sitting now there will be other matters of a similar character, and I stand ready to support their passage also. With those brief remarks by way of contribution, I again commend this bill to the house.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:24): I rise to support the Local Government (Public Health Emergency) Amendment Bill 2020. I acknowledge the way that parliament has started off today and thank the opposition and the crossbench for how we are moving forward in these interesting times. This bill proposes to amend the Local Government Act 1999 to ensure council meeting continuity during public health emergencies—and these are different times, Mr Speaker. To address concerns arising out of the COVID-19 issue, it is proposed to amend the act to insert a provision for the minister to have a power to make a notice for a specified period to vary or suspend provisions of the Local Government Act 1999 as specified in the notice.

It is proposed that the minister may only exercise this power in circumstances in which a public health emergency has been declared. The intent of this amendment is to enable councils to continue to operate effectively and make critical decisions during periods of public health emergencies. I think this is absolutely critical for our sector, that the government is at the ground floor in this state so that they can keep functioning and doing the right things for our communities.

It is proposed in the first instance that a notice will allow council members to participate in council meetings through electronic means, as this is currently not possible under the act. This will better position councils to meet quorum requirements in circumstances where measures to protect public health may otherwise prevent this.

A notice may also provide the minister with the ability to allow councils to transact business at a council meeting if a quorum is not present. As the intent of the proposed allowance of electronic attendance is to ensure that councils can continue to maintain quorum, it is expected that a notice to this effect would only be utilised as a last resort, where councils are unable to make quorum due to illness or other good reason and must make critical decisions that they have been unable to delegate.

The act requires councils to have at least monthly ordinary council meetings and also enables councils to have special council meetings and establish council committee subsidiaries and regional subsidiaries that also meet regularly. The act also allows for members of council committees, subsidiaries and regional subsidiaries to meet via electronic means such as telephone or videoconferencing. However, and this is the nub, this is not the case for council meetings, whether they be ordinary or special. Council members are required to attend council meetings in person to participate in decisions and to make quorum, which is half of the total number of council members plus one. Any public health measure that prevents the attendance in person by council members at meetings could affect councils' ability to meet this requirement.

To date, it has not been viewed as desirable to allow council members to participate in council meetings via electronic means, to ensure both the integrity of council decisions (through, for example, proper management of conflict of interest declarations) and the proper transparency and accountability of council actions. That is something at every level of government we must hold dear; I absolutely get that we have to have transparency and accountability. However, given that the public health measures that are now in place and that may increase in future pose a significant risk that councils will be unable to make critical decisions through lack of quorum, it is recommended that action be taken to allow council members to participate in council meetings via electronic means for a period of time.

It is proposed that a notice published under the proposed amendment will allow council members to participate in council meetings through electronic means for a specified period of time. This will mean that councils can meet quorum requirements without personal attendance at meetings. The bill also provides the minister with the ability to make a notice to enable councils to make decisions when the requirements for quorum are not met. It is expected that a notice to this effect would only be made in exceptional circumstances—and I stress, in exceptional circumstances—where councils cannot form a quorum due to illness and must make decisions that they are unable to delegate.

Section 90(1) of the act also requires councils to conduct council meetings in a place open to the public. Some councils have raised concerns that requirements regarding social distancing or prevention of public gatherings may cause them to be noncompliant with this requirement. This may also be true of other legislative requirements regarding public engagement such as the requirement to hold a public meeting to consult on councils' draft annual business plans, for example, and to make council offices open to the public.

However, councils would be expected to manage these matters utilising the powers they have under section 37 of the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 to have adequate measures in place within its area to ensure that activities do not adversely affect public health. It is expected that this would be a consistent approach to that taken by the state government where similar requirements apply to the operation of specific agencies or entities.

It is, therefore, not expected that it would be necessary to make a notice to suspend these legislative requirements. However, the proposed amendment does include the ability for the minister to make a notice related to any provisions under the act. These matters or any others that may arise through a rapidly evolving public health emergency can therefore be addressed if necessary. The utilisation of a notice to be published in the *Gazette* as the instrument to vary or suspend provisions of the act as needed will also enable swift action to be taken as necessary.

It should also be noted that the duration of any notice published under the amended act can only be made if a public health emergency has been declared under section 37 of the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 and cannot remain in force for a period that exceeds 28 days following the revocation of the relevant declaration. These limits provide assurance that any variations or suspension of legislative requirements on councils will only be made due to a public health emergency and will only be in force for the emergency period with a short additional time to readjust to normal practices if so required. I acknowledge that the Local Government Association has been consulted in regard to this legislation.

These are interesting times. It is a time when we must be strident in how we approach our health at any level. I applaud what Premier Marshall is doing, as well as the whole government, in tackling COVID-19. It is an unfolding scenario. This legislation will help keep local government operating. Part of what I say in my office and outside my office is that no matter what we are dealing with, we need to keep calm and carry on. No matter what is going on, as I saw in a letter to the editor in *The Advertiser* the other day, no matter what is happening with this issue or any other issue, we still need to live and we still need to function, and that is absolutely so.

We must take all advice as it comes in, as the parliament has with social distancing and having fewer members in the chamber with 20 fewer for however long we sit this week. I would like to again commend the Premier. I commend the state's Chief Public Health Officer, Dr Nicola Spurrier. She is doing a sterling job in trying conditions. Everyone involved in our health positions, whether they are in our education positions, people who have to work in the public sphere at any level are doing a sterling job in difficult times. We will get through this; it will take some time. It is legislation like this that helps the local government sector to keep functioning, as we all need to function, now and into the future, because we will have a bright new dawn not too far down the track. I commend the bill.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (11:34): I would like to thank everybody for their contributions on this bill. I would also like to thank the member for Light for his help and cooperation over the past 24 hours. It seems like a lot longer than that. It is certainly good to see that during these times we can get on and show the people of South Australia that we can work together to get stuff done.

I just want to echo the points from the member for Hammond in relation to this. We are dealing with a very difficult and evolving situation and I have no doubt it is going to get worse before it gets better. But it will get better and, at that point, because of all the work that has been done now to deal with this issue as it stands, we will come out the other side of this roaring, with a society and an economy that can get moving very quickly. I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I move:

Amendment No 1 [TransInfrLocalGov-1]—

Clause 3, inserted section 302B—After subsection (7) insert:

- (8) This section will expire on 31 December 2021.
- (9) The Minister must cause a review of the operation of this section to be commenced at least 6 months before the day specified in subsection (8) and the Minister must cause a report on the outcomes of the review to be tabled in each House of Parliament within 12 sitting days after receiving the report (and in any case before the day specified in subsection (8)).

This amendment introduces a requirement for the minister to cause a review of the operation of this section to commence at least six months before the day specified in subsection (8), which is 31 December 2021. To speak briefly to this, there is a natural tension here in what is seeking to be achieved today, to give power and flexibility to a government to help enable the local government sector to operate, as there is a countervailing tension in that what we do not want to give is unilateral power to a minister.

I completely agree and understand that, and over the course of the past 48 hours a number of things have been inserted in relation to making the *Gazette* notice disallowable in excluding the ability for the government to issue a notice, causing restrictions on the ability for councils to tell them how they can collect rate revenue.

Inherent in the bill is the fact that this is only related to a public health emergency. We wanted to be very clear about that. The Local Government Act has been shown to be robust and operates effectively in all kinds of emergencies: bushfires, earthquakes, floods and the like. This is something that is different and that is why we have made it specific to a public health emergency. We have obviously given ourselves flexibility where a public health emergency turns into a major emergency declaration. In that instance, we have confined it to the public health emergency.

We have also made it that any notice made under this provision automatically expires 28 days after the lifting of that public health or major emergency declaration. We did this because anything that comes in under this section has to be temporary. It also has to be reasonably necessary. We also have to consult with the LGA. Any government or minister who thought that this was an opportunity to make a permanent policy change would find that all of that activist work would be undone as the public health emergency is lifted and the notices are then also lifted. I think we have struck the right balance here and it is something that we have worked together with the opposition on.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I indicate that we will be supporting this amendment. We think this strikes a reasonable balance between giving, as the minister indicated, unfettered powers to a minister and the local government to act. We understand that it is only in the context of a public health emergency. Having said that, I think that in a democratic society we always need to make sure there are appropriate checks and balances. Those appropriate checks and balances will be different for different times and different locations, and we recognise that.

Again, I put on the record my thanks to the minister and his staff for considering the concerns we raised during the briefing and subsequently in discussions. We appreciate the fact that both the minister and the LGA have taken on those proposed changes to the bill and we can support this amendment.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I have a couple of questions. For the purposes of the record, in terms of clause 3, what sort of conditions is the minister likely to attach to ensure transparency and accountability of local government decisions?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Certainly, that is an issue. I think what we are all getting at here is the fact that the public is normally allowed into a council meeting. Quite clearly, that cannot be allowed to continue in the context of public gatherings. That is something that we are looking to explore. What we would be seeking to do is to require a video or some sort of recording of the meetings so that they can be maintained for posterity, and then to ensure obligations for that to be shared on a council website or the like.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Thank you, minister, for that answer. Where the councils have the capacity—and I do differentiate; some councils will have the capacity and some will not, so I do not wish to unfairly burden some of those smaller councils—in the minister's view, can that information be live, in other words, in the same way we are? There will be a number of councils that can actually do that live, and it would be great to maximise accountability and transparency to the extent possible.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Essentially, yes. For those that can use video, we would be requiring that. Adelaide city council do this, for those of us who like to tune in for a bit of fun on a Tuesday night. That will obviously need to continue, and we will obviously need to make allowances for those that cannot.

Last night, we had videoconferencing set up by the LGA, with basically every council on the line. I would like to work with the LGA to help councils improve and advance that. They certainly have the technology. It is just about getting that out there as soon as possible. I agree that there is a balance here between trying to push councils to be as open and transparent as possible but also trying to get it done in a period of time.

The other thing is that what this clause allows us to do is to make a notice for a council, a class of councils or all councils. There is an ability there to split them up, so that a class of councils that has video has to do it. For the ones that do not, we will look at what other arrangements we can make.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I would like to make a comment in terms of the new additional clause. We have requested a review, because we think this is an opportune time. While there is an emergency to be dealt with, there is an opportunity for us to learn as well. I think this may become a feature in the future of some reform of the Local Government Act, so that we do not have to come back every time there is an emergency to do this. That review is very important, in the sense that it will give us advice and throw up any issues that come up, which means down the track we may have an ongoing provision in the act.

Clause as amended passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (11:45): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

CORONERS (UNDETERMINED NATURAL CAUSES) AMENDMENT BILL

Standing Orders Suspension

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (11:45): I move:

That standing orders be and remain so far suspended as to enable the introduction of a bill without notice forthwith and passage through all stages without delay.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Cowdrey): An absolute majority is needed and not present. Please ring the bells.

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

Motion carried.

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (11:48): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Coroners Act 2003. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (11:48): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Coroners (Undetermined Natural Causes) Amendment Bill 2020. The bill amends the Coroners Act 2003 to allow the state Coroner to return a finding of 'undetermined natural causes' in appropriate cases. The bill is intended to ensure efficient use of state forensic resources and to spare families the stress of a coronial investigation where possible.

The role of the state Coroner is to investigate certain South Australian deaths to determine the cause of death. Section 29 of the Coroners Act requires that a cause of death be found for each and every death reported to the state Coroner. A reportable death is defined in section 2 of the Coroners Act and covers a wide range of circumstances, including deaths by unexpected, unnatural, unusual, violent or unknown causes; deaths that occur within 24 hours of being discharged from a hospital or having sought emergency treatment at a hospital; deaths of persons protected under guardianship or administration orders; and deaths in custody.

If a death is reportable, a person who becomes aware of the death must report it to the state Coroner or a police officer. In some cases, forensic pathologists or other medical practitioners can be confident that a death was due to natural and unsuspecting causes but a post-mortem examination is required to determine the precise cause of death; for example, whether the natural death was due to pulmonary embolism or ischaemic heart disease.

In these circumstances, the act requires that forensic testing on the deceased be performed regardless of the family's wishes and the public interest in performing such testing. The bill instead provides the state Coroner with a discretion to state that a death was due to undetermined natural causes and to discontinue the investigation. Under the bill, it is proposed that the state Coroner's discretion is subject to several safeguarding conditions.

First, the finding of an undetermined natural cause cannot be made if an inquest is required. Under the act, some deaths reported to the state Coroner are subject to a hearing by a Coroners Court, known as an inquest. The court hears evidence about the surrounding circumstances of the death to provide extra oversight and to ascertain whether and how the death could have been prevented. A full court inquest into the cause and circumstances of a death requires precise findings. An undetermined natural causes finding is not appropriate if the matter will be progressed to an inquest.

Secondly, to use the undetermined natural causes finding, the state Coroner must be satisfied, after obtaining relevant medical information or advice, that the death was due to natural causes. A natural cause death refers to a death due to an illness or internal malfunction of the body, rather than directly caused by external factors. To illustrate, naturally occurring diseases, degenerative ageing or congenital anomalies are natural causes of death. Accidents, animal attacks, suicide or homicide are not natural causes.

Thirdly, a senior next of kin of the deceased person must give their consent for the state Coroner to cease testing and return a finding of undetermined natural causes. New South Wales has a similar provision in their Coroners Act and, in their experience, the next of kin frequently support the decision to cease testing as the coronial process can be very stressful for families of the deceased. The state Coroner retains the ultimate discretion as to whether to use the undetermined natural causes finding. They will be able to continue investigation into any death by natural causes if

they consider it is in the public interest, even if the senior next of kin would prefer that investigation cease.

It is expected that the bill will help to reduce the workload on Forensic Science SA, which performs the necessary forensic testing for coronial investigations. The pathologists at Forensic Science SA experience a heavy workload and the demands of their time are great. Several government measures are being implemented to assist with this workload, including this bill. Another effort is the government commitment to fund an on-site CT scanner at Forensic Science SA.

Work on this bill has been underway for some months and is part of the government's justice agenda that aims to ensure that policies and legislation reflect contemporary South Australian needs. However, reducing the burden on Forensic Science SA has become particularly critical due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the coming months, it is expected that all government services will experience strain due to staff illness and isolation. Forensic Science SA will face particular difficulties due to the nature of their work. Forensic testing on deceased persons cannot be postponed or done from home. Therefore, this bill, which will reduce the need for forensic testing by Forensic Science SA, is critical.

Members may well be aware that there has been some consultation undertaken, as this bill predates the COVID-19 pandemic. In that regard, the Law Society have reported—although in a rather abridged time frame, given the government's proposal to have this matter dealt with today—that in general terms they support the basis of the reforms. We gratefully appreciate the opposition's agreement to advance this in the circumstances. The Law Society suggest that a safeguard clause could be included, requiring the state Coroner to write a report setting out their reasonable grounds for considering that the death was due to natural causes.

We have considered that, of course. We value the advice given by the Law Society of South Australia, but this does not apply in New South Wales, where I indicated that there is already a procedure, a process, that allows for this. Most importantly, I report to members that I am advised that clearly under the current legislation there is no general legal requirement for the state Coroner to write a report on his reasons for making any particular cause of death finding—and of course he does that for thousands of cases a year.

The state Coroner is required to make the undetermined natural causes finding based on medical information or advice. The Coroner's Office will have records of medical and other information provided to the state Coroner on which he based the undetermined natural causes finding. I am advised that this may also include a hospital record or a report from Forensic Science SA. So whilst we have received the advice from the Law Society, we do not see it as necessary, and, as I say, it is not required for the findings that he makes in other regards.

The three safeguards that I have referred to are: first, it does not occur if there is an inquest; secondly, it is obviously reliant on other advice, that is, it is not the Coroner himself making an assessment about what the medical circumstances are; and thirdly, and I would suggest most importantly, that it would require the consent of a senior next of kin. With those comments, I commend the bill to the house and seek to provide a short explanation of clauses to be inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Coroners Act 2003*

3—Amendment of section 29—Finding to be made as to cause of notified reportable death

This clause amends section 29 to allow the Coroner to make a finding that a death was due to undetermined natural causes if:

- no inquest was required; and
- after relevant medical advice, the Coroner has reasonable grounds to believe that the death was due to natural causes; and
- a senior next of kin indicates consent to having no further investigation, inquiry or inquest conducted for the purpose of determining the precise cause of death.

Schedule 1—Transitional provision

1—Operation of amendment

The amendment applies in relation to a reportable death regardless of whether the State Coroner was notified of the death before or after its commencement.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee) (11:58): I thank the Deputy Premier for her second reading contribution on the bill that she has introduced, namely, the Coroners (Undetermined Natural Causes) Amendment Bill 2020. From the outset, I can say that the opposition will be supporting this bill. My comments will be unusually brief, and I will have a small number of questions for the Attorney in the committee stage, which I expect she will most likely be able to deal with quite expediently.

I understand that this proposal was initiated late last year and not necessarily in sole reaction to the current COVID-19 pandemic. By and large, this amendment is not critical to the government's response to the current emergency, but it may, however, be useful in some circumstances going forward as we grapple with that emergency.

I am advised that the Coroners Act includes a requirement for inquests into various circumstances and that the bill will not change that. The act also requires that a wider range of deaths be reported to the Coroner for consideration. In all of these reportable deaths, a finding as to the cause of the death must be made. Where an inquest is required following a reportable death, this finding must be made by the Coroners Court. In other reportable deaths, this finding must be made by the Coroner.

I am advised that the bill provides greater flexibility in cases where the Coroner must make a finding about the cause of a reportable death. It proposes three thresholds that all must be met: that an inquest is not required; that the Coroner has reasonable grounds to believe that the death was due to natural causes; and that a senior next of kin requests that no further investigation, inquiry or inquest be conducted into the cause. Upon meeting these thresholds, the Coroner may make a finding that the death was due to undetermined natural causes.

Whilst the bill states that a senior next of kin may request this, it is not clear whether the Coroner may initiate this discussion. That will be one of the questions I will put to the Attorney in the coming brief committee stage. I think it is clear to all of us that our health system and the Coroner are likely to be under greater pressure in the coming months. This is one of the reasons for the opposition's support of the bill. Of course, we all hope that the Coroner has as little work to do as possible in the coming months, but I think we can be honest enough to expect that that might not necessarily be the case.

Despite this, it is hoped that the proposed amendment will provide greater flexibility to manage a potential increase in reportable deaths. In limited circumstances it may also reduce the time between the death of a loved one and when a family may undertake funeral and memorial arrangements, which is, of course, front of mind during these circumstances.

The opposition supports the bill, noting that amendments may be proposed in another place. I conclude my comments by saying that it is the opposition's understanding that the Attorney may verbally commit, if not amend the bill, to ensure that there is an appropriate review of the operation of the elements of the bill in due course.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (12:02): I rise to support the speedy passage of the bill through the house. I acknowledge and amplify the earlier remarks of the Attorney and also acknowledge that the bill will be supported by the opposition. I have listened carefully to the contribution made by the member for Lee outlining some of the mechanical aspects of the bill and how it would operate. As the member for Lee has noted, I also note that this work was underway and indeed well advanced late last year. It comes to the parliament now in circumstances of particular public health difficulty. I also recognise the observations of members in that regard.

I want to take a moment to again make some reference to the interoperation of two of the relevant sections of the Coroners Act 2003 insofar as they relate to these amended powers. Really, they are expanding the relevant discretion of the Coroner in circumstances of certain reportable deaths. The bill, as we see under clause 4, provides for the amendment of section 29 of the act so as to insert a new subsection (2) that provides for a discretion for the Coroner to make a finding that a death was due to undetermined natural causes and to do so in certain limited circumstances. The first of those is that the relevant reportable death—and I will address that in a moment—is not one where an inquest is required.

Section 21 of the act provides, in paragraphs (a) and (c), for circumstances in which an inquest is mandatory following a reportable death. The first of those is where the death was a death in custody—that is section 21(1)(a). The second is where the event is required by any other act. So where an inquest is mandatory, then these provisions will not apply. Section 21(1)(b) of the act, as it presently stands, provides for the discretion for the Coroner to conduct an inquest where the Coroner considers it necessary and desirable to do so.

Where that discretion applies, pursuant to section 21 as it stands, these amendments will be relevantly in action; that is, the inquest is not mandatory and then, as we have heard, the state Coroner has reasonable grounds to believe that the death was due to natural causes and, thirdly, and importantly, that a request is received in the form required by the next of kin that no further investigation is to be conducted. It is really an extension of the capacity of the state Coroner to exercise a discretion and, further, it is the bringing in of a provision for the Coroner to make a less specific finding in relation to a death that is, on reasonable grounds, believed to be a death due to natural causes, so that the finding may be made that those natural causes are undetermined.

Again, for the benefit of those who may be following this for understanding, a reportable death is one of a number of different circumstances of death. It is only reportable deaths that give rise to the question of whether or not an inquest is to be conducted. As I have addressed already, it is then some of those reportable deaths that enliven the discretion and, in turn, the operation of this bill. It may be useful to note—and I take this opportunity to do so—that reportable deaths include deaths in a whole variety of different circumstances and chief amongst these are deaths that occur unexpectedly, unusually or by violent, unnatural or unknown causes; deaths that occur on a flight or a voyage to this state; and deaths that occur in custody. As I have already said, section 21 provides that in those circumstances the holding of an inquest is mandatory.

It also includes deaths during, as the result or within a very short period of surgery or other invasive medical procedures; a death that occurs within a very short period of discharge from a hospital or emergency treatment having been sought from a hospital; in circumstances where a deceased person is a protected person; where the deceased was in custody or guardianship under the Children's Protection Act 1993; while the deceased was a patient in an approved treatment centre under the Mental Health Act 2009; while the deceased was a resident of a licensed supported residential facility under the Supported Residential Facilities Act 1992; while the deceased was in a hospital or other facility and being treated for a drug addiction; during or as a result of medical treatment to which consent had been given under the Guardianship and Administration Act 1993; and when in any event a cause of death is not certified by a doctor.

I have referred there to a number of pieces of relevant legislation. Where the operation of those acts applies to section 21(1)(c), there will be circumstances requiring an inquest and therefore not enlivening the discretion. So in terms of the amendment that is made by this bill, it really is the extension of the discretion that already is within the power of the Coroner necessarily to exercise in a very large number of categories of reportable deaths, however, not in all categories of reportable death. There are those categories to which I have referred in which an inquest is mandatory.

Of course, the other two aspects that apply in amended section 29—those being the requirement that the Coroner have the necessary reasonable grounds to believe that the death was due to natural causes and also that a request has been made by the next of kin for the deceased person—really mean that this capacity to exercise the discretion to go ahead and make a finding that the death was due to undetermined natural causes is one that really holds with the structure of both the act as it presently stands and its interrelation to those other relevant acts.

With those brief words of contribution in relation to the bill, I again note that this work was well underway some time ago. It is perhaps important to remind ourselves that in legislating here we are endeavouring at all times to do so with a view to improving the administration of public affairs, including the operation of the Coroner's important duties and the act. The fact that this work had been done in an orderly way, and now coincides with a particular period of trial for the state, speaks to the importance of ensuring that we do the work of government as best we can at all times so that we are as best prepared as we can be. With those words, I commend the bill.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (12:15): With no-one else showing a burning interest in this matter, I thank members who have made a contribution and thank in advance the opposition for their indication of support for the bill and its progress through the parliament.

I will place on record now the matter that the Hon. Kyam Maher, as the shadow attorney-general, raised with me which I indicate to the parliament I think is meritorious. This is a new model for South Australia that is being proposed to deal with circumstances in this category of natural cause deaths. On that basis, I indicated to him and I undertake to the parliament to make provision, at the expiration of 12 months from the commencement of the act, for a report to be prepared within 30 days, providing to the parliament the advice of the number of cases in which a determination of the Coroner is made under proposed section 29(2).

As I have very senior and able members of the department here today, they can make a note of that and we can then have that information to see if there are any further matters that we need to consider in relation to this proposal. But I wish to reassure members that this is replicating circumstances interstate. So, to the best of my knowledge, there have not been any identified concerns raised, and the Coroner has provided me with quite an extensive background to this in his submissions in correspondence commencing about September last year, so it is not a matter that is being brought without quite a considerable gestation period of consultation and consideration.

For the reasons that have been explained, and I appreciate the parliament's indulgence, it may be that we are pressed with further COVID-19 circumstances and, in that regard, we are advancing this bill so that we might clear the decks so to speak and make sure that we have extra room for that. I have just been handed a further letter from the Coroner. I will quickly scan that and indicate whether I will provide this extra information to the parliament, as it may be of extra assistance. Essentially, it seems to be—and I will make a copy of this available to the opposition—a response to the Law Society's comment.

If I jump to the critical aspect of it, he outlines probably more clearly than I have the matters I had indicated, namely the fact that the Coroner has to make determinations in relation to a whole lot of other circumstances and is not required to give a written report. He goes on to say:

In some cases, judicial review of an exercise of discretion may be available. The State Coroner's file is not publicly available, and is not available as of right for any interested person to view, but particular documents will often be released (particularly post-mortem reports) or made available to view. Where a finding of undetermined natural cause has been made, I would expect the reasonableness of the grounds for such finding to appear from documented information received from a reporting medical practitioner, investigating police, or from a medical practitioner at Forensic Science South Australia whose opinion has been sought, or a combination of those three sources of information. These, too, are documents which would usually be made available to next of kin to view.

I suggest it is not in the public interest, or the private interests of any person, that the State Coroner be required to write a report advocating the reasonableness of this or any other discretionary decision.

I thank the Coroner for indicating that and, as I say, I am happy to make available to the opposition a full copy of the letter because I think that makes it abundantly clear why we would not have a written record of this. I think we need to appreciate not only the matters that have already been raised but the sensitivity of this type of matter, should it be public, for the purposes of the surviving relatives and friends. I hope that covers matters that would allay any concerns of the parliament or, indeed, the opposition and, as I say, I thank the members for their contribution.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clause 1.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: When was this proposal first put forward and by whom?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: It was by the state Coroner and my recollection is that it was September last year, in that I have a copy of correspondence and I was only just refreshing my memory a little while ago about that, but I will just see if I can find it. I do not have it in this file in parliament today, but I had just recently refreshed my memory on a list of things that the Coroner brought to my attention in a long letter dated September last year relating a lot to the CAT scanner aspect, but then this was raised in his letter as an initiative that needed to be considered. I subsequently received briefings on it and a memorandum of advice and by February this year instructions to proceed with a draft and consultation developed through the usual process.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Does either the Coroner or the Attorney have any estimate, rough or otherwise, about how many causes of deaths will be determined in this way?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: No I do not, but I will just make an inquiry. I am not sure how I can do this easily, but I will just see if I can get that. I indicate that I am advised that it is not possible to predict the number of cases that might result in a finding of 'undetermined natural causes' as there are too many variables. It will depend on the agreement of both the Coroner and the senior next of kin and will also depend on whether an inquest is mandated.

Again, I think it is fair to say that we are aware, as I think I said in the second reading, of a significant number of cases where people die of natural causes. I cannot remember, but I think it is well over 10,000 people a year who die in South Australia, and obviously some of those are reportable deaths and so on. I do not have that data, but there is some very helpful material in the annual report of the Coroner, which gives us a lot of data in relation to deaths.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: That is a useful segue into my next question, which is how will deaths subject to these determinations be reported on?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: There is an obligation under the Coroners Act itself for a report to be provided to parliament. That is an annual report. I do not know; perhaps I am one of the few quirky people in this parliament who actually read the annual reports. I always find them quite interesting, from public officers, and the Coroners Court report is always of considerable interest. There is an obligation under the act for the provision of that. It does not specify a breakdown of provisions that are being proposed under this model to be reported on but, as I have indicated, I think it is worthwhile us having a look at that data when it comes through.

It may be that there are 15 cases that would be eligible for consideration and that in only five of them next of kin is either identified or consent is obtained. We will need to have a look at that down the track when we look at the numbers, but I am proposing that that be made available within the time frame I have indicated, without waiting for an annual report.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Cowdrey): Member for Lee, I am happy to be reasonably flexible, but if you have fewer questions than required, can we move on to clause 2?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: If the Attorney is happy to take subsequent questions at clause 2, yes, that is fine.

Clause passed.

Clause 2.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Is there an expected cost or resource impact on the Coroner's Office as a result of this proposal?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: In short, no.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Could the Attorney perhaps indicate to the house her expectations of when a review might be carried out into the operations of the act with the insertion of this measure?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: What I indicated was that at the expiration of 12 months from the commencement of the act, we will advise the parliament of the data within 30 days, and then

from there, of course, whether there needs to be any further consideration of amendment or improvement of the model that we have proposed. That is what I have indicated I will attend to.

Clause passed.

Clause 3 passed.

Clause 4.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: I understand the amendment to the act would require that a senior next of kin request the expedited process, if I can put it like that, in writing. My first question is will the Coroner's Office be able to initiate this discussion?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Yes. If one looks at the proposed section 29(2)(c), it reads:

a senior next of kin for the deceased person indicates their consent—

I will not read what is in the brackets, but it continues:

—to no further investigation, inquiry or inquest being conducted for the purpose of determining the precise cause of death,

Only when those three matters, (a), (b) and (c)—not or (a) (b) and (c)—are circumstances that exist, can the process be initiated. The Coroner may identify for himself, firstly, that an inquest is not required, that it is not a mandatory obligation, and secondly, that he has all the relevant material for him.

I expect that in those circumstances, in the absence of receiving a request from a family member—before I get to the senior next of kin—he may well initiate that. He of course needs to identify a senior next of kin, which is set out in proposed subsection (3), which sets out a fairly long list of persons who, I think the member would agree, are in a fairly obvious transition from spouse or domestic partner down to children, etc., to activate that. Even if a person made the approach, the Coroner would need to be satisfied that either that person or, if not them, that he locates a person who satisfied the senior next of kin process to obtain that consent.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: I appreciate the Attorney detailing that information. In the bill, as the Attorney rightly points out, under subsection 3(2)(c), the senior next of kin must make a request, and subsection (3) then sets out how the request must be made (i.e. in writing) and so on. With regard to subsections (3)(b) and (3)(c), can the Attorney shed any light on what the period is likely to be in which that request must be made, and perhaps give some examples of what any of those other requirements of the Coroner might be?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Firstly, can I just correct one matter, which is the suggestion that the senior next of kin must make the request: they do not. They have to indicate their consent, so it may well be a process that is initiated by the Coroner as making the prima facie determination that this may be a case that is suitable for consideration of this model. Before the Coroner is able to do so, he needs to have obtained that consent. That is the first thing I would like to make clear. Subparagraphs (3)(c) and (3)(d) provide:

- (c) if the person did not have a spouse domestic partner or adult child or if they are not available—a parent of the person;
- (d) if the person did not have a spouse, domestic partner, adult child or living parent or if they are not available—any adult brother or sister of the person;

Is that what you are referring to?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: My apologies, I might be looking at a draft of the bill rather than the version that you are looking at. In the version that I have, clause 4(2)(3) states that a request under subsection (2)(c), which is the request from the next of kin, must be:

- (a) be in writing; and
- (b) be made to the State Coroner within the period...and
- (c) comply with any other requirements...

That is what I was referring to.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I am sorry to do this, but I am advised that what you are reading from is in fact a previous draft. Can I just make sure that you are given a correct copy straight away. I am satisfied, though, that the table has the correct bill. I think we are in order.

Let me place on the record, if I may, that the member for Lee has been provided with a copy of an early draft. I am not quite sure how that has occurred. The bill that has been tabled is the final bill and has only two clauses, clauses 2 and 3, in relation to proposed section 29. I see that the Government Whip is making available at a distance the correct copy. I am not sure what has happened there. In any event, there is no clause 4, but the definitions clause is clause 3. I think you may still have a question; is that right?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: I am happy to leave it for the other place.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I thank the house for its indulgence in relation to what appears to have been the tabling of an earlier draft of the bill. In an endeavour to remedy the passage of a bill that is not consistent with the government's proposal—that is, that we bring the bill in the form that the government intended it to be placed—I propose a number of amendments. To do so, I firstly seek to recommit clause 2, which you have already dealt with, because I need to propose to delete it.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Cowdrey): Attorney, on advice, we are going to move clause 4 as printed, and then move schedule 1 and move the title.

Clause passed.

Schedule passed.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: By leave, I move:

That clauses 2 and 4 be reconsidered.

Motion carried.

Clause 2—reconsidered.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I now propose that clause 2 be passed in the negative.

Clause negated.

Clause 4—reconsidered.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Firstly, in clause 4(1) I move:

Delete the word 'subsection' where first appearing and substitute the word 'subject'.

In speaking to that, I indicate that the words 'subsectionx to subsection (2)' do not make any sense. It is to read 'then subject to subsection (2)'. The second proposed amendment to clause 4 relates to the proposed subclause (2)(b). I move:

After the words 'following the State Coroner' insert the words 'after obtaining relevant medical information or advice,'

The third amendment to this clause relates to the proposed section 29(2)(c). I move:

After the words 'a senior next of kin for the deceased person,' delete:

'request that' and 'no further investigation, inquiry or inquest be'

And insert:

indicates their consent (in writing and in accordance with any requirements of the State Coroner or prescribed by the regulations) to no further investigation, inquiry or inquest being

So that everyone is crystal clear about what we are doing, I indicate that we are making provision to the current clause 4 to correct, obviously, an error in relation to the word 'subject'; secondly, to add in, if you will, the qualification of the state Coroner having reasonable grounds by specifying that he must obtain relevant medical information or advice; and the paragraph (c) amendment which relates to the senior next of kin consenting to this procedure, providing for that consent to be in writing and for any further requirements that may be required by regulation.

So we are really strengthening, I suppose, that process which I advised the house in consultation was considered to be prudent and of which the government accepted. Again, I just want to apologise to the house for any delay in trying to remedy that, but I would ask the house to consider in committee now the approval of those amendments.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Cowdrey): We will run through the amendments made by the Attorney. The first is at line 5, to delete 'subsection' and insert 'subject'; at line 10, after 'State Coroner' insert 'after obtaining relevant medical information or advice'; at line 12, following 'a senior next of kin for the deceased person', delete 'requests' and insert 'indicates their consent (in writing and in accordance with any requirements of the State Coroner or prescribed by the regulations) to'.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I do not think that is correct. I think the latter one is to delete 'requests that no further investigation, inquiry or inquest be' and insert 'indicates their consent (in writing and in accordance with any requirements of the State Coroner or prescribed by the regulations) to no further investigation, inquiry or inquest being'.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Cowdrey): We will go over the amendments once more. Apologies to everyone watching at home with great interest, I am sure. At line 5 the Attorney is proposing to delete 'subsection' and insert 'subject'; at line 10, to delete 'following the State Coroner' and insert 'after obtaining relevant medical information or advice'; at line 12, after 'deceased person', to delete 'request that no further investigation, inquiry or inquest be' and insert 'indicates their consent (in writing and in accordance with any requirements of the State Coroner or prescribed by the regulations) to no further investigation, inquiry or inquest being'.

Amendments carried; clause as amended passed.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: That concludes it. I just place on record my request, if it is necessary, for the renumbering of the clauses. Because we have removed the proposed clause 2, essentially we would be left with three clauses renumbered in the bill.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Cowdrey): I am reliably informed that is done automatically between the houses, Attorney.

Title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Sitting extended beyond 13:00 on motion of Hon. V.A. Chapman.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: There is one other minor matter I need to deal with, which is to delete the request procedure under the previous bill, which is in clause 2. The other way is to deal with it in the Legislative Council. It is only the deletion of a clause, so can we deal with it?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: By leave, I move:

That the bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clause 4.

Motion carried.

Clause 4—reconsidered.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I move:

Delete subparagraph (3).

Mr Chairman, I bring your attention to the Coroners (Undetermined Natural Causes) Amendment Bill 2020 which we are considering, in particular what is currently clause 4(2) and the new proposed paragraph (3) for the new section 29. It is at about point 16 or 17 of page 2 of the bill. So I have moved that the whole of paragraph (3) which commences 'a request' and concludes 'State Coroner' be deleted.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (13:04): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Again, I thank the member for Heysen for his support and assistance in this committee stage. Also, of course, I thank the patience of the member for Lee.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Sitting suspended from 13:04 to 14:00.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC HEALTH (CONTROLLED NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Assent

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

EVIDENCE (REPORTING ON SEXUAL OFFENCES) AMENDMENT BILL

Assent

His Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

Parliamentary Procedure

ANSWERS TABLED

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

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

Auditor-General—Update to the Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2019
Report 6 of 2020

By the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government (Hon. S.K. Knoll)—

Local Council By-Laws—
City of Marion—No. 7—Cats Confinement

By the Minister for Planning (Hon. S.K. Knoll)—

Regulations made under the following Acts—
Development—
Bushfire Recovery
Delivery of Goods

By the Minister for Education (Hon. J.A.W. Gardner)—

Regulations made under the following Acts—
South Australian Public Health—Notifiable Contaminants

By the Minister for Energy and Mining (Hon. D.C. van Holst Pellekaan)—

Regulations made under the following Acts—
National Electricity (South Australia)—Local Provisions

By the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services (Hon. C.L. Wingard)—

Regulations made under the following Acts—
Correctional Services—Corresponding Law

*Ministerial Statement***CORONAVIRUS**

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:04): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL: My ministerial statement today is about working together to slow the spread of the coronavirus and save lives. I begin with an appeal to all South Australians to do the right things, the required things, the responsible things and the respectful things that recognise the right of all of us to be protected from the spread of this insidious virus because no-one deserves to die from this coronavirus. No student deserves to lose a whole year of education from this coronavirus. No business deserves to go under. No-one deserves to lose his or her job.

To minimise such consequences, all South Australians must do their bit. I thank all those who are adhering to measures already recommended or required, from the basics of practising good hygiene to social distancing and self-isolation; however, there are some who have continued to ignore these things. By doing so, they risk the lives of the older and more vulnerable of their fellow citizens in particular. They jeopardise the measures being taken to minimise the health and economic impacts on all of us. Unless we all take our responsibility seriously and think at all times about how we can reduce risks to others, government measures will not be enough.

My government will continue to follow the advice of our leading medical experts. So far, this has kept South Australia ahead of the curve. We have set up a dedicated coronavirus clinic system right across South Australia, including in our regions. We have rolled out Australia's first drive-through testing clinic at the reactivated Repat site. We opened a second drive-through clinic today at the Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre. We have acted swiftly and we have acted decisively to alert South Australians to this threat. We have communicated clearly and constantly about the steps needed to slow or delay the spread.

Our measures have put us in a better position than the Eastern States so far but, with increasing community transmission occurring in some other parts of our nation, we have continued to act to slow the onset of local transmission. That is why we have now imposed unprecedented border controls. That is why more widespread restrictions have been imposed on social gatherings. These restrictions will be reviewed on a monthly basis. For a time, perhaps some time, they will change the way that we all live. I deeply regret the impacts that these restrictions are having on business owners and on workers already impacted and to be impacted.

No-one could fail to be affected by the heartbreaking lines of people outside the Centrelink offices yesterday and again today in our cities, suburbs and regions, but there is no choice if we are to reduce the spread of this virus. There is no choice if we are to save lives. We must maintain the quickest possible pathway to economic rebuilding and recovery, and rebuild and recovery we must and we will achieve. South Australia was the first state to put in place an economic stimulus package. My government continues to actively consider further measures already.

The federal government and all the state and territory governments are doing what they can to cushion the economic impacts as well as the threat to public health. The national cabinet is working efficiently and effectively. I deeply appreciate the opportunity this provides to work with the federal and other state and territory jurisdictions to ensure cooperation and a consistency of approach across the entire country. Equally, I appreciate the cooperation of the opposition and other members of this parliament. I encourage any questions that they may have about particular actions we are taking or any suggestions that they have for further action.

In appealing for the cooperation of the whole community, we must accept the responsibility to set an example ourselves. I take this opportunity to recognise the selfless work of our health professionals: our doctors, nurses, paramedics and everyone else at the front line of our public health response. More than others, they are exposed to the risk of the virus. I also thank all our other public servants in South Australia who are enduring a massive increase in workload and the complexity of tasks due to this coronavirus. In particular, I single out our teachers and our police officers.

I know that many people in South Australia remain extraordinarily anxious about what lies ahead. I assure each and every one of you that your health and wellbeing will continue to be the government's number one priority, as together we confront this challenge and work to ensure that our state emerges stronger and more resilient on the other side. What is ahead may be the most difficult period many South Australians have faced in their lifetime. We have a clear and strong plan to respond to this challenge. Together, we can get through this. We must get through this, and we will get through this.

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:10): I thank the house for the opportunity to respond to the Premier's ministerial statement. We meet today in an unprecedented format for an unprecedented time. Never before in the history of our federation have we faced such a threat as this pandemic. It is a threat to our way of life, a threat to our jobs, a threat to the education of our children and a threat to our health, all of which represents an extraordinary test of not just our leaders and institutions but of every single South Australian in this great state.

We are all being enlisted to this fight. Some have already been called to the front line: the hardworking staff at SA Pathology; the nurses and doctors in our hospitals; the police on their way to border crossings; the teachers in our schools; the shop assistants stacking the shelves, manning the checkouts and pushing the trolleys; and the distribution centre workers. I know these men and women: they are tough, they are hard, they are honest and they are picking orders like they have never picked before. In regard to cleaners: one of the most humble professions in our society has become one of the most heroic. They are cleaning our buses and our trains and cleaning our hospitals, our schools and our supermarkets—disinfecting it all in a way that will literally save lives.

From the ICUs and the doctors to the cleaners, South Australians are progressively standing up to take on this extraordinary challenge that we have never seen before. We thank them for what they are doing, and we thank them for the way that they will continue to serve our community, as they inevitably will be called to do over the coming months.

However, each and every one of us in work should know this: no matter what the disruption, the inconvenience or the call in our endeavour, we are the lucky ones. Last night, as we turned on our television screens and saw the queues, around the block, of people across the nation at Centrelink centres, I think the whole nation's heart sank. We saw people lining up at Centrelink for government support, people who probably would never have contemplated that that would happen to them, but it was happening to thousands right across the country. As that occurred, it struck me, as I think it struck the nation, that this challenge is going to be with us for some time.

The human cost of this challenge is untold; it is extraordinary. It appears that this virus attacks our way of life and our means as aggressively as it attacks our health. For every person in a queue to get a COVID-19 test who appeared on the television screen last night, it appeared there were 10 people lining up at a Centrelink, trying to get access to a basic income so that they could put food on their tables and a roof over their heads. These sights are chilling, so the clear and blunt message for us all is that we must all make a contribution, as the Premier suggested, in complying aggressively and responsibly to all calls that are being made by our health officials in the current days and certainly in the months ahead.

To the men and women who are currently feeling the pain of unemployment as we speak, the tens of thousands across the country who have seen whole industries decimated overnight, we thank you, too. We thank you for your patience, your perseverance and your commitment to remain steadfast in the face of an extraordinary challenge. We are with you and we will do everything possible to ensure that you can continue to enjoy a decent standard of living, provide for your families and have hope in the future.

It is true that in times like this people across the land look to their institutions for comfort and confidence and none more so than their parliament. It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to accept that responsibility. This opposition will do that. We will continue to work collaboratively and constructively with the state government as they lead our state during this extraordinary and challenging time. We look forward to working with the government and the Premier on an ongoing basis. The opposition understands its role at this time is not to seek to undermine confidence in the

government but rather to ensure it through offering constructive and considered ideas that we believe will serve this state well during this period.

Overseas experience tells us that going hard and going early is essential. The cost of acting early is only surpassed by the cost of acting too late. We implore the government to heed this message. We implore the government to do more rather than less. If in doubt, act early, act hard and act decisively for the betterment of our state. This opposition will provide bipartisan support to the government in all of those actions.

Now more than ever, we must come together to rise up to this challenge. Our constituents, the people of this state, depend on it. We are ready to work with the government in that endeavour. We look forward to taking on this challenge with the gusto that history provides us with, with the confidence that modern medicine gives us and knowing that, ultimately, we will prevail in this fight in the way that only Australians can.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (14:19): I bring up the 55th report of the committee, entitled Murray Bridge High School Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Mr TEAGUE: I bring up the 56th report of the committee, entitled Gawler and District College B-12 Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Question Time

CORONAVIRUS

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:20): My question is to the Premier. What is the Premier's health advice regarding schools remaining open?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:20): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. The AHPPC advice that we received on Sunday night remains very clear on this: they want our schools to remain open and they want our students to be at schools. They are very adamant about this. We accept this advice.

We have been in recent days announcing that we will provide more flexible options for students when parents decide that their children are better suited to staying at home. We note that some schools already have excellent capability in this area to provide more flexible options for online delivery of curriculum; and, in fact, I think that some state schools, as well as private schools— independent schools—are moving towards that at the moment.

We are rapidly developing the capability across our overall school network for a combination of both online and hard-copy learning materials. We want to make sure that if there is any absence from school that students are still getting a quality education. We feel very concerned about students who may be away from school, potentially for a prolonged period, being without an education. We take our obligations in this area very seriously.

Nevertheless, some parents have decided that they would like to take their children out of school. I make the following points: if a parent does that, they have an obligation to make sure that the student is supervised; that they are undertaking their studies; that they also recognise that that period of time they are out of school may not be for just one week or two weeks, like we are used to with term breaks, or even six weeks or seven weeks like they might be at the end of the year. This could potentially be six months, so this is a heavy responsibility on those parents. But, if they choose to, they will be supported.

This, of course, will reduce the pressure on our schools and allow even further social distancing. But Professor Brendan Murphy could not be clearer on this: if we had 277,000 school students in South Australia who were no longer at school and were out in the community and were not supervised, we would be very significantly accelerating the spread of the coronavirus and

simultaneously undermining our ability to deal with that further outbreak. So, the advice is very clear. Having said that, he makes it very clear that that advice was as of Sunday night and it could change as we progress through this virus.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:23): My question is to the Premier. If keeping schools open saves lives, does that mean closing schools could compromise lives?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:23): Well, it's a difficult question to answer without knowing the specifics of the timing, because at different parts of the progress of the virus there would be different advice; and, as I was saying in my earlier answer, we really need to listen to the experts' advice who have the detailed modelling available. They are in touch with other nations around the world and their experiences, such as the World Health Organization.

For example, we know that Singapore have kept their children at school. When we look at the evidence that is provided by the AHPPC to the national cabinet it is pretty clear that, in many past epidemics, countries that have kept their children at school have had better health outcomes than those who have removed their students from school. We are very mindful of listening to that, but we also have to take into account the specific nation that this has occurred in, the timing and the part of the epidemic that we are at. Again, I can only say that as of Sunday night the advice was very clear—in fact, it couldn't have been clearer—and it's supported by our Chief Public Health Officer in South Australia.

There are plenty of parents who can provide a safe, secure and supervised environment for their child. There are other students who may come from a more vulnerable situation where, quite frankly, going to school is very important for their social development. There are other students who really need that interactivity with other students as a critical part of what they do. We know that we are putting an enormous pressure on our teachers in schools at the moment because many teachers are now being forced to essentially provide help to students who are studying at home and to students who are in the classroom. We are very grateful for the work they are doing.

We know that some teachers in particular have some health concerns of their own. This is a concern, so we are working with their principals, the union and the department to see how those teachers can continue to do their work from home, just as some students will be doing their study from home. The complete agreement at the national cabinet on Sunday night was for all states and territories to keep all their schools open. This doesn't mean that some haven't brought forward pupil-free days, in particular to set up the systems they will need further along the line in terms of the progress of this disease. That makes sense. That would be something that we would be considering in South Australia as well.

UNLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:26): My question is to the Premier. If the government's current advice is that it's safe to keep schools open, why has the state government effectively closed Unley High School?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (14:26): I thank the member for his question. This is indeed a very important question today. Unley High School has progressed its preparations for online learning, particularly in relation to the circumstances in which they find themselves: with 110 students in self-isolation as a result of a positive test and eight staff members in self-isolation.

The challenges confronting our entire school system are significant. They inform the work that we have done to enable learning at home to be supported, alongside learning at school. At the moment, across most of our schools, we are in a situation where if parents choose to, as they have been empowered to since Sunday, keep their children at home, in that circumstance they are responsible for their education and the school is not. That's why we are providing significant resources into the education department to put online platforms in place to support parents in supporting their children's learning. Those resources will also be available for the contingency that statewide closures need to take place at some point.

The issue that Unley High School has, and other schools have, where there are students in isolation, is that the school has a responsibility to support the learning of those students in isolation, alongside those in the classroom. This is an extraordinary challenge, where you have students in the same class both at home doing their learning and in the class at the same time. So Unley High School is in the fortunate position of being more advanced than many schools in being able to provide strong platforms. Because they have this further circumstance, they are in a better position than some schools might have been to be able to move forward to what the education department has been asking, I think, since two Fridays ago—whenever we announced the protocols for the pandemic. Members will recall that. I think it was in the order of two to 2½ weeks ago, but I stand to be corrected if I am mistaken.

At that time, we asked that all schools work towards being able to provide two weeks' of work for all students that they could take home at any time and preferably be able to take home every day. Unley High School has been doing the work that we asked of them. They are ready to go. Today, they informed parents that they will be moving to that tomorrow. One of the key things that Unley High has also prepared for parents, and further schools in this situation will need to do the same thing should that arise, is that parents who are not in the situation to give that supervision to their students at home have been asked to let Unley High know today, if possible, that their child will be at school tomorrow. Supervision will take place for those, whether they are the children of emergency services workers or vulnerable children, or other people in that necessary worker category at Unley High.

If they are unable to provide that supervision, then Unley High will be able to do so. The thing is that we will be moving the methodology for teaching at Unley High to that learning-at-home model, even for those students who are still in Unley High. This allows the school and the teachers in the school to deliver one stream of teaching at the school rather than have teachers required to support students in the classroom at the same time as they are required to support those students who aren't in the classroom. I think that one of the key things in relation to this that can't go unnoticed is that the work being done by the staff at Unley High has been extraordinary. I particularly want to pay tribute and give thanks to them and the principal at Unley High who has done such strong work in leading his school through an even more difficult time than most other schools in the state.

UNLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:30): My question is to the Premier. Given the government's advice that it is safer to keep schools open, why not keep Unley High School open alongside the online learning platform?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (14:31): I thank the member for the question. In addition to the range of reasons, which I believe I have provided in a fair manner over the last four minutes, I would also say that it's useful for Unley High to provide this demonstration of some of the challenges. I know that in the independent sector a number of schools did some trial days last week of what an at-home learning methodology would look like.

We've got a system with 900 schools and preschools. There are 178,000 students in the public school system. About 1,200 of them are at Unley and, of that, about 10 per cent are currently in isolation as a result of being contact traced by SA Health. The challenges at Unley High, and the fact that they are ready to go, I think is actually very useful. For our system to be able to observe how they go, and the challenges that they come across, in addition to those already done, will inform the response available to the rest of our system.

We have had significant work done across the education system in recent weeks, and I'm really hoping that in the next day or two we will be putting parents in a position to receive further resources, not just prepared by the education department but also by education departments working collaboratively around Australia and worked through the South Australian education department that will support students working at home. In addition to that, there are some schools like Unley High that are more ready to go than others and are able to provide continuity of learning in that home environment.

At Unley High, it was the sensible decision given their unique circumstances, given the particularly high number of students who were forced into isolation for whom we have to provide that model of learning alongside those in the classroom, which is extraordinarily difficult for a teacher to

do—two types of instruction at the same time with a reduced teaching cohort, and 10 per cent of the teachers are also in self-isolation. It was the sensible thing for Unley High. It is also a useful thing for the whole system in public education in South Australia and it's a useful thing for our other schools, and that is why we absolutely support this direction.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:33): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the house on the South Australian government's response to COVID-19?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:33): I thank the member for Hammond for his question. Our primary responsibility, as the government of South Australia, is to protect the health, safety and welfare of all South Australians. We take this responsibility very, very seriously. We also have responsibilities with regard to the economy and making sure that we can get through this disease, out the other side, and have our recovery the strongest in the entire country, the strongest in the entire world. These are our two principal objectives.

In terms of the health objective, can I say that right from the very outbreak of this coronavirus, which we learnt about in January, SA Health sprang into action. We are very well served in South Australia by the Chief Public Health Officer, Associate Professor Dr Nicola Spurrier. She leads a team, along with the Communicable Disease Control Branch led by Dr Louise Flood, who have been doing an outstanding job in South Australia to do everything they can to understand and to control the spread of this virus. We have, in terms of the health side, two specific objectives: first, to reduce the peak and push it out as far as we possibly can; and, secondly, to massively increase our health capability and response. They are the two things we are doing from a health perspective.

To date, the most recent statistics show that we have 134 COVID-19 positive tests in South Australia. We have no deaths recorded in South Australia. In fact, to this point in time, we have no hospitalisations due to treatment of this disease. We note that in the early stages of this disease people who were diagnosed with this were isolated within the hospitals. Now many of them are increasingly isolated within their homes. That makes sense because we have to keep those beds available in the hospital for the peak when it comes. As I said, our primary focus is on doing everything we can to reduce that peak and push it out into the future as much as we possibly can.

One of the things that has been absolutely fundamental and critical to our strong plan to tackle the coronavirus is the work of SA Pathology. I was meeting again this morning with the clinical lead, Dr Tom Dodd. They have done an outstanding job, first of all to get the pathology services to test for the coronavirus here in South Australia and then the incredibly quick way they set up the standalone, dedicated COVID-19 rapid testing and assessment clinics. The first we opened probably less than two weeks ago at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. We now have more than a dozen statewide, including many in country SA.

We led the nation with the first drive-through COVID-19 testing station down at the Repat hospital. The success of this program has now been copied right around the country. This morning I was at the Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre for the opening of the second of these drive-through centres. We have also moved to some telemedicine investments at the Royal Adelaide Hospital for those people who are living with cystic fibrosis so they do not need to come into the Royal Adelaide Hospital as we get closer and closer to that peak. They now have an investment in spirometers that they can activate at home and the data gets sent through to the clinician. This is one of the advantages of using technology. I can see that we are going to have a much, much higher use of this in the future.

There is so much to talk about, but I do want to switch to talk about economic stimulus as well. Many, many businesses are doing it extraordinarily hard. We have had a first state stimulus package, two federal stimulus packages, and there will be further stimulus at the state level. This is something we take very seriously. We need to support these businesses and the employees who have lost their jobs, through no fault of their own, due to the coronavirus. We need to help people get across this bridge to the other side. We will get there. Our goal is to make sure that we can have that recovery as strong as possible here in our state.

CORONAVIRUS

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:37): My question is to the Minister for Education. How many other schools have significant student absences and staff absences as Unley High School has and yet are not closing at present?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (14:38): I thank the member for the question. I don't think it would surprise members to know that across South Australia student absences are significantly up. The variation from school to school is reasonably significant. Since Sunday night, when the Prime Minister advised the outcomes of the national cabinet meeting and the advice of the AHPPC, that has increased further, as indeed it has certainly signalled to parents that they are entitled to do so for the first time.

The responsibility that comes with that is quite different to that for a student who is in self-isolation on the instruction of the public health officials—somebody who has, as a result of the contact tracing to a positive test by SA public health officials, been instructed to self-isolate. The Department for Education, if they are in a department school, or any school that they are in has a responsibility to those students, such as the 110 students at Unley High instructed to be in self-isolation.

We have a responsibility to provide regular programming and regular lessons as much as possible to those students, just as we would if they were sick or if they were absent for any other purpose at any other time. If a student is absent from school for sickness, we have a responsibility to provide them with a learning program. We have taken the call, as certainly we believe is our responsibility, in the circumstances where a student has been instructed by SA public health officials to be in self-isolation.

There is then this second category of students who are absent without the instruction to self-isolate. Those students have had their parents take responsibility for their learning. The difference is that those parents have taken responsibility for their learning by not sending them to school. That is the expectation, and it is one where we have encouraged them to contemplate that, in the absence of broader school closures, the expectation might be for some time.

It is very difficult for a school to offer learning to a student who is in the classroom, a student who has been instructed to self-isolate and students who have further been withdrawn from the school by their parents. We expect it of the school in relation to those who have self-isolated, and Unley High has a particularly large cohort of those students. The absences vary from the majority of students in some schools being withdrawn from the school to other schools where—I haven't had an update today, to my knowledge, but certainly yesterday—the overwhelming majority of their students are still at school. It varies around the state.

But in any circumstance the category where a parent has taken it upon themselves in these unusual and extraordinary circumstances to educate at home is one where we will indeed provide departmental support. That is the website and the online materials that I have identified, which are but days away from being launched. Indeed, I believe that we are looking at significantly road testing some of those resources with a number of our principals and other educators this afternoon while we sit in this parliament. Because, of course, that resource will also be available, should there be widespread closures, for schools to adapt if their own school methodologies aren't at the state of perhaps Unley High's, for example.

That resource will be available for parents, as is a range of home education resources, but it is not the school's responsibility to support those students alongside the students in the classroom, as it is for those who are in self-isolation at the instruction of public health officials. I hope that clarifies the situation and I am happy to provide any other information the member wants.

CORONAVIRUS

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:42): My question is to the Premier. Is the Premier planning on cancelling school holidays, given his view that allowing children out into the public would be a public health catastrophe?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:42): I thank the deputy leader for her question. As I have stated really right from day one here, we will be following the advice of the

AHPPC, the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee. It is chaired by Dr Brendan Murphy. All the chief public health officers from all of the other jurisdictions are on that. They are receiving expert input from the Communicable Disease Network Australia.

I feel very, very assured that the advice that we are receiving is the highest level. As we receive that advice, we will be implementing that advice here in South Australia, and we have not received any advice that we should be cancelling school holidays. In fact, as I updated the house earlier today, it was made very clear only on Sunday night that schools should remain open and children should be going to school. The minister has outlined his case with these exceptions, but that is the very clear advice of the AHPPC.

I fully appreciate that there are many people who have got differing opinions on this, but we are trying to make decisions in a very stressful and time constrained situation. I think the best thing that we can do to protect the health of the people of South Australia is to listen to the expert epidemiologists, public health officials—those people who are qualified to provide this advice. I give this following caveat, because it is important to give this caveat: this advice does change over time. If we go back to looking at, for example, the advice that we received from the AHPPC only two weeks ago regarding mass gatherings, it was for a maximum limit of 500 people. Then there was the decision to differentiate between outside and inside, static and non-static, and other advice changes as we progress through the virus spreading around Australia and as we move to having higher levels of community transmission.

One of the things that we are very fortunate with here in South Australia is that we do not have the same levels of community transmission as they have in other states. In fact, as of today, I don't think we have any example of community transmission. Let me just explain what that is. There has been transmission from one person to another, but there is no example yet in South Australia where we can't trace back the origin of the infection to somebody who has been overseas and come back and passed it to somebody they were in close contact with or who has been interstate and come back and passed it to somebody else they were with. In one case, it was at one of our schools between a teacher and a student.

All of those have been traced. The contact tracing, which is done by the Communicable Disease Control Branch within SA Health, has been excellent. This is what gives us a lot of confidence that we do not have that community transmission at the moment. We also have a very high number of coronavirus tests that have been administered in South Australia; in fact, there were 17,800 as of this morning, which gives us one of the highest rates per capita of testing anywhere in the world—not just anywhere in Australia or anywhere in the region but anywhere in the world.

A lot of those tests are applied not just to people within the narrow scope that is allowed for people to come and get them, but we are administering them as well to a cohort who are in the general public. That gives us the confidence level that we don't have that community transmission in South Australia. Ultimately, this will come. This is a global pandemic. We can't avoid it coming to South Australia, but what we can do by working together is reduce the peak and push that peak into the future so that we can get as prepared as we possibly can.

CORONAVIRUS

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:46): My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier received any medical advice that warns there would be an increase in transmission, an increase in the incidence of COVID-19, during the school holidays when the students are out of school?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (14:46): The member is able to see the AHPPC advice on the federal health department's website that relates to schools and early childhood. Obviously, there are some further things that we are looking at in relation to the school holidays. One of the key things is that, in the period between now and the start of school holidays, every parent in South Australia is going to have to get their heads around the fact that these school holidays will be unlike any school holidays before.

This isn't going to be a circumstance where students will be able to be free to congregate in malls and shopping centres and act in the way they usually do in school holidays. There will be a

responsibility on all of us to ensure that we know where our children are and what they are doing, and that really should be at home in school holidays if you are able to be at home. The education department, for its part, is looking significantly at what we need to do to prepare ourselves for the sorts of vacation care programs that we would not necessarily usually operate.

We are conducting significant work at the moment to look at how that might potentially operate for those children who are in pretty much the same cohorts we discussed before: the children who can't be supervised at home because their parents are doing necessary work or because they are in a vulnerable cohort. I think it should not be lost on any of us that that vulnerable cohort of children are vulnerable not only in terms of their health risks if they are not supported by the education department but also their opportunities in life.

Everybody in this chamber knows that education can be a silver bullet to transform someone's life. This year, potentially more than any other, that remains the case. We particularly identify those students being supported in their education but also for their health needs during the school holidays, which is the time that the member is particularly focused on in this line of questioning, and we are working very hard to develop that solution. We don't have that solution ready to announce today. It is identified as a significant issue.

In South Australia, the school holidays are due to commence on Good Friday. The union has suggested bringing that forward by a period. We are in discussions with them and other schooling sectors as to what that would look like, what benefit it would have and what challenges it would throw up. We are looking to address that. We have 277,000 students or thereabouts across our three sectors in South Australia. If they were released without supervision into the community—and I know that there are significant challenges that have been put forward—then that leads to the prospect that the AHPPC have raised, as I understand. Supervision during the school holidays will be critical, but we also need to ensure that our education department continues to provide part of that response.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:49): My question is to the Attorney-General. Can the Attorney update the house on how the Marshall Liberal government is promoting public health and safety through unprecedented restrictions on non-essential public gatherings?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (14:50): I thank the member for Colton for his question. He is a representative of one of the most vibrant hubs, in Henley Square in his electorate, and understands the importance of nightlife, hotels and, of course, our restaurants and cafe services to the community. Unfortunately, the current circumstances, which are well known to members, require that we need to act to ensure that the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic is limited. I thank the Premier for his proactive approach and for dealing with the matters that we have an ongoing responsibility to protect the community from.

Last Sunday, the national cabinet determined that all non-essential public gatherings would be indefinitely restricted, for reasons which are well known. As a consequence, from Monday, hotels, clubs, restaurants, cafes, cellar doors, breweries, etc., need to remain closed to the public. The changes were communicated to licence holders as soon as practicable and with as much information and clarity that could be provided. Obviously, the situation continues to change but, as is well known, limiting contact with others is now a public health imperative in this unprecedented step in our modern history. This of course illustrates that this is not a time for the faint-hearted in dealing with these measures. As we are advised, and again as I think is well known, the coronavirus is extremely contagious and we probably only have a fairly limited time to act to prevent community transmission.

Here is the situation: the Commissioner for Liquor and Gambling, South Australia Police and SA Health have immediately started working with industry bodies to ensure that all venues understand the necessary restrictions and the steps that can be taken to ensure that the venues comply. Both the federal and state governments are very well aware of the impact on small business owners and employees, particularly in the hospitality industry. I place on the record my appreciation to the federal government in acting to fund commitments for small business to date.

At this stage, licensed venues, cellar doors and restaurants will still be able to offer takeaway services, including takeaway liquor where they already provide this. I have been giving consideration during the day as to how we best address that situation for cafes, restaurants and the like, who will

continue to have the capacity to provide takeaway food, and whatever restrictions are appropriate in relation to alcohol. Obviously, things are changing rapidly on a daily basis, so what might be in place this week may change next week. I want to place on record my appreciation to the industry and the individual venues for their cooperation during this time.

I suggest that members also consider, if they have detailed inquiries in relation to this, that accommodation arrangements and provision of food and beverages for those in accommodation facilities are continuing under this directive. It is a difficult time, and I can't think of any members here who wouldn't be touched by people in their electorates who have faced almost overnight unemployment in this industry.

We will obviously need to make sure that we provide support for those who are in need and protect those who expect us to act responsibly. We also know that we really do need to treat this as the most serious health issue that we have faced. I thank members of the industry, including the Hotels Association, Clubs SA, the SA Wine Industry Association and others for their continued support in working through the implementation of those restrictions.

CORONAVIRUS

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:54): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier explain to South Australia why it is that the medical advice here on keeping schools open is so different from the 138 countries where schools have been closed and different from the countries where schools have been kept open but with a regime of temperature testing and strict hygiene processes?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:54): It is difficult to add any more to the information that I have already provided. Every country is dealing with a different part in the progress of the virus and so it is not useful to compare, for example, what is happening in Italy now with what is happening in Adelaide now. It is just not useful.

What we have relied on is the AHPPC advice and I think this is perfectly reasonable. If the opposition would like to put up another methodology for determining what our position on this should be, then they should do that. I think the Leader of the Opposition was given the opportunity yesterday to state what he would be doing and it wasn't clear to me that he would be doing something different—

Mr Malinauskas interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL: Again, this is not the advice of the AHPPC—

Mr Malinauskas: Don't verbal us into something that we are not saying.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL: I just think people should be calm in this situation.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL: The reality is that the Leader of the Opposition wasn't suggesting that we move away from the AHPPC advice—maybe he is suggesting now that we do that. That will be up to him to do, but we are very resolute on this side of the house and we have the AHPPC advice coming to us at very regular intervals. As the minister has indicated, this is published and it is available for people to see. People can have a difference of opinion, but we are sticking with the advice that has been provided.

Some countries may be getting different advice. Some countries might have a different situation; they might be in a different season of the year or they may have other reasons for making their decision. We are not in any way having a go at other jurisdictions that make different decisions. We are just outlining to the house how we make our decision here in South Australia and that is in line with the AHPPC advice.

Mr Brown interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Playford is called to order.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:56): My question is to the Premier. Has the AHPPC advised against temperature checking in schools, as they do in Singapore?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:56): There has been no advice with regard to temperature checking, but I make the point—

Mr Malinauskas interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Leader!

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL: —that if they do make that recommendation, then that is what will be implemented.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:57): Supplementary question: has the Premier asked the question of the AHPPC of the merit of temperature checking in schools, as they do in Singapore?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:57): What we have done is to seek the whole advice from the AHPPC and the Communicable Diseases Network Australia on what we should be doing in schools. It is very clear and it is very comprehensive. It is not one line; it is actually a huge amount of work that is being done after careful consideration by public health officials, epidemiologists and people who are perfectly qualified to provide advice. That advice has been received by the national cabinet.

I make the point again that this is not something that we are deciding to augment or change. We are very strictly following the advice of the AHPPC. The opposition is perfectly entitled to have a differing opinion, but the question that we are asked is why we have made that decision and that is the reason why we have made that decision.

CORONAVIRUS

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (14:58): My question is to the Premier, who I believe represents the Treasurer—I am Blu Tacked to this spot in the house. What measures or extra measures are being taken to ensure electorate offices and the public who use them do not become points for transmission of the coronavirus? With your leave, sir, and of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms BEDFORD: Given the importance of maintaining the vital services to the community, especially JP services, will the Premier assure the house that urgent action will be taken to implement consistent protocols to protect the public and electorate staff?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:59): I thank the member for her question. My understanding is that this is an issue that has already been raised—the issue of people working at electorate offices—and advice to electorate offices was sent out by Paul Tatarelli yesterday. If the member has read that and if she has any further questions, I am happy for her to take them back to Paul Tatarelli and seek clarification, but my understanding was that there was a comprehensive email sent out to members and electorate offices yesterday covering these issues.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE SERVICES

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (14:59): Supplementary: the difficulty is that we are on the front line. Every electorate office is different, and, while the general blanket advice may have been felt to have been adequate, it's not. In our particular area there are no JP services operating—

The SPEAKER: Is this a question, member for Florey?

Ms BEDFORD: —except mine.

The SPEAKER: A question, please.

Ms BEDFORD: The question is: are you certain that Mr Tatarelli's advice is sufficient?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (15:00): May I just assist the member if I can in relation to two areas: one is the advice of our staff in electorate offices and how they might deal with the current situation.

As would be evident, probably from a number of sources, there have been attempts for a lot of workplaces, both in the private and public sector, to try to prepare for a circumstance where they need to work from home. Some are already exercising that, and they are operating with their laptops, iPads, etc. They are connected and doing trials, as we have heard today from the Minister for Education, for example, in relation to school education. So that's happening now.

Mr Tatarelli's advice yesterday, which was quite a long piece of advice—I had to read it a couple of times to get through the full extent of it—essentially, as I understood it, was that he was endorsing the opportunity for electorate offices to prepare for that and to be able to operate from home. He gives certain advice about providing support in those circumstances. If I were to use an example from my own office today, two of our staff are both ill—not from coronavirus, I might add, but in any event ill—and the trainee was left there, so how do we deal with the incoming phone calls and so on? As best I understand it, consideration is being given to an inquiry now being made as to how many extra pieces of equipment might be needed. PNSG is the agency which is responsible for that and which, obviously, has funding from Treasury.

I think Mr Tatarelli is inviting people, if they have specific needs as to connection and connectivity with remote working from home—I am assuming things such as telephone redirection and the like for their electorate offices. In relation to justices of the peace, which many of our offices provide directly for the public, unfortunately it is a situation where Consumer and Business Services, which is responsible to me as Attorney-General, has given advice to me that as of the 17th (that is, last week) it is no longer providing direct in-person justice of the peace services—its volunteer service. Some of that relates to public accessibility to the premises, but it is also providing advice as to where else JPs are available to do that.

Many electorate offices may decide at present that they are going to continue to offer those services, and obviously we are not here as a government to interfere with individual members of parliament and the operation of their offices, but at present it is up to the agency. Obviously, a lot of local government services are making decisions as we speak as to what services they are going to continue to offer and whether they can do that in a social distancing responsible manner, if I can paraphrase the sort of general requirement in that regard.

If the member has any particular requirements for her electorate office, then I can only urge her—I am happy to take that myself as to any particular circumstance or otherwise—to contact Mr Tatarelli's office to indicate the extra resource or alternate arrangement that she is seeking to implement in her electorate office.

CORONAVIRUS

Dr HARVEY (Newland) (15:04): My question is to the Minister for Education. Can the minister update the house on how the Marshall Liberal government is supporting the continuity of learning across the South Australian education system in response to COVID-19?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:04): I thank the member for Newland for the question. There is a range of measures that we have already discussed today, and there are a range of further measures which I am sure that members of the house would be interested in, particularly as we support our teaching and education workforce, not just in our schools but also in our early childhood settings, and in our preschools in particular as part of that.

Throughout the challenges particularly confronting teachers, schools, preschools and early childhood settings in the last week and a half or so, one of the most front of mind has been in relation to the cleaning of sites and the provision of hygiene products. Part of the opportunity we have had over the last month is to enhance the offering in relation to hygiene, the teaching of hygiene and the teaching of social distancing within our sites, but particularly hygiene.

We have 900 public education sites in South Australia with 30,000 staff. The breadth of challenge is different in each of those sites. The 900 sites—500 schools and 400 early education and preschools sites—have, until now, been largely responsible for managing their own issue of products. That has been confronted with some behaviours in the community and issues in the supply chain that are unprecedented in South Australia. That is why, either at the beginning of last week or a little before then, we made the decision that we would be working centrally to meet that need.

Last Friday, the first of a series of very substantial orders for things like hand sanitiser, soap, toilet paper, tissues and other hygiene products arrived in our distribution centre, which I visited this morning and had the privilege of talking to the staff who have been working with schools to meet their needs. We have taken more than 20 people off line from other tasks within the education department to reach out proactively to schools—as of today, yesterday and in recent times successively more and more people—because what we encountered was that, despite the fact we were asking schools to contact us with their needs, we had about 13 sites that actually did run out of product, so that at some stage yesterday and maybe even a couple on Friday were without the products that they needed.

I understand all those schools now have what they need as a result of the orders that came in on Friday and yesterday, and that have been distributed on Friday, yesterday and today. We want to be proactive, so that in the current arrangement with schools being open, offering programs as normal, potentially to lower numbers of students with social distancing in place or arrangements such as Unley High School is moving to tomorrow, and a contingency for others, we need to ensure that those schools have the highest level of hygiene, that all these products are there and that cleaning contracts are ramped up.

That's why we have put millions of dollars extra into enhanced cleaning contracts at all our sites, and people will see that at the sites. In fact, it has already started. That's why we are taking over central distribution and the supply of those hygiene products. I know that those hygiene products have been substantially welcomed and will reduce anxiety for some of the leaders and business managers who have been dealing with this over the last few weeks.

CORONAVIRUS

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:08): My question is to the Premier. Why is TAFE still undertaking face-to-face teaching in circumstances where they are unable to create the spatial distancing recommended by health authorities?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:08): I thank the member for her question. It was raised with me by the union yesterday. I understand that the board is preparing, or may have prepared earlier today, some advice that I am expecting to receive very soon to consider some of the challenges the member raises.

Much of TAFE's work going forward I would anticipate moving to an online setting. Of course, this is something that TAFE has been working towards for some time to meet the workforce expectation, the expectation of businesses and indeed students to be able to undertake study in a flexible manner. Of course, it doesn't always suit a TAFE student, an apprentice or a trainee to undertake their instruction in a traditional TAFE lecture theatre or classroom. So TAFE has been working up this capability.

Certainly, in the time that I have been in the ministry and working with TAFE, I have seen them develop it at pace. It also assists with some efficiencies. The capacity is significant there and I think this year we will see it radically ramped up, potentially in the very near future. I await the opportunity to read in detail the advice that has been prepared in recent hours for me. I hope to see that soon.

The challenges in some circumstances within the TAFE offering—I won't take the four minutes, so if the clock is not going I promise this answer is nearly over and you can do the next one—for some courses are more difficult than others. For example, I know one that was raised with me was in relation to TAFE's offering of teaching English as a second language or English to refugees and migrants to Australia. That is, I am sure, one of the issues that will be raised with me in the advice that I will hopefully receive very soon, if my office hasn't already received it.

STATE LOCKDOWN

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (15:10): My question is to the Premier. Why hasn't the government yet moved to a comprehensive lockdown as New Zealand and much of Western Europe has?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (15:10): As the Leader of the Opposition would be more than aware, the national cabinet has been considering a range of options put forward by the AHPPC to control the spread of the coronavirus. These have been escalating in recent days from the announcement less than two weeks ago by the Prime Minister that there would be restrictions on mass gatherings above 500. Since then, there has been progressive implementation of further restrictions. We wait to see what the advice is from the AHPPC tonight.

The reality is that all states and territories are working together. We are not bound to work together, but we are working together to implement nationally consistent approaches, although we have moved slightly further in South Australia to close our state borders. This makes logical sense because the incidence of the spread of the virus in South Australia and the fact that we haven't, to this point in time, had community transmission means that we would like to provide that further buffer from other states.

In the early days, the coronavirus was basically picked up from people who were returning from overseas. Increasingly, recently, it has been from people who are returning from interstate—people who might have been there for work, for a conference, on a holiday or for personal reasons. This coronavirus doesn't differentiate: everybody is susceptible to it. Of course, when those people return to South Australia they can infect those people who they come into close contact with.

This is why we have done two things: to follow the AHPPC advice at the national level with regard to social distancing but put in our own very strong plan and our increased restriction regarding stopping people from coming into South Australia without a commitment to undertake two weeks of self-isolation. This applies to not only people from interstate or perhaps visitors from overseas who are coming into South Australia for self-isolating for two weeks, it also applies to South Australians.

It applies to South Australians who might be going interstate. They are not stopped from going interstate, but when they return—and they are not stopped from returning to South Australia—they must submit themselves to two weeks of self-isolation. They will need to complete a declaration, provide details of where they are going to be, and subject themselves to the potential for a random audit of SAPOL. We are taking these restrictions very seriously because we know that, if we get these things right, we will unequivocally save lives in South Australia.

CORONAVIRUS

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome) (15:13): My question is to the minister representing the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Can the minister advise the house what precautions and assurances can be given to regional communities that have overseas vessels berthing as to the risk of those members on these vessels being cleared of the coronavirus before being able to disembark and mingle with the general community? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and that of the house I will explain a bit further.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: Port Pirie, as with other regional ports, has numerous vessels berthing from various overseas and coastal locations both to load and offload various commodities. The seamen visit the community, in particular supermarkets, to obtain fresh vegetables and fruit when available, which is causing great concerns with both the retail staff and the general public.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:14): I thank the member for the question. It's a very serious question. I will get an answer to the member as urgently as we will be capable of doing so, provide it to the member and find some mechanism to make sure that advice is publicly available potentially earlier than the usual question on notice channels would allow.

SKILLS TRAINING

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (15:14): My question is to the Minister for Innovation and Skills. Can the minister update the house how the Marshall Liberal government is supporting South Australians through ongoing skills training and workforce support in response to COVID-19?

The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley—Minister for Innovation and Skills) (15:15): I thank the member for Heysen for his question and his interest in young people who are starting their careers and those who are transitioning into new careers. Of course, this is a very important question because we have been very successful since the signing of the national partnership with the federal government in September 2018 in changing the way we do skills training here in South Australia.

One of the things we have identified is the fact there is a significant cost to business for the on-the-job component of vocational training around the world. At some institutions, particularly those in Germany come to mind, it is recognised that there is a significant cost to business for on-the-job training in the vocational education system.

Our Skilling South Australia program saw \$100 million of state funding and \$100 million of federal funding come together for our Skilling South Australia program. We have used that money to bespoke design programs to support employers and apprentices and trainees to move into their training system.

I think it is fair to say, because we have released that program without a one size fits all, we have had some significant success over that period compared to the national results and the results of other states. For example, the latest figures that were released on NCVER showed that for the first three quarters of 2019 there was a 17.1 per cent increase in the number of apprentices and trainees here in South Australia compared to a national increase of 2.7 per cent. If we look at the September quarter for last year and we compare that to the September quarter for the year earlier, it is a 20.6 per cent increase here in South Australia. They are nation-leading figures, and they have happened because we have recognised the cost of on-the-job training.

We released last week a program that we started working on earlier in the year to again recognise that there are these costs for employers. There is our Equipped for Growth, where employees will receive up to \$5,000. That is on top of the subsidised training list that we have expanded from 350 skills to 800 skills and opened up to all training providers and not just accessed through TAFE. Of course, there is our Skilling South Australia support that is already enabling barriers to be removed for businesses and enablers to be brought in.

This is an extra enabler for businesses to continue on their training program. Of course, there would be a number of people who would be saying, 'But we've seen a lot of people put off, particularly since midday yesterday.' Yes, that is predominantly in the tourism and hospitality sector, which has had some good growth, but there are other areas where there is significant growth and significant shortages. In the care sector in South Australia, through the NDIS system and through the aged-care system, we are looking at about 6,000 vacancies over the next five years in that space.

We have been working, since we have had the Skilling South Australia program, in delivering for the first time in the nation traineeships where people are actually paid to learn. We have matched up an industrial instrument with a certificate III in individual support, where an employee is paid to learn a traineeship and a skill in that area. We will be expanding that program through this new incentive.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr PICTON (Kurna) (15:19): My question is to the Premier. How many people who have COVID-19 symptoms have been turned away from testing centres due to no travel or no identified contact?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (15:19): I don't have those details, but we are very concerned, with a global shortage of the testing reagent, that we do stick to the protocols which SA Pathology has negotiated with SA Health. The reality is that we do have the best testing regime anywhere in the world here in South Australia, because we are doing two things: we have the direct testing of those people who fall into the narrow scope that has been defined by SA Health,

SA Pathology and the Chief Public Health Officer and we also have this background testing that is being done in South Australia.

We are very concerned that we don't have a rush from the worried well, as they are often referred to—people who think that they are at a higher risk. We know, by sticking to the methodology that we have put in place, that we give ourselves the very best chance of having the best data in Australia to tackle the coronavirus.

Grievance Debate

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:20): Naturally enough, I want to talk about education and this horror of a pandemic that we are all dealing with. It grieves me that this state, this nation and this world is having to go through this experience, but go through it we are. For that to be in any way survivable and for us to be able to restore our country and our world to anything like it has been in the past—that long distant past of about six weeks ago—we need the very best leadership.

One of the features of that leadership must be clarity and another feature must be honesty. If we do not clearly understand what is happening and if we do not have our leaders being utterly up front and honest with us then we risk losing community support and community confidence for what is being collectively asked of us. I do not want to talk more generally about that, although there are many ways in which we should be discussing that theme.

However, if I think about education I see the most acute example across the nation of confusing messages that are upsetting, puzzling and disturbing teachers, principals, support workers, parents and children. I would like to start by saying to all staff in schools: thank you for what you do every day, and thank you for the last two weeks when you have had an avalanche of information that has been disturbing and concerning, such as that spatial distancing applies everywhere but in your school.

The idea that keeping away from other human beings is the best and safest thing we can do, unless you are in a school, must be very hard for those staff to have to deal with, to hear and to manage. This is particularly so in schools where they do not have enough hygiene products, and by that I mean soap, as well as hand sanitiser, and where they do not have the space to keep kids apart in the way that every other human being in Australia is being asked to keep apart.

I say to parents and to students that I understand what you are going through because I, like most people here who have school-aged children, am going through exactly the same questioning: what is the right decision? What is the right choice? How do I reconcile the health advice that tells me it is too dangerous for my children to see their grandparents but it is fine for my children to go to school, see each other, be with teachers (some in the older-age cohort) and then come home afterwards? Do they get it or do they not get it? Do they spread it or do they not spread it? I hear these questions.

I am not giving medical advice—I cannot and I should not—but I understand those questions. I understand why people are agonising over what their personal choice should be and what the right choice for the whole system should be. I have said for the last week or two that it is important that we allow parents to make choices and that we support those choices. What I have heard today is that the department at this stage is not regarding it as their responsibility, educationally, to support the parents who choose not to send their children to school. In fact, schools are, because schools are awesome. It worries me that the central messaging is that that is not the responsibility, that it is different if you are in isolation to if you make the decision.

I was disturbed a week ago to hear from both the Prime Minister and the Premier that not only is it a good idea to keep the schools open, which I appreciate is the health advice, but that parents should and must send their children there. That has now changed; it is okay, you can make your own decisions, but we are still not in a situation where the education department feels it has a responsibility to you if you make that decision.

As I said, fortunately, schools are different. Schools are fantastic, and I know that the staff at my children's school are going out of their way to support parental choice and maintain learning. It is so important that we collectively understand the pathway, that we understand the triggers that take us from one stage in this crisis to the next stage, what that response will look like in a week, or what that response will look like when this condition is met.

It horrifies me that I am sending to my constituents what I get from the New Zealand government site, which says, 'These are the stages; we are at this stage and that is the consequence.' We still have time to do this and I urge the government to take control and show proper leadership.

CUDLEE CREEK BUSHFIRES

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:25): I will be taking this opportunity to share with the house some reflections on the challenges posed to my community in Morialta by the Cudlee Creek bushfires. While I had intended to make a significant contribution when the motion before the house was available, I do not know when that opportunity will present itself. Since 20 December, there have been things that needed to be said and I do not want to lose the opportunity to do so in the circumstance that it will be some time before the bushfire motion returns to the house.

On 20 December and pretty much every day since, the communities of Cudlee Creek, Lobethal, Kenton Valley, Lenswood and a range of surrounding areas, such as Mount Torrens, the outlying areas of Birdwood and Gumeracha and the whole Adelaide Hills community, including all of the tourism operators and operators of other economic endeavours, have been absolutely smashed by the challenges posed by the bushfires. Some have been directly affected: some have been burnt, hundreds have lost houses. Dozens and dozens of people in my electorate have lost houses and hundreds have lost property one way or another.

The impact, ferocity and severity of the fire has been unmatched in the living memory of many people who live in that community. It was terrifying; it was an extraordinary ordeal. What happened in the days after was extraordinary heroism demonstrated by so many people in the Country Fire Service, so many volunteers and volunteer organisations across the community which, if I get the opportunity to make a longer speech I will mention in greater detail. They have dealt with the immediate response, immediate relief and the longer-term recovery.

The government's response was profound and appreciated on the ground where it was capable of being delivered. The work that was done to support that response on the ground by non-government organisations and, really importantly, individuals standing up, supporting their neighbours, supporting their communities and supporting their towns was an extraordinary sight to behold. I reflect on the fact that in recent weeks we have seen some really bad behaviour by some people in our communities. It has absolutely gutted me to see panic buying in supermarkets and those ignoring the needs of the more vulnerable in the community.

As I believe Adelaide Hills Mayor Jan-Claire Wisdom said at a community meeting in Oakbank just days after the fire, what was brought out by the worst that nature had to offer was in many cases the best that humanity had to offer, and it was extraordinary. I want to pay particular tribute to some community members—and while I risk offending others in doing so, to those I cannot mention by name today, I indicate that I will be looking to do substantially more in my hopefully 20-minute contribution later in the year.

In Lobethal, we saw a response that was potentially unlike any other. Before communication was restored to Lobethal, when there was no mobile phone or internet connectivity and when people were terrified and hungry, a group of people in the community came together in the RSL and then moved to the retirement village to set up a Lobethal bushfire recovery effort. I want to pay particular tribute to some of those people: Adam Weinert, Kelly Lewis, Jodie and Kye Turpin, Taylos Bunce, and Melissa and Amanda Geue, particularly from the committee. There are others on the committee who have asked not to be identified, and there may be some whom I have missed. I could name hundreds of volunteers around the Hills who would be worthy of merit. That group is emblematic of the sorts of things we want to see in our community.

As education minister, I have taken the opportunity to visit sites hit by bushfire: the Kangaroo Island bushfire, in particular, and indeed as many sites as I have been able to get to before the coronavirus took hold in the Adelaide Hills. The stories of staff who themselves suffered great loss but went to support their children—potentially not having had school holidays because of the impact on their properties—to give them some semblance of normality from day one, despite having lost property and despite having in some cases lost houses, have been extraordinary. It has given the children the best possible start to the year.

While we are all confronting this unprecedented crisis of the coronavirus, I ask that all of us remember that there are some in our community who this year were already suffering an unprecedented crisis and who now have had this laid on top of that. To all those educators and all the other workers in the Hills, on Kangaroo Island and in other bushfire-affected areas, we say thank you, thank you, thank you.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr PICTON (Kurna) (15:30): We are used to thinking about enemies as large things: as bombs, as missiles, as armies and as warplanes. The enemy that our world is confronting right now is two ten-thousandths of one millimetre in size; it is tiny. This virus, COVID-19, is causing a massive disruption across the whole world: a heartbreaking number of deaths and a heartbreaking number of people being admitted to hospital and also an economic effect that is being felt by hundreds of millions of people, if not billions of people, right now. It is something that unites the human race to stop this, to limit the spread, to flatten the curve and to try to protect as much of our wellbeing and way of life as we possibly can.

From our perspective here in this parliament, on this side of the parliament, we are doing everything that we can. Whether it is something that the government is doing to prepare our state or whether it is something to protect our community, to boost our health system or to save jobs, it has our 100 per cent support. But we are also doing our job in being constructive and proposing things that we need to do to take action to get ahead of this. We need to take as much action as possible now. We saw this where our leader proposed closing the borders, and we are glad that has now happened: an unprecedented action that has now taken place, where our borders are effectively closed in South Australia.

We are encouraging the government to hire more health staff. We are encouraging the government to put out a call for people outside the health system who have the qualifications to roll out free flu vaccinations to come back so that we can protect people from flu at the same time that we are confronting the coronavirus. We are encouraging the government to put out a massive stimulus—as Premier Daniel Andrews called it, a survival package—to help those hundreds of thousands of people around the country and tens of thousands, if not more, people in South Australia who are losing their jobs at the moment.

We need very clear communication, and we are encouraging the government to do that on a range of matters and to take every action possible. We do not want to get to the end of this and think that we could have gone harder, that we could have gone sooner and that we could have put more in place to help people, both to protect the community and save people's jobs and to boost our health services, which we know are going to be under tremendous threat. While we have a relatively low number of cases in South Australia, it is climbing exponentially. It has doubled in the past two days, and we are shortly expecting an update of the latest numbers. Where we might be in a week or two in terms of the growth rate is scary. We might be looking at a situation such as Europe or America are facing at the moment.

I am heartbroken by what we are seeing in terms of people losing their jobs. There are people losing jobs in my community, in my electorate and all over the state. This is going to cause so much heartbreak. So many people will face what is going to be the worst winter of their lives in terms of the economic effects. This is a horrible situation where, to defeat this virus, all the things that we rely upon—our economy, our community and connecting—are at polar opposites with what needs to happen.

I would like to thank and pay tribute to all those health staff who work their guts out already but are frankly afraid of the tsunami that is about to come into the health system. They see those

images from around the world. We need to thank them and give them everything they need, as well as all those other people who do not get paid very much but are now essential workers, like supermarket clerks, people who collect garbage and cleaners. All of them now have essential status in our community.

I would like to spare a thought for all the families out there who are having some really difficult conversations with their parents and grandparents, who they might not be seeing as much as they used to, and with their children. I am in that category of not really knowing how to talk about this with little kids who want to look at the world as an open and wonderful place. We are confronting these challenges. Let's go as hard as possible, let's take every action and let's fight this together. We need to do that.

CORONAVIRUS

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:35): In my remarks today, I want to firstly acknowledge and recognise the collective work of everyone in these unprecedented times, from our healthcare workers at all levels and in all areas, to the educators, the carers, the families and everyone in between. Everything we do is important to our collective communities. We must make sure we do as much as we can to make the next few months as bearable as possible.

To paraphrase the New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, 'We'—she means the government—'will do all we can to protect you. Now we are asking you to do all you can to protect each other. None of us can do this alone.' They are strong words. Whatever we do, we must support each other through these difficult and trying times.

I cannot put it better than US resident, Joe Newman, a 107-year-old man living in Florida who is one of the last survivors of the Spanish flu pandemic left in the world. He is reported recently as saying:

You have to be my crutch. I have to be yours. It's been that way through every crisis we've had. And then, we find, when we do look back, that is what got us through it.

This generation now faces a dilemma of the ilk of the 1918 Spanish flu, the Great Depression and the world wars on either side of it. Just as those generations came through, so must we, and we are in a much better position in many ways to do so.

Being the grandmother of the house gives me the right, I am sure, to use a few old wise sayings throughout this contribution, grounded as they are in the experiences attributed to the women who have usually guided us through the centuries. A stitch in time saves nine, and that means keeping our minds on little things we can all do, like washing our hands properly and often—no longer a little thing on the front line—and using soap, which Mark Twain observed will be 'deadly in the long run'. Good hygiene habits will go a long way to making sure we do our part in keeping things safer. In perspective, it is a simple remedy that is tried and true.

Most people are social and like talking, so let necessity be the mother of invention, as we create and learn new ways of staying in touch since the world as we knew it has changed. Let's learn to strengthen our immune systems by eating as much fresh food as possible. Here, I must give a plug for my favourite brassica, which is broccoli. Exercise is also important, such as walking. The other thing we need to understand is that our bodies need to rest to repair. Smelling the roses becomes a really important pastime as we learn that loss of smell could be an early indicator or symptom. Many around the world are infected with the novel coronavirus—COVID-19, or SARS-CoV-2, as I am told it is officially known now—and, sadly, many have died.

Here in Australia, the epidemic curve has been increasing daily and we must do all we can to begin the decrease. Two weeks ago, as I worked after our last sitting week, I was told by respected public health expert, Adjunct Professor Bill Bowtell, following his appearance on Q&A, that Australia was taking action too late. Bill was at the forefront of the 1980s grim reaper campaign against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. His actions at the time of doing more than was seen necessary put Australia at the front of the fight and Australia led the way. Now, we can also do the same thing: lead the way by going hard and fast. Despite all that has been done since we spoke on 9 March, which is now 15 days ago, I worry that his prediction may yet be true.

Opinion is divided, and it is clear there is an active debate among the epidemiologists about how to handle this crisis. While appreciating the rapidly changing situation, constantly changing messages and constantly changing decisions are not hitting the mark and are clearly failing to reach home to all members of the community, with at least one in three Australians still thinking we are overreacting according to one poll today, while the other two are either distraught, undecided or do not know what to do.

However, worldwide evidence should surely be enough to quash any doubts about the need for action that is dependable, direct and decisive coming from a nationwide trusted source. No-one is an expert in all areas of the crisis. The nodding heads may remain in the background. We can only hope that the measures taken in recent weeks will be enough to avoid the worst that we have seen in other countries. I for one have welcomed the national cabinet, but as we have seen they too are divided in the best approach after considering the medical evidence.

Even as we see unimaginable queues at Centrelink offices of people in desperate need for income support, we need to ask why they do not have better information on how to register, even in the face of a crashing myGov system, and they need to be reassured. Banks have moved to reassure people and others must move to do that, too. Messages about guaranteed income for workers and businesses of all sizes and guaranteed essential supplies of food must be better transmitted.

Our Centrelink staff and retail staff are doing their best in very difficult circumstances. Without them things would be immeasurably worse. We are reliant, too, on the transport workers who move us and the supplies to keep us going, just as we are on the cleaners, the GPs and the pathology workers so vital in identifying the spread. Now more than ever we need our communities to trust in our political systems and leaders. That can only happen if we are fully informed and united in our response to this crisis.

CORONAVIRUS

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee) (15:41): I rise to talk about some of the conversations that I have had with constituents in the last couple of weeks as the coronavirus pandemic makes itself known to our local community. Like just about every one in the electorate of Lee, I share their concerns, I share their fears and I share their sense of bewilderment at times about what we are meant to be doing and when we are meant to be doing it as individuals.

I say 'as individuals', but of course it is not just about the impact on ourselves: it is about the impact on our families; it is about the impact on our community groups and our sporting clubs that we are members of; and for many people I have spoken to in the last two weeks it is about the impact on their businesses, predominantly small businesses.

People are very uncertain, and with uncertainty comes quite often fear, and fear of the future. It is now time, as we have heard from other members, including most recently the member for Florey, for governments to demonstrate strong, decisive, consistent and transparent leadership. People will make what they will of what they have seen on the TV in the last two weeks—particularly from the federal government—as we have received directive followed by updated directive about what we should and should not be doing as we interact with one another in the community.

I agree with many of the people who have spoken to me, particularly early on in the piece, and said, 'Well, it seems to me we should be acting as quickly and as decisively as possible to make sure that we are limiting all of those things that we could be doing which might foster the spread of this virus.' And it seems that we have been receiving at times directives from the commonwealth government that have rebuffed the calls from the community, the media and other commentators for swifter and more decisive action, only for days later that action then to be declared by those same leaders as being necessary.

That sense of confusion is disconcerting for people in the community. It is also disconcerting as people see our habits change in the community. They are seeing many people fleeing from shopping at their businesses that they run or coming along to their local cafes, restaurants, hotels, bars and sporting clubs—all of those activities which they usually participate in and all of those entities that people derive their living from.

It is in that context, of course, that the community has a rightful expectation that their governments will act and act very quickly with huge financial resources at their hands to support the community, to support people who might be at risk of losing their jobs and to support people in business.

I congratulate to date the Morrison federal government on bringing down tranches of stimulus packages. I congratulate those state governments interstate who are each spending billions of dollars to support households and businesses in their jurisdictions to try to make sure that as many heads as possible are kept above water during what we can all expect to be a very significant economic downturn, one which may last for a very long period of time.

I also reiterate my call, which I made along with the Leader of the Opposition in a constructive manner, for the state government in South Australia to act more decisively and with greater financial clout to try to support our economy and to try to support households and businesses. The Premier says that he has already released a stimulus package. It is unfortunate that still to date, more than two weeks on, nobody knows how all that money will be spent. Not even a small proportion of that money has yet made its way into the community.

We need to be following the lead of other states. We need to be relieving people of the burden particularly of the massive increases in state taxes, fees and charges from last year's budget. We need to be allowing people to defer their payroll tax. We need to be giving people relief from other state taxes, such as land tax, and we need to get money into the pockets of households and businesses, and we need to do it immediately.

We need to pick those industries that can react quickly, scale up and support economic activity, such as the housing construction industry. We need to support the industries that we all know have suffered the most in the last 10 days, and they are the hospitality and tourism industries. We suggested a \$200 million support fund. That should just be the start of the business support and the household support that we see rolled out in the coming days.

CORONAVIRUS

Dr HARVEY (Newland) (15:46): Our communities across South Australia are facing a threat on a scale not seen for 100 years. First and foremost, our community is facing a potential health crisis due to a pandemic with great potential to take many lives within our community caused by the virus COVID-19 that was not even known to exist until January of this year.

Whilst 80 per cent of people infected are likely to have mild symptoms, the risk to those vulnerable, including older people and those with chronic illnesses, is very real and in many cases fatal. Moreover, the risk is not only that vulnerable people become unwell, but if the spread of the virus is uncontrolled then the number of people requiring high-level medical care will exceed the capacity of our health system and then people cannot receive the care that they need. This is an outcome that governments across Australia are working hard to avoid at all costs.

Given that the COVID-19 virus has not been seen by humans before, our immune systems do not recognise it and thus the virus spreads readily from person to person right around the world, as we have already seen. This is the reason that following the public health advice it is so critical to be practising social distancing and self-isolation where that is required. Every additional person we come into contact with is another additional opportunity for transmission. Each additional instance of transmission has an exponential impact on the number of people who ultimately become infected, also exponentially increasing the number of vulnerable people who become infected. Social distancing is something that we must all do and it will save lives.

In amongst what does seem like doom and gloom, I would like to assure my community that the Marshall government, in concert with other governments across the nation, is doing everything possible to protect the lives of South Australians and the lives of Australians right across the country. We are well placed here in South Australia, and other jurisdictions around the world are ahead of us in terms of the extent of the spread of infection. This provides us with an opportunity to learn from them. Moreover, even within Australia, with the state border controls to be in place shortly, we can slow the seeding of infection into our state and learn from what happens in other jurisdictions.

The Marshall government has worked hard to ensure that the rate of testing for the virus is world leading to help track the spread of the virus and inform future planning in the health system, has stepped up capacity within our health system to deal with the demand that we all hope will not be realised and is introducing other measures to help protect the vulnerable and maximise social distancing.

Of course, the devastating impact that this pandemic is already having in our community is the impact on so many people's livelihoods. On my way here this morning, I went past a long line-up of people at the Modbury Centrelink office, waiting for it to open. It is truly devastating that so many people in our community are right now so concerned for their future, through no fault of their own.

It has also been devastating to see so many local businesses within my own community who have had to lay off staff. Many have tried to adapt, modifying their operations in such a way to keep going, whilst others have simply had to make the decision to close completely. It is essential that we all reach out where we can to those who need our support. We are all in this together.

The state government has put in place a stimulus package with more support flagged designed to support business activity in our community, and the packages of the federal government are designed to cushion the blow to businesses and individuals. Whilst of course these initiatives will have important and positive impacts in our community, there is no doubt that there will still be many people right across our state who will be hurting for some time to come.

I would like to thank those heroes in our community: the healthcare workers in our community, such as our doctors, nurses, paramedics and others on the front line; also, our senior public health officials who are guiding our state's response; those working in diagnostic laboratories; those working in research, making advances in potential new ways to treat and prevent the virus infection; our teachers, who continue to work in unprecedented and difficult circumstances. I would also like to commend those who work in our supermarkets and distribution networks and supply chains who continue to ensure we are able to continue to feed our community.

I would like to assure my community that, in these dark and uncertain times, I would not want to be anywhere else in the world right now than here in South Australia. We are as well placed as the best in the world to weather this storm. We are barely a few weeks into a situation that will likely last months, but I know that our community is strong and resilient and that, by working together and looking after each other, we will get to the other side of this crisis stronger than ever before.

At 15:51 the house adjourned until Wednesday 25 March 2020 at 10:30.

*Answers to Questions***DUGGAN REVIEW**

5 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (6 February 2020). Can the minister provide an update on the progress of the promised review of front-line policing in South Australia, to be conducted by Kevin Duggan QC (the 'Duggan review')?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): The review has been submitted to cabinet for consideration.

DUGGAN REVIEW

6 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (6 February 2020). When will the Duggan review be complete?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

The review has been submitted to cabinet for consideration.

DUGGAN REVIEW

7 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (6 February 2020). If the Duggan review is complete:

- (a) When will a report be made public?
- (b) What were its recommendations?
- (c) Which of those recommendations will the government adopt?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

- (a) This is a matter for cabinet.
- (b) The document is cabinet sensitive.
- (c) This is a matter for cabinet.

EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE INDEX

8 Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (19 February 2020). In relation to the updated Index of Educational Disadvantage for South Australian Schools:

- (a) Provide the number of schools in each category before and after the update, and the number of students in each category before and after the update?
- (b) What was the methodology for the review and what factors are accounted for in defining a school's category?
- (c) Has the review of categories resulted in more or less money being disbursed that would have occurred under the previous category allocation?
- (d) How many and which schools have a principal at a level that will drop when the position is next up, given a change in category?
- (e) Overall is the index of educational advantage lower for SA students in public schools than ten years ago?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education): I have been advised of the following:

(a) The list below outlines number of schools in each category before and after the update, and the number of students in each category before and after the update.

IoED Category	Number of Schools Prior to Update	No. Students Prior to Update	Number of Schools After Update	No. Students After Update
1	40	7567	40	5856
2	77	30768	77	28028
3	60	19302	60	21290
4	73	22571	74	21370
5	95	29900	95	38437

IoED Category	Number of Schools Prior to Update	No. Students Prior to Update	Number of Schools After Update	No. Students After Update
6	97	38619	97	37757
7	69	32690	68	28679

Note: Student numbers are based on 2019 February head count

(b) The below outlines the methodology used and the factors which are used to define a school's Index of Educational Disadvantage (IoED) category.

The IoED is a socio-economic index, used by the Department for Education to allocate resources to schools to address educational disadvantage related to socioeconomic status.

The index is calculated using four measures:

- Aboriginality which is based on the average of 2017, 2018 and 2019 school enrolment data.
- Student mobility which is based on the average of 2016, 2017 and 2018 school enrolment data.
- Parental economic resources which is based on the 2016 ABS Census data (released in 2018) using 2019 student addresses, noting that until this update the previous IoED relied on 2006 Census data.
- Parental education and occupation which is based on the 2016 ABS Census data (released in 2018) using 2019 student addresses, noting that until this update the previous IoED relied on 2006 Census data.

(c) The review allocated the same total amount of money to schools; however schools that received less funding as a result of the change in index received transition funding in 2020 so that they receive the same amount as they did in 2019. The total amount of additional transition funding paid in 2020 is \$7.2 million. It should be noted that a number of schools have appealed their reclassification and it is anticipated that this process may result in further additional funds going to schools, over and above what was previously provided.

(d) It is not possible to determine whether a principal classification will drop based on the change in category, as this is only one part of the methodology for determining principal classification. It should also be noted that schools have moved in both directions, so the impact, in as much as there is one, would go both ways.

(e) The index is a relative index and the number of schools in each category are very similar for the current and former indices.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE

13 Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (19 February 2020). What are the number of formal cautions issued by SA Police to young people over the past ten years; and of those, how many were issued to Aboriginal young people?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

Over the last 10 financial years there were 20,693 formal cautions issued, of which 4,167 were young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE

14 Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (19 February 2020). What are the number of informal cautions issued by SA Police to young people over the past ten years; and of those, how many were issued to Aboriginal young people?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

1,230 informal cautions were issued by South Australia Police (SAPOL) to young people between July 2009 and June 2019.

Due to South Australia Police (SAPOL) system constraints prior to the implementation of SHIELD, SAPOL does not have the number of Aboriginal youth informally cautioned prior to November 2018. SAPOL can advise that 46 informal cautions were issued from November 2018 to June 2019 and of those, four were issued to Aboriginal young people.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE

15 Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (19 February 2020). What are the types of offences for which non-Aboriginal young people are most likely to be cautioned over the past ten years?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):

- Acts intended to cause injury
- Fraud deception and related offences
- Illicit drug offences
- Justice procedure offences e.g. breach of violence and non-violence restraining orders
- Other miscellaneous offence e.g. carry graffiti implement, drunkenness, possess prescription drug
- Other offences against the person e.g. threatening behaviour, dangerous or negligent acts
- Property damage and environmental offences. e.g. mark graffiti, property damage(broken windows)
- Public order offences. e.g. disorderly conduct, trespass
- Robbery and related offences
- Serious criminal trespass offences
- Sexual assault and related offences. e.g. distribute image person under 17 years
- Theft and related offences. e.g. theft from shop, theft from motor vehicle
- Weapons/explosive offences. e.g. carry offensive weapon

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE

16 Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (19 February 2020). What are the types of offences for which Aboriginal young people are most likely to be cautioned over the past ten years?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):

- Acts intended to cause injury
- Fraud deception and related offences
- Illicit drug offences
- Justice procedure offences, e.g. breach of violence and non-violence restraining orders
- Other miscellaneous offences, e.g. carry graffiti implement, drunkenness, possess prescription drug
- Other offences against the person, e.g. threatening behaviour, dangerous or negligent acts
- Property damage and environmental offences, e.g. mark graffiti, property damage (broken windows)
- Public order offences, e.g. disorderly conduct, trespass
- Serious criminal trespass offences
- Sexual assault and related offences, e.g. distribute image person under 17 years
- Theft and related offences, e.g. theft from shop, theft from motor vehicle.
- Weapons/explosive offences. e.g. carry offensive weapon

COUNTER TERRORISM ACTION PLAN

18 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (20 February 2020). What additional training has been provided to SA Police officers as part of the government's Counter Terrorism Action Plan?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): On advice from South Australia Police the government's commitment to increase police training evolved into creation of the security response section.

COUNTER TERRORISM ACTION PLAN

19 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (20 February 2020). How many extra community constables have been deployed to enhance engagement with at risk communities, as promised as part of the government's Counter Terrorism Action Plan?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): Since coming into government nine additional community constables have been deployed.

COUNTER TERRORISM ACTION PLAN

20 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (20 February 2020). Has the 'audit of all major public places and events', promised as part of the government's Counter Terrorism Action Plan, been complete, and, if so, what recommendations arose from this audit?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): Yes. South Australia Police is providing ongoing assistance to owners and operators of these places.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE

25 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (20 February 2020). When will the MFS expenditure review be complete? Will the report be made public?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

The South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service expenditure review has been submitted to cabinet for consideration.

SURF LIFESAVING CLUBS

26 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (20 February 2020). Which SA surf lifesaving clubs have been provided with shark spotting drones?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):

South Australian Surf Life Saving Clubs with a dedicated remotely piloted aircraft system capability or serviced by the Surf Life Saving South Australia Emergency Operations Group are:

- Aldinga
- Beachport
- Brighton
- Chiton Rocks
- Christies Beach
- Glenelg
- Goolwa
- Grange
- Henley Beach
- Moana
- Normanville
- North Haven
- Port Elliot
- Port Noarlunga
- Robe
- Seacliff
- Semaphore
- Somerton
- Southport
- West Beach
- Whyalla

PRISONER NUMBERS

27 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (20 February 2020). What were the average staff to prisoner ratios at each DCS prison, and each privately operated prison, for each month from January 2018 to January 2020 inclusive?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

The Department for Correctional Services (DCS) does not present data on staff to prisoner ratios as the data would not be comparable.

The data is not comparable as:

- Role and function of prisons differ;
- Built environments differ;
- Programs and services differ at each prison; and
- DCS does not disclose staffing arrangements for the good order and security of the prison system.

PRISONS, MOBILE PHONE JAMMING TECHNOLOGY

28 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (20 February 2020). Has mobile phone jamming technology been trialled at any SA prison, and, if so, what were the results of this trial?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

The Department for Correctional Services has commenced work to meet the government's election commitment to undertake a pilot program at a regional prison to block the use of contraband mobile phones.

Work has been undertaken to identify the most appropriate type of technology and a suitable trial site for the pilot program.

REWARDS WONDER CAMPAIGN

29 The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay) (3 March 2020). Will there be a Rewards Wonder Campaign for 2020? If not, why not?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier): I have been advised:

The Rewards Wonder Campaign which commenced in September 2018 launched the new positioning of 'South Australia – Rewards Wonder' to the domestic market.

Following this activity, the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) conducted seasonal campaigns promoting South Australia as a must-see holiday destination in summer and winter. The SATC will continue this marketing activity for the remainder of 2020 and beyond.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION

30 The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay) (3 March 2020). Will there be a new winter tourism campaign for 2020? If not, why not?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier): I have been advised:

The South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) is considering conducting a new winter marketing campaign in 2020.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION

31 The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay) (3 March 2020). What was the SATC's transport access budget for the following financial years:

- (a) 2015-16?
- (b) 2016-17?
- (c) 2017-18?
- (d) 2018-19?
- (e) 2019-20?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier): I have been advised:

The South Australian Tourism Commission budget for transport access includes industry incentives, cooperative marketing agreements, implementation of tourism signage and wi-fi, representation at forums and summits on international transport, travel expenses associated with meeting with international and domestic airlines, and minor operational expenses. It does not include an allocation of employee benefits expenses. The budget in each financial year was as follows:

- (a) 2015-16: \$330,300
- (b) 2016-17: \$7,828,560

- (c) 2017-18: \$4,364,780
- (d) 2018-19: \$2,789,000
- (e) 2019-20: \$1,472,000

GREAT SOUTHERN BIKE TRAIL

32 The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay) (3 March 2020). Has the feasibility study for the Great Southern Bike Trail been completed?

1. When will it be publicly released?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier): I have been advised:

The Great Southern Bike Trail Economic Impact Assessment Report was commissioned in early 2019 and provided to the government late last year.

The government has referred the project to Infrastructure SA to undertake a peer review of the report. Infrastructure SA has been asked to provide advice on potential project development, governance and finance options for the state government's consideration. This is expected by April 2020.

SECURITY RESPONSE SECTION

33 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (3 March 2020). How many police officers applied for positions within the new Security Response Section?

1. How many were accepted?
2. Were any applicants accepted from outside of South Australia?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

180 applicants were selected to progress to the Aptitude Assessment Centre. 81 applicants were shortlisted to progress to the basic skills course (BSC). Successful completion of the BSC qualifies officers to apply for a position at the security response section. Team member positions are currently under selection.

Only serving members of South Australia Police are eligible to apply.

SECURITY RESPONSE SECTION

34 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (3 March 2020). What is the number of personnel, command structure and spread of ranks within the new Security Response Section?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

47 members. One inspector, one senior sergeant, six sergeants, six brevet sergeants and 33 constable/senior constables.

SECURITY RESPONSE SECTION

35 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (3 March 2020). When exactly will the Security Response Section be operational?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

30 June 2020.

SECURITY RESPONSE SECTION

36 Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (3 March 2020). Will the Security Response Section, or any officers from within or attached to the SRS, form part of any police or security services performed on a commercial basis for the private sector?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I am advised:

No.

REWARDS WONDER CAMPAIGN

38 Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (4 March 2020). Will there be a Rewards Wonder Campaign for 2020? If not, why not?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier): I have been advised:

The Rewards Wonder Campaign which commenced in September 2018 launched the new positioning of 'South Australia – Rewards Wonder' to the domestic market.

Following this activity, the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) conducted seasonal campaigns promoting South Australia as a must-see holiday destination in summer and winter. The SATC will continue this marketing activity for the remainder of 2020 and beyond.

KANGAROO ISLAND BUSHFIRE RESPONSE

In reply to **the Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL (Mawson)** (19 February 2020).

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier): I have been advised:

The Leader of the Opposition was receiving regular briefings from the government at the time. The KI recovery coordinator's priority during this extremely busy period was assisting the people of Kangaroo Island, so a meeting with the opposition was not possible. When the cabinet visited Kangaroo Island the following week it did not receive a briefing from the KI recovery coordinator either.

KANGAROO ISLAND BUSHFIRE RECOVERY SUPPORT

In reply to **the Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL (Mawson)** (19 February 2020).

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Minister for Environment and Water): I have been advised:

The tender process for contracts to clean up waste on Kangaroo Island and Cudlee Creek has involved a combination of direct engagement with panelled suppliers through the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure and registrations of interest from local companies.

Direct engagement of contractors has been necessary given the need to get work started as soon as possible following the bushfires.

Contractors were engaged in January 2020 to undertake immediate asbestos suppression spraying in Cudlee Creek and Kangaroo Island.

This work necessitated an urgent and efficient response for public safety and public interest reasons, and the work was contracted by Green Industries SA through direct engagement with licensed and qualified suppliers with available equipment.

Waste consultancies were also directly engaged by Green Industries SA to provide on-the-ground services including: waste management assessments of affected sites, data analysis, oversight of clean-up work, and liaison services.

The process for engagement of suppliers for undertaking the clean-up of bushfire-affected material commenced in February 2020 with a focus on properties with asbestos contaminated materials.

Green Industries SA used the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure's 'Prequalified list for demolition and asbestos removal' to identify suppliers.

Advice on Kangaroo Island and Adelaide Hills suppliers was also sought through waste management consultants, the local recovery offices and through direct inquiries.

The clean-up work is being undertaken progressively in geographic clusters, and prioritised to help re-establish businesses, assist vulnerable people and those establishing or living in temporary housing on site.

Local suppliers are imperative to the clean-up effort and clusters of work are being specifically organised to ensure optimal utilisation of these suppliers, in accordance with their capacity and local knowledge.

Local contractors who do not hold the licensing required for asbestos clean-up works are integral to the clean-up of other materials, and Green Industries SA is encouraging asbestos-licensed suppliers to subcontract work to these local suppliers where possible.

The government is continuing to seek out and identify opportunities for local contractors wherever possible. Suppliers are encouraged to register their interest and capability to undertake clean-up works with Green Industries SA.

In February notices were published in *The Advertiser* and *The Islander* to again encourage suppliers to register their interest with Green Industries SA. Additionally, Green Industries SA published information on their website, state emergency websites and provided information via the local recovery offices.

WOMBAT CULL

In reply to **Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (4 March 2020).

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier): I have been advised:

Had the cull proceeded, it would have been undertaken pursuant to the Code of Practice for the Humane Destruction of Wombats by Shooting in South Australia.

SPRINGBANK SECONDARY COLLEGE

In reply to **Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (5 March 2020).

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education): I have been advised of the following:

No amount of the \$10 million funding allocated to Springbank Secondary College has been spent.

Separate from the capital works redevelopment project at Springbank Secondary College, demolition work and minor works have been undertaken at the school. The works included demolition of Building 01 E which was reported in April 2018 as being unsafe to occupy. During the demolition works, asbestos removal was required on multiple occasions. Minor refurbishments to other areas of the school were provided, including a toilet upgrade, painting and carpets. The works were completed in March 2020 with a total cost of \$1,764,734.