

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

### Thursday, 16 November 2023

**The SPEAKER (Hon. D.R. Cregan)** took the chair at 11:00.

**The SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of this country throughout Australia and their connection to land and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to elders both past and present.

**The SPEAKER** read prayers.

#### *Parliamentary Committees*

### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: PORT AUGUSTA PRISON ACCOMMODATION UPGRADES**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:01):** I move:

That the 34<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled 'Port Augusta Prison Bluebush and Greenbush accommodation upgrades', be noted.

The Department for Correctional Services proposes to upgrade aged accommodation units and yards at Port Augusta Prison through a comprehensive refurbishment of the Bluebush accommodation block, the Greenbush accommodation block and their respective outdoor areas. This initiative will assist in improving staff and prisoner safety, while providing greater opportunities for prisoner rehabilitation.

The Port Augusta Prison is a high-security prison built in 1869. Prisoners are accommodated in a variety of units that cater for different prisoner needs, including the high-security units of the Bluebush and Greenbush accommodation blocks, which house 156 prisoners. The accommodation blocks are the oldest accommodation blocks on site and have significantly aged.

The units were designed according to correctional standards and principles set in the 1960s and do not reflect modern correctional practices of ensuring that rehabilitation is at the forefront of all infrastructure design. The unit upgrades will ensure the accommodation is fit for purpose, safe and culturally inclusive.

The project forms part of the department's commitment to making a difference to reducing reoffending through the priorities of Closing the Gap, to reduce the over-representation of incarcerated Aboriginal people through cultural understanding and engagement, innovation and contemporary practice, by delivering world-class correctional services, and maintaining safe-at-work principles by improving amenities and having increased access to outdoor spaces. The total invested budget for the project is \$30 million, with the project currently in the tender phase and practical completion expected in November 2025.

A two-stage approach will be used to reduce the operational impact of the works. Stage 1 will result in 104 Bluebush beds temporarily taken offline so that the Bluebush ground floor, Bluebush first floor and Bluebush rear yard can be upgraded. Stage 2 will result in 36 beds taken offline to upgrade the main yard and the first floor of the Greenbush unit. The upgraded accommodation and yards will include:

- improved visibility of staff posts in accommodation areas, with open benchtops to encourage prisoner and staff interaction;
- removal of the shower blocks and inclusion of showers in cells;
- removal and replacement of all draconian-style steel bars in corridors with glass airlocks;
- introduction of fixed seating and tables in corridors to support and encourage prisoner socialisation;

- updating interview rooms, prisoner kitchen and servery areas to support and encourage open conversation between social workers and prisoners;
- placement of acoustics, materials and colour choices reflective of the local environment, as well as the incorporation of Aboriginal artwork and murals from local Indigenous people;
- a secure internal courtyard for prisoners occupying the ground floor of Bluebush to provide further opportunities for access to outside spaces, encouraging positive and social prisoner exchanges;
- dividing the main yard into two yards, providing opportunities for more prisoners to access the main yard simultaneously; and
- providing flexible multipurpose yards with fixed seating and chairs, walking trails, gym equipment and facilities to accommodate recreational activities.

The project team has incorporated formal processes and initiatives to ensure that ecologically sustainable development principles are integrated into the design, construction and operation of the updated accommodation and yards. These initiatives include energy-efficient lights and lighting systems, the use of recycled furnishing materials, low-energy use air conditioning systems and water management systems with water-saving settings.

The accommodation upgrades have the capacity to reduce stress, increase the wellbeing of prisoners and foster better relationships, leading to fewer negative behaviours and critical incidents. The rehabilitation outcomes of the project are aimed to improve prisoner wellbeing, incorporate modern design concepts, allow prisoners the ability to spend longer periods out of their cells, foster positive officer and prisoner interaction, and improve prisoner engagement and interaction. Importantly, the design also allows for the inclusion of a meeting space where allied health staff, such as social workers, can meet and hold effective conversations with prisoners.

The project provides an option for prisoners to undertake meaningful work to contribute to the unit upgrades by providing opportunities for prisoner engagement. Port Augusta Prison Industries will have significant involvement through the construction of cell furniture, including beds and shelving using the metalwork and spray shop.

The department is also investigating the involvement of a prisoner working group for prisoners to be further engaged by working alongside builders and their subcontractors, along with training providers. This exposure to a construction environment with the intention of upskilling provides prisoners with an opportunity to engage and build networks with employers to learn transferable skills, and can enhance employment prospects upon release.

The department recognises potential risks associated with the project and its delivery, which have been thoroughly scrutinised to ensure that risks are mitigated and safety is paramount for employees and prisoners. Issues surrounding long lead times of materials, supply demands, cost inflation and the regional location are at the forefront of the department's risk mitigation strategies. Risk mitigation strategies will be utilised throughout the project and will include the use of local trades, providing additional security and maintaining ongoing communication strategies.

The Department for Correctional Services confirms that consultation and engagement has occurred throughout the design phase to ensure the design and costings were challenged and endorsed without affecting the operational principle of the design. The Department for Infrastructure and Transport are involved in appointing the lead design consultant following the relevant procurement process.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Port Augusta Prison Bluebush and Greenbush accommodation upgrades. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Mr David Brown, Chief Executive of the Department for Correctional Services; Mr Chris Sexton, Executive Director, People and Business Services, Department for Correctional Services; and Mr John Harrison, Director of Building Projects, Department for Infrastructure and Transport. I thank the witnesses for their time. I would also like to thank the member for Stuart for the written statements supporting this project in his electorate.

Based upon the evidence considered and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public works.

Motion carried.

*Parliamentary Procedure*

**VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Florey, I acknowledge the presence in the chamber of the Hon. Tammy Franks from the other place.

*Parliamentary Committees*

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: BOLIVAR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT ESSENTIAL SERVICES SWITCHBOARD UPGRADE**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:09):** I move:

That the 35<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled 'Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant essential services switchboard upgrade', be noted.

The South Australian Water Corporation, or SA Water, proposes to upgrade the aged Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant essential services switchboard, which controls critical elements of the treatment process at the Bolivar site.

Replacing and relocating the two essential switchboards will ensure the power to critical plant processes is maintained and will increase security of the essential plant power to reduce the risks of treatment process failure, avoiding poor effluent quality. The switchboard replacement will work towards maintaining an optimum level of service and maintain the plant's environmental performance. Additionally, the switchboard replacement will reduce the operating safety risks for workers at the Bolivar site by having improved safety features as part of the updated installation.

The Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant was built in the 1960s and has had nearly 60 years of service. It is the largest wastewater treatment plant in South Australia, with approximately 70 per cent of Adelaide's wastewater treated at the site. The essential switchboards were installed when the plant was originally constructed and are currently located at the basement level of the powerhouse building, sitting below the one-in-100-year flood-line level. SA Water proposes to relocate the switchboards to the mezzanine level to ensure that the switchboards sit above the one-in-100-year flood line to aid the resilience to climate change specifically as increased change in rainfall patterns and risks of extreme rainfall events occur.

The switchboards are also past their functional life and can no longer be effectively maintained due to a lack of serviceable spare parts. As a result, the switchboards have become a major risk to the safety and operation of the plant, and failure of these assets would adversely impact plant function and could lead to loss of control capabilities. The project aims to improve security of the power supply at the treatment plant, reduce the risk of treatment failure and potential environmental harm due to poor effluent quality, and improve safety and security to SA Water customers in the event of a one-in-100-year flood.

The capital cost of this project is funded through SA Water's Our Plan 2020 regulatory determination. Construction has commenced, with practical completion expected in early 2025. The proposed scope of works includes:

- the installation of a new switch room in the treatment plant powerhouse;
- the installation of new switchboards to replace the existing switchboards;
- the installation of new cabling and/or rejoining existing cables to swap services from the old switchboards to the new; and
- the decommissioning and removal of old switchboards and associated equipment no longer in service.

Ecological sustainable development principles and key environmental objectives and performance criteria were incorporated into SA Water's design and policies for this project. SA Water has confirmed that environmental integrity has been supported to ensure that impacts are avoided, minimised or managed to reduce environmental harm.

In line with SA Water's environmental targets, contractors will be required to report on greenhouse emissions associated with the project and that site-specific location plans specifically address environmental aspects, including vegetation protection, locations of compounds and spoil storage, the storage of hazardous substances, and soil and erosion prevention measures.

SA Water is mindful of project risks, and a risk management policy and framework will apply over the course of the project to ensure appropriate risk management and mitigation measures are applied in the project delivery. This includes significant planning around the methodology of swapping power supplies, including the sequence, time frames and backup allowances.

SA Water confirms that there is a changeover procedure with defined roles and responsibilities so that identification and isolation of power supplies will be actioned when required during the upgrade. Ultimately, the construction methodology enables SA Water to transfer power supplies from the old system over to the new system in a very deliberate and staged manner, with contingency plans in place to ensure there are no interruptions to the treatment plant process.

SA Water confirms there are no native title implications over the site area and has consulted with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation unit, who confirmed that there is a medium likelihood of encountering Aboriginal heritage in the area because the works are to be completed on existing disturbed sites. Further consultation with the Attorney-General's Department Aboriginal heritage register did not identify any Aboriginal heritage sites or objects within the project area.

In the unlikely event that heritage is uncovered, the design and construct contractor will comply with SA Water's standard operating procedure for the discovery of Aboriginal heritage. Work will cease immediately and an environmental and heritage expertise representative will be contacted. SA Water assures the parliament that engagement and consultation has occurred with internal stakeholders and partner organisations and will continue to occur throughout the life cycle of the project via project progress meetings.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant essential services switchboard upgrade. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Mr Steven Jansen, Project Manager for SA Water, and Mr Peter Seltsikas, Senior Manager, Capital Delivery, SA Water. I thank the witnesses for their time.

Based upon the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public work.

Motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: HEALTHY COORONG, HEALTHY BASIN PROGRAM, TERINGIE WETLAND ON-GROUND WORKS**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:15):** I move:

That the 36<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin Program, Teringie Wetland On-Ground Works Project, be noted.

Of ecological significance, the Teringie wetland provides habitat for a number of resident and migratory shorebirds. The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) proposes to undertake Teringie wetland improvements to increase available habitat for these key species of migratory shorebirds and resident Australian non-migratory shorebirds. This initiative will benefit Coorong waterbirds and increase their preferred foraging habitat, supporting natural dispersal and boundary shifts of the shorebird species. These improvements will build resilience in the system, supporting the long-term health of the Coorong against both immediate and future changing climate conditions.

Terlingie is located on the shore of Lake Alexandrina near the town of Narrung. The wetlands site sits within the Ngarrindjeri and Others Native Title determination area and is owned by the

Aboriginal Lands Trust. The Teringie area is subject to the Ngarrindjeri and Others Native Title settlement Indigenous land use agreement and has been identified as having significant cultural and ecological value. The wetlands are subject to several international migratory bird agreements and numerous state and federal government initiatives and are a Ramsar-listed wetland of international importance.

Ecological decline has occurred in the area for a considerable period, with a decline in the abundance and distribution of waterbird species. To address this significant issue, the project aims to increase management capabilities of the wetland and increase the total area watered by improving the connection between the Teringie north and east basins; improve connectivity to Lake Alexandrina to facilitate watering of the site; and improve site access by upgrading segments where heavy vehicle access may be impeded, which will facilitate monitoring, maintenance and visitation opportunities to the site.

Key components of the project works include the installation of a regulator at the inlet between Lake Alexandrina and the Teringie north basin, the installation of a regulator at the inlet between the Teringie north basin and the Teringie east basin, track upgrades for access to the two regulators, and the deepening and widening of existing channels for improved connectivity between the lake and the north and east basins.

The works are to be self-managed by DEW under the Department for Infrastructure and Transport's planned small construction works process. Presently, the north wetland is controlled solely by lake levels, and the east only receives inflow from rainfall or extremely high lake levels due to flooding events. To address the water flow issues, the regulators will consist of a four-culvert inlet regulator in the north wetland and will include stoplogs and fish screens and a two-culvert connecting regulator between the north and east wetlands. The existing channel works will improve inflows and connections between the north and east wetlands. Combined, these works will provide for the continued management of both wetland areas.

The project will improve and restore sediment and water quality and control water levels to restore and increase the availability and habitat quality for key aquatic plant communities, fish and waterbirds. The initiatives will provide support to over 2,500 target waterbirds and provide 40 hectares of preferred shorebird habitat for the majority of the shorebird season.

An additional outcome of the project works is the opportunity for social and economic growth by improving access and experiences for volunteers and tourists, increasing community involvement, and boosting productivity in the region through increased visitation. It is expected that ecotourism initiatives such as birdwatching, camping and bushwalking will rise as a result, and this overall increase in the number of recreational users will be sustained over a 20-year period.

The project will produce potential support for the continuation of community cultural practices and increase access to the site for the Ngarrindjeri people, and endeavours to support First Nations education and employment outcomes in the area. The Teringie project is part of the Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin program and is funded on a 90:10 basis by the federal and state governments. The estimated construction cost is \$4.9 million, with work expected to commence in December this year and practical completion in May 2024.

An ecologically sustainable development report outlining the project's sustainable development principles and objectives will be compiled by DEW throughout the project's life cycle. The climate change unit of DEW has been consulted regarding the project delivery to ensure it is in accordance with relevant policies and guidelines.

During the planning and design process, several environmental assessments were undertaken to identify and understand potential project issues and impacts, especially in relation to vegetation, fauna, Aboriginal heritage and geotechnical surveys. DEW is aware of various risks associated with the project and will follow the Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin program to incorporate DEW's risk management policy and procedures to manage and mitigate potential risks, which is an integral part of the project management process.

To ensure appropriate First Nations engagement, consultation has occurred with the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation, the Ngarrindjeri Working Group, and the Raukkan Community

Council throughout key stages, including concept development, concept prioritisation, detailed design development, and cultural heritage surveys. Additionally, stakeholders and community members will be provided with regular updates regarding the project's aims, progress and environmental benefit.

As the Teringie site has significant cultural and ecological value, there has been strong community support for interventions that have minimal ground disturbance activities to improve the health of the lands and waters. A cultural heritage management plan has been prepared and will be enforced during construction.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin Program's Teringie Wetland On-Ground Works Project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Ms Lisa Stribley, Acting Director, Water Infrastructure and Operations, Department for Environment and Water, and Mr Stephen Whitehead, Program Leader, Coorong Infrastructure Investigations, Department for Environment and Water. I thank the witnesses for their time.

Based upon the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public work.

Motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE BARRACKS RELOCATION— GEPPTS CROSS**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:22):** I move:

That the 37<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled South Australia Police Barracks Relocation Project—Gepps Cross, be noted.

South Australia Police (SAPOL) propose to relocate the Mounted Operations Unit and the Dog Operations Unit currently located at the Thebarton Police Barracks to a greenfield site at Gepps Cross. This relocation will enable a vacant location for the construction of the new Women's and Children's Hospital announced by the state government in September 2022.

The Thebarton Police Barracks is a multifunctional site, with the functions specialist in nature and not replicated or accommodated at any other police site. It is critical to maintain the services at the barracks to ensure continuity of emergency services provision for the South Australian public. SAPOL proposes to permanently relocate the Mounted Operations Unit and Dog Operations Unit to a site at Gepps Cross that incorporates modern facilities, associated green space in alignment with animal welfare and safety requirements, functional operative training facilities, and built form support for staff to support ongoing operational duties.

The Mounted Operations Unit consists of 36 staff members and includes 32 horses, 16 of which are required to be ready for immediate operational and public order deployment. The horses are a valuable asset used in SAPOL's operational response to protests, rallies and major events in the Adelaide CBD to move and control people and crowds.

The unit's four main functions are: public order/crowd disorder, patrol operations, search and rescue and ceremonial. The unit has an integral role in policing the Hindley Street entertainment precinct, and horses are regularly ridden to patrol the CBD areas. The Dog Operations Unit consists of general purpose and detection dog teams and are a specialist police resource, supporting operational police. Dog teams are used statewide and are trained to carry out duties that include tracking; area searching; criminal apprehension; missing person searching; and drug, currency, firearm and explosive detection.

The unit consists of 23 staff and includes 27 dogs, who are ordinarily housed with their handlers. The Dog Operations Unit requires kennels when handlers are on periods of leave or are onsite between training, operation and other duties, such as administrative duties, corporate training and fatigue duties, including cleaning animals, fleets, facilities and equipment.

SAPOL considered various factors when shortlisting a preferred site, including maintaining proximity to the city to ensure efficient deployment of the Mounted Operations Unit and the police

greys, sufficient accommodation for equine and canine facilities, staff accommodation provisions, and green space for resting horses in compliance with animal work health and safety principles.

Site assessments were conducted by SAPOL in partnership with Renewal SA and the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) to establish a suitable match for the unique accommodation requirements. The site assessments further ensured adaptability of the site layout for operational fit-outs, the quality of infrastructure, location match and operational co-location of units were sufficiently addressed.

The chosen site at Gepps Cross sits at the corner of Grand Junction Road and Briens Road, and is a state government-owned vacant land parcel. Various feasibility processes and relevant geotechnical and environmental investigations were undertaken to confirm that the site is appropriate for intended construction and there are no contamination issues.

Site options near Adelaide Airport were dismissed after concerns with sound levels of planes, low-lying land, potential acid sulphate soil and the potential for PFAS at the suggested sites. The internal security device section at SAPOL has cleared the Gepps Cross site as a suitable location for operational policing premises. Construction works have commenced, with practical completion expected in early 2025.

The project delivery will follow project procurement and management advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities. DIT will project manage to a general builder contract under a managing contractor contract. This contract will engage with a selected contractor from concept design and will provide construction and planning advice to assist in driving scope and budget alignment, as well as assisting with the identification of construction efficiencies and potential project acceleration.

These initiatives will support the expedited relocation from the existing police barracks. SAPOL recognises the importance of ecologically sustainable development principles and reports that it has adopted key environmental objectives and performance criteria in the design and delivery of the project. SAPOL is committed to providing facilities with good environmental qualities to achieve good value-for-money solutions, providing a positive workplace, reducing energy and water consumption and minimising recurrent costs associated with maintaining and operating the facility. The Department for Environment and Water has assessed and approved the submission against the ecologically sustainable development guide note for planning, design and delivery.

SAPOL is aware of various operational risks and will employ their risk management policy and framework throughout the project life cycle. The project will be managed by governing bodies such as SAPOL and DIT through a five-step infrastructure planning and delivery framework. This multiagency governance framework is in place to mitigate risks and ensure that a value for money outcome is achieved, with design reviews undertaken at appropriate stages by experienced stakeholders and specialist consultants. A governance structure has also been established to ensure appropriate oversight and risk management during the planning and delivery stage.

Extensive consultation and engagement has occurred throughout the feasibility and concept planning works for the Gepps Cross Police Barracks relocation project. Notably, SAPOL has met with members of the Mounted Operations Unit and Dog Operations Unit for valuable project input. Consultation with various stakeholders will continue throughout construction works to service readiness. Communication around the site planning and logistics will be managed by SAPOL through SAPOL's communication team.

SAPOL confirms, after consultation with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Unit, that there are no native title implications over the site area. Additionally, after consultation with the Department for Environment and Water, SAPOL confirms that there are no local heritage places on the site.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Gepps Cross South Australia Police Barracks relocation project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Assistant Commissioner Noel Bamford from SA Police; Ms Karen Kochergen, the Director of Infrastructure and Assets at SA Police; Mr Scott Bayliss, Chief Services Officer, Department of

Treasury and Finance; and Mr John Harrison, the Director of Building Projects, Department for Infrastructure and Transport. I thank the witnesses for their time.

Based upon the evidence considered and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public work.

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (11:29):** I rise to speak on the 37<sup>th</sup> report of the Public Works Committee entitled 'South Australia Police barracks relocation project—Gepps Cross'. I do so in the context of the entire project of the relocation of the South Australia Police barracks from what is a heritage-listed facility at Thebarton. Due to a political decision, a decision by the government that they want to move the police away from that heritage area and build a women's and children's hospital on that site, the police have been forced to make these arrangements, and the Public Works Committee is going to bring us a series of reports, not just today but in coming sitting weeks.

I was especially interested in the report's noting that the vast majority of the work that the police unit does is within the CBD. The member, when presenting the report, mentioned the body of work that is done in Hindley Street and across the CBD by the mounted units. The question that can quite rightly be asked, and is being asked by the public, is: if this work is being done in the CBD, why are the units now being moved out to Gepps Cross? It is a fair distance, logistically, for those members of the mounted unit and their operations to mobilise and get into the CBD. This is why I think this report needs to be taken in the context of the entire project.

We know, through watching this project closely over the last number of months, that the first decisions were made and SAPOL directed the government that their preference was to be in a site close to the CBD, close to where their operations are, so that they could more readily be responsive to the needs for the mounted unit within the CBD. They made recommendations to the government about locations closer. I know there were discussions around Parklands sites the government started to advance on. They decided that politically the fallout might be too great for them to bear, so they decided to look in a different spot.

The report did note that there was consideration of a site near the Adelaide Airport, or multiple sites near the Adelaide Airport. The reasons that were used by the member in presenting the report were noise—who would have thought that being near an airport there would be plane noise—acid sulphate soils and concerns around PFAS. These are all aspects which, quite rightly, should have been considered, but it is my understanding that there was not even soil sampling work done to ascertain whether there was any PFAS within that proposed site at all.

The decision was rushed at the beginning. It was rushed for a politically expedient outcome, for the government to look at an Adelaide Airport site. That got too hard for them as well, and then they landed on this site on Grand Junction Road, multiple kilometres away from the CBD, the main operation area for the mounted unit.

As far as the decision-making on this project goes, the question that really needs to be asked is: what justification does the government have for making the site at Gepps Cross their preference? Why this site above other sites? So far, the uncertainty, the murkiness and the lack of transparency around this project have been very notable. I, for one, have been disappointed with the way that police and their operations have been ignored. The concerns of the mounted unit, the concerns which have been raised from multiple angles around the operational risk of a site at Gepps Cross, continue to be ignored, as does the impact that a relocation to Gepps Cross is going to have on the mounted unit as a whole.

I, as the shadow minister for police, have been hearing from a number of concerned members of the police force, and members of the community who support the police force, about this move to Gepps Cross and the uncertainty that it creates in terms of the ongoing aspects. As I said, the different aspects of this relocation project will be aerated through some of these Public Works Committee reports. I note that there have been other reports tabled that will be discussed later on.

With a site at Gepps Cross that is so far away, there is a necessity for there to be a city staging area for the police horses as well. This is adding extra layers of complication, extra layers of



operational challenge and extra layers, as has been mentioned by the member, of operational risk. I think that is unacceptable, because the police are telling the government what outcome they want and the police are being ignored.

I was interested to note that there was a mention, by the member, of value for money. This project has been given a price tag of \$90 million at this point, and that is only for the Gepps Cross site in current dollars. I will be interested and watching closely as to whether this project does indeed stick to the \$90 million or, as concerns around other projects have been aerated by the likes of the Auditor-General, there is a risk around escalation of costs and project blowouts because of the rushed nature of this project. I will have no surprises at all if it does indeed blow out further than the \$90 million that the government is putting out at the moment, and that is not even including the cost of any other parts of the relocation, whether that is the city staging location for the horses or for some of the other relocation costs.

This project has been one that has frustrated police. It has been foisted upon them, and their perspectives have not been listened to. I have been frustrated, as the shadow minister, that the lack of transparency that this government has shown throughout this project has left too many unanswered questions. The report that has been presented to us, looking at the Gepps Cross project, has enough questions in itself, let alone in the context of the overall project to relocate the South Australia Police barracks.

The government needs to make sure that the decision that is made for this relocation is the right one, not just for short-term political gain but the right one for medium and long-term outcomes for our community safety and for our police operations as well. When I hear about concerns about operational risk and when I hear about concerns about additional operational costs, I really do question whether this government is making these decisions for the right reasons or making them for political reasons—take it from me and take it from those police who are actually coming out publicly.

I note that the man in charge of the Police Association, Mark Carroll, was certainly not backward in coming forward to say that, on behalf of his members, how frustrated they were that they were being presented a solution that seemingly was a politically motivated one to try to shore up the seat of Adelaide, rather than one that is for the betterment of the police force and for community safety. Those are not my words; they are words directly from the Police Association.

In noting the 37<sup>th</sup> report of the Public Works Committee, about the relocation of the police barracks, the horses and the dogs to Gepps Cross, I want to continue to put on the record, from my perspective, my concerns about a relocation to a site that operationally is going to have additional risks for our community, as has been aerated through this project.

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE BARRACKS, 199 GRENFELL STREET, ADELAIDE**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:38):** I move:

That the 38<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled South Australia Police Barracks, 199 Grenfell Street, Adelaide, be noted.

South Australia Police (SAPOL) proposes to relocate several SAPOL functions currently located at the Thebarton Police Barracks to leased premises at 199 Grenfell Street, Adelaide to enable the construction of the new Women's and Children's Hospital announced by the state government in September 2022.

Thebarton Police Barracks is a specialist multifunctional site and its functions are not replicated or accommodated at any other police site in the state. It is critical to maintain these functions and services located at the Thebarton barracks to ensure continuity of emergency service provision for the South Australian public.

This project proposes to relocate 252 personnel from the following operational branches to the Grenfell Street site: Police Security Services Branch, the Security Advice Section, the Special Operations Support Branch Unit, and the Police Operations Centre. The relocation will enable the

exit of the multiple divisions from the Thebarton barracks and incorporates operational policing infrastructure over five floors of the new premises, providing contemporary accommodation, technology and facilities to support ongoing services to the community. The specialised operational fit-out will allow critical emergency management response services to support core obligations of SAPOL and the South Australian government in an efficient and sustainable manner.

When considering the relocation of the SAPOL branches, several commercial options were considered in consultation with Renewal SA and the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT). SAPOL endeavoured to locate the best match for accommodation requirements and adaptability of the layout for operational fit-outs, the quality of infrastructure, location match and operational co-location of units. SAPOL undertook an internal review of their existing portfolio of vacant committed space but determined there was no suitable infrastructure to accommodate the group's relocation due to SAPOL's current accommodation portfolio being at tight capacity.

Additionally, DIT explored other vacant committed government space to match the SAPOL requirements and Renewal SA was consulted to undertake land searches for a permanent-owned option, with no suitable outcomes. Expression of interest campaigns were launched for suitable temporary lease premise options for the commercial property markets in October and November 2022 and again in January 2023. Ultimately, after consultation and assessments, it was determined that securing 199 Grenfell Street and undertaking refurbishments to accommodate the policing functions was the most suitable option of those available on the market.

The site was also selected as an appropriate police headquarters operations centre because it has infrastructure disaster resilience and existing critical IT infrastructure that can be leveraged, resulting in saving costs. SAPOL's internal Security Advice Section has cleared the site as an acceptable premise for policing operations.

SAPOL have advised the project is in the final stages of the procurement process, with construction to begin shortly after this has been finalised. The works will be delivered in a staged manner, which will provide timely relocation prior to construction and significant preparatory works for the new Women's and Children's Hospital. Delivery of the project will follow procurement and management policies as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities.

SAPOL, DIT, the Department of Treasury and Finance and the associated consultant team have established project control and steering groups to assist in project management and will ensure regular reviews of design, documentation and construction processes. There will also be an establishment of a cost plan to include management of project costs and development of formal communication channels between end users, stakeholders and SAPOL. These initiatives endeavour to ensure the government requirements are understood and achieved throughout the course of the project.

SAPOL recognises the importance of ecologically sustainable development principles and reports that it has adopted the key environmental objectives and performance criteria in the design and delivery of the project. SAPOL committed to providing facilities with good environmental qualities to achieve good value-for-money solutions, providing a positive workplace, reducing energy and water consumption and minimising recurrent costs associated with maintaining and operating the facility. The Department for Environment and Water has assessed and approved the submission against the ecologically sustainable development guide note for planning design and delivery.

SAPOL is aware of various operational risks of failing to achieve successful delivery of the project. There is the risk of a major impairment to SAPOL's operational capacity resulting from the loss of this asset. As a result, SAPOL will apply a risk management policy and framework over the course of the project. DIT will also employ their mandated risk project management approach in conjunction with SAPOL's policies.

Due to the fast-track nature of these works, there are risks of budget overruns and design outcomes. To mitigate these risks, a multigovernance framework is in place to ensure a value-for-money outcome is reached, and design reviews will be undertaken at appropriate stages with experienced stakeholders and specialist consultants. Project governance structures have been established to ensure there is appropriate oversight and risk management during planning and delivery stages.

Extensive consultation and engagement have occurred throughout the feasibility and concept planning works for this SAPOL police barracks relocation project. Consultation with various stakeholders will continue throughout the life cycle of the project. The required communication around site planning and the logistics will be managed by SAPOL through SAPOL's communication team.

SAPOL confirms after consultation with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Aboriginal Affairs Reconciliation unit that there are no native title implications over the site area. After consultation with the Department for Environment and Water, SAPOL confirms there are no local heritage places on the site.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the South Australia Police Barracks, 199 Grenfell Street, Adelaide project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Assistant Commissioner Noel Bamford from SA Police; Ms Karen Kochergen, Director of Infrastructure and Assets, SA Police; Mr Scott Bayliss, Chief Services Officer, Department of Treasury and Finance; and Mr John Harrison, Director of Building Projects, Department for Infrastructure and Transport. I thank the witnesses for their time.

Based upon the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public work.

Motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE BARRACKS SPECIALIST INVESTIGATIONS UNIT RELOCATION**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:45):** I move:

That the 39<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled 'South Australia Police Barracks Specialist Investigations Unit relocation project', be noted.

South Australia Police, or SAPOL, proposes to relocate the Specialist Investigations Unit that is currently located at the Thebarton Police Barracks to a leased premise following the completion of associated fit-out works and relevant security measures.

The unit will be co-located with another SAPOL function to provide a secure fit-for-purpose SAPOL leased facility and will allow works to proceed with the construction of the new Women's and Children's Hospital announced by the state government in September 2022. This initiative will support SAPOL's Our Strategy 2030: Safer Communities, by ensuring prompt and effective service delivery, maintaining a visible police presence in the community, reassuring the public and ensuring resources are deployed to emergencies and events where required.

The Thebarton Police Barracks is a multifunctional site, with its function not replicated or accommodated at any other police site. It is critical to ensure these services are relocated at the earliest opportunity to ensure continuity of policing services provision for the South Australian public. The relocation of the specialist unit will provide contemporary accommodation, technology and facilities to support ongoing services to the community and will deliver specialised operational fit-out works at the site. Importantly, the project will enable the continuation of critical operational policing services to support core obligations of SAPOL and the government of South Australia.

The Specialist Investigations Unit is responsible for targeting unique persons of interest and is an attractive target for criminals, requiring increased security measures. These increased security measures for the building and staff have been at the forefront of determining the location, function and design of the unit. These measures ensure the safety of SAPOL personnel and mitigate the risk of the unit operations being disrupted by persons of interest.

SAPOL confirms that several commercial sites were considered in consultation with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, or DIT, and Renewal SA to accommodate the unit's relocation. An option of existing infrastructure already leased by SAPOL was identified as a suitable location to maximise occupancy of the facility. The site has attached office accommodation that has been deemed suitable to accommodate a permanent site for the Specialist Investigations Unit, with SAPOL currently in the process of documenting a further 10-year lease from September 2024.

The project delivery will be managed by DIT to ensure SAPOL's requirement of fit-for-purpose infrastructure is achieved. This will maintain SAPOL's capability to respond to ever-changing and increasing threats to public safety and security. Robust project management processes will establish a cost plan, schedule regular reviews of design, comply with documentation and construction progress and will ensure compliance with legislative requirements of the Development Act 1993.

SAPOL recognises the importance of ecologically sustainable development principles and reports that key environmental objectives and performance criteria are adopted in the design and delivery of the project, with SAPOL committed to providing facilities with good environmental qualities to achieve good value-for-money solutions, providing a positive workplace, reducing energy and water consumption, and minimising recurrent costs associated with maintaining and operating the facility.

The Department for Environment and Water has assessed and approved the submission against the Ecologically Sustainable Development guide note for planning design and delivery. SAPOL is aware of various operational risks associated with the project and states that failing to achieve successful project delivery would result in a major impairment of SAPOL's operational capabilities. SAPOL will employ its risk management policy and framework over the course of the project in conjunction with DIT's mandated risk management approach.

The project management by governing bodies at SAPOL and DIT will be conducted through a five-step infrastructure planning and delivery framework. This multiagency governance framework is in place to mitigate risks, ensure a value-for-money outcome is achieved and ensure that early contractor involvement is undertaken to develop realistic schedules. The governance structure also ensures there is appropriate oversight and risk management during the planning and delivery stages.

Extensive consultation and engagement has occurred throughout the feasibility and concept planning works for this relocation project. Notably, the project team has undertaken user group consultation with individuals who have firsthand experience and service requirements to be involved in developing facility concepts and design detail. This consultation with various stakeholders will continue throughout construction works to service readiness. Furthermore, all required communication around the site planning and logistics will be managed by SAPOL through SAPOL's communication team.

SAPOL confirms after consultation with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation unit that there are no native title implications over the site area. After consultation with the Department for Environment and Water, SAPOL confirms there are no local heritage places on the site.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the South Australia Police Barracks Specialist Investigations Unit relocation project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Assistant Commissioner Noel Bamford, SA Police; Ms Karen Kochergen, Director, Infrastructure and Assets, SA Police; Mr Scott Bayliss, Chief Services Officer, Department of Treasury and Finance; and Mr John Harrison, Director Building Projects, Department for Infrastructure and Transport. I thank the witnesses for their time.

Based upon the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public work.

Motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:51):** I move:

That the 40<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled 2022-23 Annual Report, be noted.

Although the Public Works Committee has the power to inquire into any public work, the main work of the committee is to consider and report on public works projects with a construction value exceeding \$4 million (excluding GST) undertaken by or on behalf of the state government.

For the 2022-23 year, the committee considered and reported on 31 public works projects. While the committee resolved to determine on an individual basis if oral evidence was heard with respect to referrals in the \$4 million but less than \$15 million range and automatically hold hearings for project referrals with a value over \$15 million, there was only one project the committee did not hold a public hearing for.

Additionally, pursuant to section 16(1)(c) of the Parliamentary Committees Act, the committee tabled two inquiry reports in the reporting period which the Fifty-Fourth Parliament Public Works Committee resolved to inquire into. These reports included the north-south corridor tunnels project to evaluate the Department for Infrastructure and Transport's processes for effectiveness and consideration of community impact on this project and the intersection works and compulsory acquisition of five intersection upgrades across Adelaide. I thank the committee members for their input into these reports even though the inquiries themselves were not undertaken by the current members of the committee.

During the reporting period, 13 meetings were held with 94 witnesses appearing before the committee. The 31 projects were for a range of public works, including numerous Department for Health and Wellbeing election commitments, SA Water projects and major transport-related infrastructure referred from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport.

Overall, 10 referrals were provided by the Department for Health and Wellbeing, seven were referred from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, three were referred from the Department for Environment and Water and SA Water respectively, two were referred from the Department for Education and one was referred from the Department for Correctional Services, the South Australian State Emergency Service, Renewal SA, the Office for Recreation and Sport, SA Police and the Courts Administration Authority respectively. The proposed construction values ranged from \$5.2 million for a new State Emergency Service unit in Noarlunga to \$202 million to construct the bypass from the Sturt Highway at Truro.

The workload of the committee varies over the course of the year, and a common observation is that a greater number of projects are considered in the second half of the calendar year. A further observation is that there has been an increase in the committee workload which is influenced by, firstly, a greater number of projects captured by the \$4 million threshold due to inflation and the rising costs of construction materials and, secondly, public-private partnership projects being explicitly included in the jurisdiction of the committee and the committee electing to hold public hearings for all projects that have been referred.

In addition to considering and reporting on project proposals, the committee continued to monitor the progress of existing projects through the quarterly reporting process. At the end of this financial year, the committee continued to review and monitor over 80 ongoing public works. I would like to thank all witnesses who have presented to the committee and other departmental and agency staff who have provided us with a high standard of referral documentation for the committee to consider. I will not take the opportunity to name all witnesses who appeared before the committee.

For local members who have appeared before the committee and provided submissions regarding the projects in their electorates, I thank them for their valuable contributions. I also thank my fellow committee members, the member for King, the member for Elder, the member for Schubert and the member for Hartley. I thank them for their dedication, robust discussion and scrutiny of projects, and for operating in an open and accountable manner. Finally, I would like to thank the secretariat staff of the committee, currently Ms Melissa Campaniello, the parliamentary officer, and Ms Jessica Watson, the research officer, who have supported the committee and ensured that we met our statutory obligations in a timely manner. I recommend that the report be noted by the house.

Motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: PIMPALA PRIMARY SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:56):** I move:

That the 41<sup>st</sup> report of the committee, entitled Pimpala Primary School Redevelopment, be noted.

The Department for Education proposes to redevelop the aged Pimpala Primary School facilities located on Vanstone Avenue at Morphett Vale within the City of Onkaparinga. This project will provide modern education accommodation, comply with legislative requirements and deliver the department's benchmark accommodation for students in a primary school.

New flexible and contemporary learning areas will be provided through the construction of two new buildings with general learning areas, serviced learning areas and student amenities, as well as new administration facilities delivered through the construction of a dedicated administration building. A large portion of existing infrastructure will be demolished to eliminate asbestos-containing materials and remove facilities that are past their functional life and which require extensive maintenance.

The redevelopment will incorporate the existing out-of-school-hours care site and Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, which are strong programs offered by the school and will remain operational during construction. Landscaping will encourage open learning and flexibility between spaces, with the creation of an internal courtyard encompassing a learning garden and water play area to create a focal point for the school and surrounding classrooms. The redevelopment will result in a total school enrolment capacity of 336 places.

The capital cost of the redevelopment is \$15 million and will be funded through the department's existing resources. Construction is expected to commence early next year, with practical completion in September 2025. Key aims of the project include:

- providing new modern and environmentally sustainable facilities with new technology to support contemporary teaching and learning;
- developing creative, flexible learning spaces to enhance student engagement and allow collaborative teaching practices;
- providing contemporary administrative spaces;
- demolishing aged accommodation; and
- improving street presence and the school's connectivity to the community by creating a focal point entrance visible from Vanstone Avenue.

Three options were considered in the development of the project: option 1, do nothing; option 2, build a completely new school; and option 3, redevelop and construct new facilities on the Pimpala Primary School site. Options 1 and 2 were discounted and option 3 was adopted by the department.

The department is aware of potential risks to staff and students being present while redevelopment works are underway and will ensure that controlling entry and securing the site are construction issues that will be strategically addressed. The department also notes that site soil conditions are highly reactive and will ensure that appropriate footing and paving design, as well as appropriate landscape design, are implemented to avoid risks to staff and students.

Extensive engagement and consultation have occurred, with the school principal, governing council, school staff and the education director all endorsing the redevelopment project. Consultation with the governing council and staff at each stage of the project has ensured that there has been direct representation for all stages of project development. I would like to thank all those who gave evidence to the committee, and I thank the witnesses who came to the committee for their time.

Based upon the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public work.

Motion carried.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** Sir, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

*A quorum having been formed:*

*Bills***HYDROGEN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY BILL***Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill with the amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

- No. 1. Clause 4, page 11, after line 14 [clause 4(1), definition of *owner* of land]—After paragraph (f) insert:
- (fa) the holder of an aquaculture lease or aquaculture licence under the *Aquaculture Act 2001*;  
or
- No. 2. Clause 73, page 58, after line 34—After subclause (9) insert:
- (10) In this section—  
prescribed body means—
    - (a) the Minister to whom the administration of the *Aquaculture Act 2001* is committed; and
    - (b) the Minister to whom the administration of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* is committed; and
    - (c) the Minister to whom the administration of the *Livestock Act 1997* is committed; and
    - (d) any other body prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this definition.
- No. 3. New clause, page 63, after line 28—Insert:
- 79A—Compensation for material diminishment of rights
- (1) Subject to this section, a person who holds a relevant authority is entitled to receive compensation from a licensee for any loss suffered by them in consequence of authorised operations that have materially diminished the rights of that person (and the onus of proving this matter is on that person).
  - (2) The amount of compensation under subsection (1) is to be determined by agreement between the person who holds the relevant authority and the licensee, or in default of agreement, by the ERD Court.
  - (3) For the purposes of subsection (1), authorised operations will not be taken to have materially diminished the rights of a person who holds a relevant authority merely because—
    - (a) those operations were undertaken on an area of land on which the holder of the relevant authority had a right to undertake activities pursuant to that authority; and
    - (b) of such matters of a kind prescribed by the regulations.
  - (4) Regulations made for the purposes of this section may prescribe—
    - (a) the matters to which a person or the ERD Court (as the case may be) must have regard in determining whether or not there has been material diminishment of the rights of a person who holds a relevant authority; and
    - (b) the matters that may be taken into account in assessing the amount of compensation payable to a person under this section; and
    - (c) limitations on the amount of compensation payable to a person under this section, including limitations that may apply if the person is entitled to receive compensation under another provision of this Act or any other Act or law.
  - (5) In this section—  
relevant authority means an authority under the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*.

Consideration in committee.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

**Mr PATTERSON:** Just briefly, I note that the amendments that have come down are not all the amendments moved in the other place; certainly, those moved by the Hon. Ms Centofanti replicated some of the amendments that we tried to move here in this house. They had high merit, and were about listening to concerns stakeholders—predominantly landowners and pastoralists—had about ensuring they were adequately consulted with.

The information given to them was that their concerns would be addressed by regulation. We did try to put those concerns legislatively, but we accept the government's commitment that they will be handled via regulation. There were some real concerns around making sure stakeholders were consulted properly and making sure they were able to droughtproof their properties as well; significantly, for the purpose of the special enterprise licence, to make sure that the rights of freehold landowners are in no way diminished. Having said that, the amendments before us were supported in the upper house, and they will be supported here too.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Despite the best efforts of the Liberal Party and the Greens, this bill is now about to pass both houses of parliament. I thank members in the upper house for their support ultimately. I thank the Hon. Robert Simms and the Hon. Tammy Franks for their work. I thank in particular the crossbench—the Hon. Connie Bonaros, the Hon. Frank Pangallo and the Hon. Sarah Game—for the work they did to help facilitate the passage of this legislation. This will regulate the greatest expansion of renewable energy in South Australia's history, and those who attempted to delay it are on the wrong side of history.

Motion carried.

## **ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY BILL**

### *Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the amendments made by the House of Assembly without any amendment.

### *Parliamentary Procedure*

## **SITTINGS AND BUSINESS**

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (12:05):** I move:

That for the remainder of the session, sessional orders be adopted so as to provide that—

Private Members' Statements

At the conclusion of the grievance debate on Tuesdays and Wednesday, the Speaker may ask if there are any private members' statements. Up to four private member statements may be made at this time. When called on by the Speaker, a member (including a parliamentary secretary), but not a minister may make a statement for no longer than 90 seconds.

Private Members Business: Other Motions Notice not moved

If a notice of motion for Private Members Business Other Motions appears on the *Notice Paper* for 12 sitting days without being moved, it is withdrawn from the *Notice Paper*.

Postponement and Withdrawal of Notice of Motion Private Members Other Motions

Any Notice of Motion Other Motion to be moved by a private member that has not been disposed of when the time for consideration of that notice expires is set down (without any question being put) as a notice of motion for consideration on the next sitting day on which Private Members' Business Other Motions would normally have precedence, but if at that time the member in whose name the motion stands requests the Clerk at the table to do so, the Clerk sets that notice of motion down for some other day nominated by the member, or withdraws the notice of motion.

A member if duly requested may request the Clerk to set a notice of motion down for some other day or withdraw a notice of motion for a member in whose name the motion stands by putting the name of the member in whose name the motion stands in addition to their own and delivering the request in writing to the Clerk at the table at the time for consideration of Notices of Motion Other Motions expires.

I look forward to its speedy passage to help deliberations of this house run a lot more smoothly and allow greater democratic expression by members in the house.



Motion carried.

*Bills*

**SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRATION (COMMENCEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (12:07):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am really proud to bring to the house today the Social Workers Registration (Commencement) Amendment Bill 2023. This bill amends the Social Workers Registration Act 2021. This act was assented to on 9 December 2021. As members would be aware, the introduction of a social worker registration scheme was supported by both major political parties in South Australia and also by the Greens. I do note the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Tammy Franks, who has been an absolute champion of this registration scheme and was instrumental in ensuring the bill progressed in our last parliament.

It was supported because the registration of social workers will have a range of very important benefits for the thousands of remarkable social workers in our state, those who seek to practise in South Australia and our broader community. A registration scheme will provide important opportunities for improved professional development, for the profession to collectively contemplate and engage in structured learning about the emerging issues that they tackle, improve public safety and create enhanced standards of conduct and accountability through the provision of accessible mechanisms for complaints and review.

Social workers are utterly extraordinary. They are highly committed professionals who choose to make a difference every single day with and for South Australian individuals, families and communities. It can be incredibly hard and sometimes heartbreaking work that they undertake, and I acknowledge their dedication.

It is often social workers who walk alongside people at their most difficult moments, helping them to traverse new pathways and helping them to know that they are not alone. As families contemplate increasingly complex and interconnected issues, we see social workers navigating new and, again, sometimes heartbreaking spaces, with compassion and determination.

When people are experiencing particular difficulties, there is often a range of different points of interaction through awareness of particular issues, prevention of particular issues, intervention, healing and recovery. At every single stage, at every point of interaction, social workers are the people who are there, lifting people up, enabling them to live, to move forward through their particular time of trouble with dignity and, again, with that sense of knowing that they are not alone.

Throughout my many years of work alongside social workers, and through proudly representing them through the Australian Services Union, I have had the pleasure of engaging with and, indeed, becoming great friends with many of the incredible people practising social work: in domestic violence shelters, youth organisations, homeless shelters, health, education, schools; and a range of other settings—in small and large charitable and non-government organisations.

I was thinking about a number of those people when I was contemplating this bill. I was thinking about the work that we did together to improve their pay and conditions through recognising the fundamental value of their work to our community, our state and our nation. I was also thinking about the need to ensure a sustainable social work workforce, to be there into the future with and for some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

I sat with so many social workers throughout this time and particularly through our landmark equal pay case and campaign. Over and over again, through that case and campaign I asked groups of social workers why they choose to do the work that they do. Without exception, 100 per cent of them articulated that they were social workers because they cared about people, because they wanted to empower people to live their best lives, to be there for them at their hardest moments, encouraging them to contemplate safer, brighter, hopeful futures.

When I discussed campaigning for equal pay with them—equal pay for the incredible work that they undertake—those workers generally decided to be part of the campaign for selfless reasons through a desire to ensure a sustainable workforce, able to be there with people for generations to come. Rarely did they become involved solely for improvements to pay. This desire to have a sustainable wage, and a sustainable sector, was also always about being able to stay in the community sector and keep supporting people needing a hand.

Within the Department for Child Protection, across the child protection and family support system, its government agencies and non-government organisation partners, thousands of social workers work with and for children and families who face deeply interconnected issues: poverty, intergenerational trauma, domestic violence, mental ill health, substance misuse—families who face some of the most challenging circumstances any of us in this place could possibly imagine.

These workers are absolutely extraordinary and, as I visit their workplaces across our state and hear about their experiences, I again hear stories of selflessness, compassion, relentless care and a desire to be that person who helps make people's and particularly children's and young people's lives better.

At our recent Child Protection and Family Support Symposium, we spoke together as a community at length about the importance of the social worker profession and the positive impact social workers have on children, young people and their families. Similar stories characterised the drive of the social workers engaged in health and wellbeing, disability, education and other settings.

I am so proud that South Australia is the first jurisdiction to progress the establishment of a registration scheme, and the rightful recognition it will bring to the social worker profession. Striving for high professional standards and rightful recognition in social work through this scheme speaks to our parliament's and our whole state's regard, very high regard, for the commitment and expertise involved in this profession.

To ensure that the foundations for the scheme are properly laid, prior to the commencement of this act, the bill that I bring to the house today seeks to defer the legislation's commencement date to 1 July 2025, unless fixed earlier by proclamation. This will ensure an operational registration scheme is in place at the time the act commences.

The Social Workers Registration (Commencement) Amendment Bill 2023 seeks simply to amend two sections of the Social Workers Registration Act 2021: firstly, to replace section 2 to defer commencement of the act to 1 July 2025, unless fixed earlier by proclamation; and, secondly, to make a consequential amendment to section 68 to ensure that the opportunity to create transitional provisions via regulation remains under the act as amended.

To establish, oversee, develop and implement this important scheme, I am absolutely thrilled that Professor Sarah Wendt—who is with us in the gallery today—a social work expert and someone who is regarded around the world with an incredibly strong national and international reputation, as of 18 September has commenced in the role as director for the social work registration scheme. Professor Wendt's extensive background and understanding in the areas of violence against women, child abuse and neglect, and social work practice will be absolutely integral to her role as director.

I have greatly admired and also been very inspired for many, many years by Professor Wendt's intellect, her deep commitment to growing awareness about the issues that our community confronts, and by her lifelong compassion for those our community most needs to walk alongside. Thank you, Professor Wendt.

Professor Wendt will be responsible for the development and implementation of the scheme, including recruiting staff, engaging a registrar, and facilitating the appointment of the board. As director, she will build on the stakeholder engagement work, including at a national level with the Australian Association of Social Workers and other jurisdictions, which has been undertaken by the Department for Child Protection over the past 12 to 18 months.

Professor Wendt will work closely with the many different representations of social work across government and non-government agencies to implement the scheme in a staged approach. The amendment bill will also make, as I mentioned, a consequential amendment to section 68 of the act to ensure that the transitional regulation-making power of the principal act is maintained in the

act as it is amended. These transitional provisions are important as they enable the registration scheme to be introduced using that staged approach, which was always intended under the scheme's implementation plan. Additionally, the staged implementation approach will prioritise systems and structures consistent with a future potential national approach.

I am very proud that to support the establishment of the scheme, the now government has committed \$4.7 million over four years. This funding sits alongside our increased investment into the child protection and family support system that equates to an additional \$372 million since coming to government. Investments into staffing include \$4 million for an additional seven full-time equivalent staff to undertake additional kinship care assessments. This will help to ensure that kinship placements are explored thoroughly for children and young people to support them in keeping strong connections with family, community and culture.

There has also been an additional \$2.1 million invested over four years to increase rightly the capacity for family reunification services to safely reunite children and young people with their family. I have also tasked the department to develop a child protection and family support sector workforce strategy to ensure that a strategic targeted approach is taken to the delivery of appropriate staffing levels across the sector.

As part of the development of this strategy, the department is engaging with stakeholders across child protection and family support, across different levels of government and internally to futureproof our workforce and provide strategies to address systemic workforce challenges experienced widely in modern human services organisations right around the globe. Our government has also committed funding to the recruitment of an extra 42 social workers with a focus on officers experiencing the highest demand. This commitment has rightly been realised.

I am really looking forward to the role that the registration scheme will have in further supporting the development of the workforce and the social worker profession. The preferred long-term approach in South Australia was and remains a national registration scheme, which I understand is also the preference of the Australian Association of Social Workers. Whilst insufficient cross-jurisdictional support exists for a national scheme at this moment, it will be important that the South Australian scheme is implemented in a way that positions it potentially for transition to a national approach at a later stage should one subsequently be adopted.

Again, social workers are extraordinarily committed professionals who work to make a difference every day with and for South Australian families and communities. It can be incredibly hard and heartbreaking work, and again I acknowledge social workers' deep commitment. This simple bill that we progress today ensures that an effective and appropriate foundation is laid for the scheme ahead of the commencement of the original act.

In closing, I thank all who have worked towards the progress of this bill, and particularly Alex from the Department for Child Protection for her work on developing it and progressing it today. I commend this bill to the chamber and seek leave to insert the explanation of clauses into *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

This clause is formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of *Social Workers Registration Act 2021*

###### 2—Substitution of section 2

This clause amends section 2 of the principal Act to disapply section 27(6) of the *Legislation Interpretation Act 2021* in relation to the commencement of the principal Act, the operation of which would have seen the Act automatically commencing on the second anniversary of its assent. Section 2 as amended will instead provide that the principal Act will commence on 1 July 2025, unless commenced earlier by proclamation.

###### 3—Amendment of section 68—Regulations and fee notices

This clause makes a consequential amendment to the transitional regulation making power in section 68 of the principal Act to reflect the amendment made by this measure.

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (12:24):** I rise to indicate that the opposition supports the bill. I will be the lead speaker and I will be brief. I just make the passing observation that we are here legislating and, sure, a bill that has the title Social Workers Registration (Commencement) Amendment Bill might present an occasion to talk about all the virtues of social workers and indeed the important work towards the implementation of the scheme.

But let's be really clear about it: it is passing risible that the minister stands here proud of introducing a bill whose sole purpose is to implement a delay of 18 months on the implementation of the scheme. That is the sole purpose of the bill. Let's just be plain about it.

Sometimes it is more edifying if the government comes into this place and says, 'Alright, we have encountered a few bumps in the road and we haven't really got to where we really meant to, and yes we've provided a bit of funding and we're still committed to what was laid out, very much driven by the former minister, Minister Sanderson in the Marshall Liberal government, and in the course of the work of the committee that was chaired by the Hon. Tammy Franks—

*The Hon. K.A. Hildyard interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The minister will stop interrupting.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I was proud to be—

*The Hon. K.A. Hildyard interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, you will have a chance to have your say.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I was proud to be a member of the committee that did that work, and I note that the minister has imparted upon the house this sort of I think what the minister has described in the past as a soliloquy in relation to social workers and the importance of the registration scheme, and all the rest of it. Let's face it, here we are: social workers, let alone anybody else who follows debate in this place, would be edified at least to understand that the whole purpose of us being here, contemplating this very brief bill, is to recognise that this has not occurred on time and that the government needs another 18 months in order to get it done.

In terms of the timetable that was set, what occurred over recent years—let's be clear—was a cooperative, committed process through what was a particularly thoroughgoing committee process that members might well have the opportunity to remind themselves of and which was engaging with social workers from both Australia and New Zealand and indeed comparing the work of social workers, including their registration schemes, throughout the world. As a member of that committee, I can just indicate to the house that that was important and thoroughgoing work to traverse the landscape to do something novel.

I am the first to recognise—again, let's just be clear and straightforward and merits driven—that we are doing something in South Australia that would benefit from being part of a national scheme. The national process is not there yet; we might have heard something about that from the minister if we were having some information about where we are at. The steps forward in South Australia to do this important work are not only supported by the opposition but, of course, the opposition when in government was very much at the lead. I share in recognising the—

*The Hon. K.A. Hildyard interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, I would prefer not to have to warn you or ask you to leave the chamber, okay?

**Mr TEAGUE:** I share in recognising the important work of the Hon. Tammy Franks MLC, and I was very glad to have the opportunity to work together with the Hon. Tammy Franks MLC on that committee, as I was—and rather unusually, too, I might say—to have a then minister participating as a member of the committee, so committed was Minister Sanderson to exploring this process.

Really and truly, we are all here, I hope, in a mature environment in which our job here in the parliament is to legislate. Okay, so if it is necessary to legislate for the delay, let's do it. We will

support it, and I am glad to hear that there has at least been, and I welcome, the appointment of Professor Wendt. That was welcome news, coming as it did just on 18 September this year.

There is no doubt about the leading credentials of Professor Wendt, and I think the involvement and the leadership of Professor Wendt in this space will be, I am sure, essential to ensuring we are not back here some time in 2025 saying, 'Hang on, it's still a bit too hard, and we're going to keep on delaying and deferring.'

I do not know what happens from here in terms of a debate on this bill. We might hear from government members coming along extolling the virtues of social workers and providing their observations about what social workers do and so on. Sure, take that opportunity. Of course, social workers do the most valuable and among the most challenging work in the community—absolutely.

But let's actually do them the service of an edifying process in terms of the parliament to say, 'We are going about the process of implementing a registration scheme; it has not happened yet. The government seeks an additional 18 months within which to do it. Let's keep a close eye on how that progresses.' I offer my assistance against the background of not only my responsibility as shadow minister but my relatively thoroughgoing involvement as a member of that particular committee.

Towards that end, I commend the speedy passage of the bill through this place and, much more importantly, the compliance with the timetable that this bill would now provide towards the implementation of a social workers registration scheme in this state.

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (12:30):** I rise to speak briefly to the Social Workers Registration (Commencement) Amendment Bill 2023. In doing so, I want to place on record some comments from a social worker who I was speaking to only last night. Gurpreet is a social worker, and she is currently completing her Master of Social Work. Gurpreet told me how pleased she is about the introduction of registration for social workers and how important it is that its implementation is thorough and that we get it right. It is fair to say that the bill before us today would ensure that this occurs.

The bill before us, the Social Workers Registration (Commencement) Amendment Bill 2023, seeks to amend two sections of the Social Workers Registration Act 2021. The first is to replace section 2 to defer a commencement of the act from 9 December 2023 to 1 July 2025, unless fixed earlier by proclamation. This will ensure an operational registration scheme is in place at the time the act commences. The second is to make a consequential amendment to section 68 to ensure that the opportunity to create transitional provisions via regulations remains under the act, as amended. This will enable the registration scheme to be implemented in a staged approach and prioritise systems and structures. In a nutshell, the amendments that form the bill before us will ensure that the necessary foundations are in place prior to the commencement of the act.

I am very supportive of the introduction of a social worker registration scheme for the benefits it will deliver—the benefits for clients of social workers and the benefits for the social workers themselves. We know that these include improved public safety, higher standards of conduct and accountability through the provision of accessible mechanisms for complaints and review, and improved professional development opportunities for people within the profession. To this end, the Malinauskas Labor government committed \$4.7 million to support the establishment and the introduction of the scheme.

We know that social workers have a significant role to play across many different settings, government agencies and the non-government sector. With more than 700 social workers, the Department for Child Protection is one of the biggest employers of social workers in South Australia.

Generally speaking, we can say that social workers are dedicated, hardworking professionals who, like many in our teaching workforce, take home with them the issues they deal with on a daily basis. They do not switch off when they reach home each day; although, when I was speaking to Gurpreet last night, she was talking to me about how that is included in some of their training. As part of her master's, they look at ways that social workers can deal with their ability to be able to—for mental health reasons, I suppose, more than anything—do that switching off.

We have heard from the minister that just a few weeks ago Professor Sarah Wendt, a social work expert with a strong national and international reputation, commenced in the role of director for

the social workers registration scheme. Professor Wendt is in the chamber with us here today. An academic at Flinders and the University of South Australia, and having previously practised as a social worker in the field of domestic and family violence, Professor Wendt certainly comes with great recommendations.

She has been a teacher of social work for more than a decade and has researched and been published on violence against women and children as well as social work practice. The professor's responsibility in her new role includes the development and implementation of the scheme, including a very important role recruiting staff, engaging the registrar and facilitating the appointment of a board.

I see this as similar to the way the Teachers Registration Board operates. Once established, the new social workers registration board will develop and maintain a social workers register and prepare and endorse codes of conduct, professional standards and ethical guidelines for registered social workers. I believe its introduction will be a very positive step towards a better future for our social workers and for their clients.

The newly appointed director will build on stakeholder engagement work, including at a national level with the Australian Association of Social Workers and other jurisdictions, which has been undertaken by the Department for Child Protection over the past 18 months. Timing changes will be managed by the Department for Child Protection in discussion with the Department of Treasury and Finance and will not, I understand, impact the budget.

Once again, this time through establishing a social workers registration scheme, our state of South Australia will be leading the nation on an important legislative change, one that has been a long time coming. We have heard that the Minister for Child Protection believes the social workers registration scheme will give the community more confidence in the critical role of social workers, reinforcing the framework for professional standards and ethics, and I could not agree more.

The preferred long-term approach in South Australia was and remains a national registration scheme, which I understand is also the preference of the Australian Association of Social Workers. Professor Wendt, I agree with you that the registration of social workers is an important next step in establishing respect, quality and professional identity in the community and that we need to make sure that this implementation is done on a very strong foundation. I commend the bill to the house.

**Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (12:36):** I, too, rise to speak to the Social Workers Registration (Commencement) Amendment Bill. Our social workers are incredible people: they work with and alongside some of our community's most vulnerable, and they do it because they care. They want to see people who need a leg up get the help they deserve, and they want to play their part in delivering positive change.

The benefits of the bill are wide reaching. The introduction of a social workers registration scheme will increase accountability of our social workers and hold them to a higher standard. That is not to say that their standards are not already exceptionally high, but when we take stock of the people requiring their services and consider their complex needs, the need for this legislation becomes apparent.

As it is in so many different fields, South Australia is again positioning itself as a leader, this time in the space of social worker registration. It is important that we get this right, and that is why this bill defers commencement of the social workers registration act to July 2025. South Australia's preferred long-term approach remains a national registration scheme, which also happens to be the preferred model of the Australian Association of Social Workers.

Right now, jurisdictional support for a national scheme does not exist, which in my view is unfortunate, but views change and they can change quite quickly. We need to be in a position to adapt should South Australia's leadership pave the way for the national scheme Australian social workers have been asking for. To ensure that our scheme is as agile as it needs to be requires time.

As we have heard today—and we are lucky to be joined by Professor Wendt in the gallery—we could not ask for a more qualified person to be leading us in this space. She will be responsible for leading the scheme's development and implementation. We have heard from three speakers already about her extensive experience and qualifications, so we are very grateful to have her on

board. As director of the social worker registration scheme, Professor Wendt will build on stakeholder engagement efforts undertaken by the Department for Child Protection over the past 18 months and draw on the funded implementation plan. On funding, the state government has committed \$4.7 million to support the establishment of the scheme in South Australia, which is occurring in a staged approach.

High on the priority list is the recruitment of a registrar and appointment of a board, which will again be overseen by Professor Wendt, along with putting in place the structures and systems consistent with any future national approach. Once appointed, the scheme's seven-member board will develop and maintain the social workers register and prepare and endorse codes of conduct for social workers.

Again, our social workers are exceptional and dedicated individuals. They provide a level of care and understanding where it is needed. They are tireless advocates for social justice. They are through and through professionals and they give back to their communities in ways that deserve far more recognition than they often garner.

When we speak about wanting to introduce new professional standards and increase accountability for the people working in this field, it is not because we do not trust them—far from it. It takes a special person to dedicate their professional life to lifting those around them, and I can say with some confidence that all of us on this side of the house have faith in the ability of our social workers to give that job their all.

I want every South Australian to have that same faith in the will and professionalism of our social workers. To have new standards in place and to have a board that reinforces those frameworks means there can be no doubt. I think Professor Wendt has put it best when she said that this is about improving our understanding of risk and protection for the people our social workers work for.

When we talk about social workers, we talk about members of one of the largest professional working groups in South Australia. The Department for Child Protection alone employs more than 700. Then you take into consideration workers positioned within other agencies, as well as in the non-government sector. It is a big job to oversee the introduction of a scheme this size, onboard each of these professionals and ensure compatibility with any future national scheme, but I am confident that we have the right person at the helm, and I am equally confident that we will build the right team around them.

As I touched on earlier, this scheme has the support of the Australian Association of Social Workers, the professional body for social workers in Australia. I would like to thank the association for working with both the state government and parliament to ensure delivery of the best possible social worker scheme, and I hope to see its advocacy continue in other jurisdictions in the future. Its advocacy dates back as far as 50 years, born out of a want to provide the public with the same confidence in their social workers that the association and I share.

Next on the Australian Association of Social Workers' agenda is a national registration scheme, which South Australia stands ready to support. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this process, including the Hon. Katrine Hildyard as our Minister for Child Protection, the Hon. Nat Cook, the Hon. Tammy Franks in the other place, the Australian Association of Social Workers and, most importantly, the social workers themselves. We would be a lesser state without all of your contributions. Thank you for all that you do. I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms CLANCY (Elder) (12:42):** I rise today in support of the Social Workers Registration (Commencement) Amendment Bill 2023. Assented to on 9 December 2021, the Social Workers Registration Act 2021 is due to commence on its two-year anniversary, on 9 September this year, as required under the legislation.

Social workers are extremely committed and qualified professionals, who every day will make a difference to the life of a South Australian and their family. Their work is crucial to disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community. The introduction of a social worker registration scheme will have a range of benefits, including introducing accessible mechanisms for complaints and review to promote higher standards of conduct and accountability, improved professional development opportunities, and greater public safety.

The bill before us today seeks to amend two sections of the Social Workers Registration Act 2021. Firstly, it will replace section 2 to defer commencement of the act to 1 July 2025, unless fixed earlier by proclamation. Secondly, it will make a consequential amendment to section 68 to ensure that the opportunity to create transitional provisions via regulation remains under the act as amended.

In September this year, Professor Sarah Wendt began in her role as director for the social work registration scheme. Professor Wendt is charged with the responsibility of developing and implementing the scheme, including recruiting staff, engaging a registrar and facilitating the appointment of a board, all of which will take time, and we want to ensure there is time to do it properly.

Professor Wendt is a social work expert with a strong national and international reputation, having worked at Flinders University from 2016 and my uni, the University of South Australia, before that, from 2006 to 2015. During this time she was a teacher of social work and a researcher and was published on violence against women and children as well as on social work practice.

Prior to her time as an academic, Professor Wendt practised as a social worker in the field of domestic and family violence. When I worked at Women's Safety Services SA (WSSSA), Sarah and her work were often mentioned in conversation and praised. As director, Professor Wendt will build upon the stakeholder engagement work—including at a national level with the Australian Association of Social Workers and other jurisdictions—that has been undertaken by the Department for Child Protection over the past 12 to 18 months. She will draw on the implementation plan that was finalised and funded as part of the 2022-23 Mid-Year Budget Review.

As the Minister for Child Protection outlined in introducing this bill, funding has been committed to the scheme and, outside of some timing changes across the out years, the delayed commencement of the act will not have a budget impact. Any timing changes will be managed by the Department for Child Protection in discussion with the Department of Treasury and Finance as part of the budget process.

We recognise the incredibly important work undertaken by social workers across a range of settings and agencies, both government and non-government, throughout South Australia, which is why we must ensure that the foundations of the social workers registration scheme are properly laid prior to the commencement of the act. By establishing this scheme, South Australia is leading the nation, and it is so important that we get this right the first time.

The preferred long-term approach in South Australia remains that it be a national registration scheme, which I understand is also the preference of the Australian Association of Social Workers. While there may be insufficient jurisdictional support for a national social workers registration scheme at this stage, it is still important that our scheme is implemented in a way that positions it for transition to a national approach, should one be adopted in the future. As I and others in this place have outlined, the introduction of a social workers registration scheme will provide a range of benefits to the sector. As a national leader in this space, it is important that we take the time to do things right.

In closing, I would like to thank the Minister for Child Protection and her team for their work in bringing these amendments to this place. I would like to thank every social worker in South Australia: thank you for your work in incredibly challenging environments, and thank you for choosing a path dedicated to supporting others. A special shout-out goes to my most favourite social worker of all, my incredible sister Kendra, who has been working with the Department for Child Protection for around 14 years now and is so deeply committed to her work. She inspires me every day, and it is she who inspired me to become a foster carer. I commend the bill to the house.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (12:47):** This is a really important piece of legislation. Along with the Minister for Child Protection, I have championed this cause in parliament for some time. As a registered nurse for decades, working in multidisciplinary and allied health teams, I have had the benefit of the pragmatic thinking, the practical approach and the problem-solving of social workers for decades. As a member of parliament, I am really determined to support, in any way we can, progressing the registration of social workers—acknowledging their profession in the way that we do with many other professions, making their skills quite portable and transportable and supporting the evidence-based nature of what they do.



The contribution I make will only be a short one because I have spoken about this in the chamber on many occasions. Sadly, I have spoken about this bill in another form during the period of our opposition, and I will unpack some of those issues in a moment. I want to say that I will not allow the member for Heysen, whose work I actually respect, to attempt to rewrite history here. The history of the social work bill is that it came out of a committee that we held during the last parliament. It was brought into this chamber—I worked really hard with the Hon. Tammy Franks from the other place to get that bill into this chamber—and it sat on the paper for ages.

The former member for Adelaide made no effort to contribute any commitment to act on this, to fund this, to progress this and, in fact, there was active obstruction of the passage of that bill and the implementation of social work registration. I will not linger on it but I just will not allow history to be manipulated or altered in any way.

I feel that, potentially, if the member for Heysen as minister in the previous government was the person who was responsible for that, maybe we would have got some action, but instead the member for Adelaide at the time, as Minister for Child Protection at that point, did nothing. It is a great shame and a disgrace that we are now here some three years later with the Minister for Child Protection, the Hon. Katrine Hildyard, now actually acting on this in our government. I think we will acknowledge that there was probably some support for it. I think there were good, productive conversations about it, but there just seemed to be a lot of hand-wringing and no real action.

It is great that this is happening now. The implementation of a registration scheme will provide numerous advantages and that will include enhanced public safety, elevated standards of conduct and also increased accountability. Additionally, it will create a much better professional development opportunity pathway for social workers and individuals within the social work profession. Those pathways and those benefits will be then shared amongst broader teams of workers working within the teams of social workers. There will be a lot of knock-on benefits in terms of what this bill will produce.

Social workers step in during critical periods to support clients who are often dealing with a spectrum of issues that affect their physical, their psychological, their social, their economic and broad wellbeing. Despite the crucial nature of social work, many social workers operate independently. Presently, social work functions as a self-regulated profession wherein professional standards are upheld, but there is a lack of enforceability around this. This framework will ensure that that can happen.

It has certainly been developed in a collegial and consultative way—again, over far too long a period—and there is great history to that, going back many governments, to whether or not this should be a federal scheme, or whether the states can do it. Frankly, I think everyone has lost patience. It just needs to happen and I am very glad that my colleague and friend the Minister for Child Protection is championing this cause.

I would like to celebrate two social workers who work amongst my services that I have the great privilege of overseeing as minister. As Minister for Human Services, many would be aware that we have the Department of Human Services portfolios that encapsulate a whole range of areas where I sum it up by saying people within those areas, without good policy and rigorous program evolution and delivery, become vulnerable.

That includes, obviously, people living with disability, it includes a range of people who live in poverty or who are subject to generational consequences of poverty, and also, there is a cohort that I work closely in partnership with the Minister for Child Protection on, and that is our child and family support services program. There are many other cost-of-living and support services and youth justice, as well as volunteers within our portfolio areas, but this social worker works in the child and family support service framework and is a warrior for the safety and betterment of children and families in our state and has been for many, many decades, and that is Kerry Beck.

Kerry Beck is an extraordinary, innovative thinker, has a way of being able to dig deeply through the layers in order to find practical solutions, is a mentor for many other people working in that service and others within DHS, and is a real ally for people living on the margins in our community who are struggling to keep their families together. This year Kerry Beck was awarded the Social Worker of the Year Award and I am constantly in awe of the work that she and others in our

department, DHS, do. Thank you, Kerry, for everything you do and will continue to do as we increase what we invest in and how we improve the services for children and families in South Australia.

The other part to my portfolio is the social housing and homelessness portfolio and one of those very important pieces is the leadership structure we have that is helping us to turn around the culture and delivery of services within the South Australian Housing Authority. It is no coincidence—and I have spoken about it in this place—that there was a shocking loss of 20 per cent of the staff over the previous four years between 2018 and 2022. They were very committed and good people who knew and dealt with many of our tenants over the time. It led to a blowout in the numbers of tenancies per housing officer and tenancy practitioner.

We also have a very limited number now of social workers working in our service, but it is no coincidence that turning around and finding some practical solutions to complex tenancy—often including families and children—is being led from the top by the Presiding Member of the Housing Trust Board, Mary Patetsos.

Mary Patetsos has been a warrior for change, a warrior for advocacy and a champion for people who need an advocate in many areas for decades. Some people might not know that her primary qualification is as a social worker, majoring in psychology. She has worked as a lead social worker in many areas, but one of them is aged care and ageing, which has in itself provided her with the skills and a platform to lead aged-care services but also now the skills and the capacity to be a leader in the South Australian Housing Authority as we deal with some of the most complex tenants and families.

It goes without saying that most of our tenants have no problem, they are great tenants, but there is a small number who really need the support. Mary, as a leader, as a social worker, is able to deliver on some of these policy things that we are changing together. This year Mary was recognised with a Member of the Order of Australia, and I thank her for that.

I wish Professor Sarah Wendt all the best for success as the first director of the scheme. Her expertise will be absolutely valuable. I also just want to take 30 seconds to pay tribute to Dr Anita Phillips who passed away earlier this year. She was an active lobbyist for social worker registration and I was lucky enough to meet her and grow a friendship with her during her trips to South Australia. She is a past MP of the Queensland parliament and former Premier Beattie in a tribute to her said:

Anita was a powerful advocate for the people of Thuringowa and a trail blazer for women in Queensland politics at a time in Queensland when both were a challenge. She was a key part of the Labor team in 2001. Her strength of character and determination were admired by both sides of politics.

I admired her strength of character and her determination. I will miss our text messages. I commend the bill to the house.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Were you on your feet, member for Giles? I missed that, sorry.

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (12:59):** Yes, I was on my feet. I was just going to add a few short words but it looks like they might indeed be very short. I do commend this bill and I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

*Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00.*

#### *Parliamentary Procedure*

#### **PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Deputy Premier (Hon. S.E. Close) on behalf of the Premier (Hon. P.B. Malinauskas)—

Remuneration Tribunal—

Reimbursement of Expenses Applicable to the Electorate of Mawson—Travel to and from Kangaroo Island by Ferry and Aircraft,

2023 Review of Determination No. 6 of 2023

Review of reimbursement of Expenses Applicable to the Electorate of Mawson—  
Travel to and from Kangaroo Island by Ferry and Aircraft,  
2023 Review of Report No. 6 of 2023

By the Deputy Premier (Hon. S.E. Close)—

Annual Reports 2022-23—  
Ombudsman SA—Audit of compliance with the Criminal Law  
(Forensic Procedures) Act 2007  
Police Act 1998—Review under Section 74A  
Serious and Organised Crime (Unexplained Wealth) Act 2009—  
Review under Section 34(1)

By the Treasurer (Hon. S.C. Mullighan)—

Veterinary Surgeons Board of South Australia—Annual Report 2022-23

By the Minister for Health and Wellbeing (Hon. C.J. Picton)—

National Health and Medical Research Council—Ethical guidelines on the use of assisted  
reproductive technology in clinical practice and research.  
Report 2017 (updated 2023)  
Annual Reports 2022-23—  
Pharmacy Regulation Authority  
Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board

By the Minister for Education, Training and Skills (Hon. B.I. Boyer)—

Annual Reports 2022-23—  
Aboriginal Children and Young People, South Australian Commissioner for  
Carclew Inc.  
Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee  
Children and Young People, Office of the South Australian Commissioner for  
Construction Industry Training Board  
Education Standards Board (Education and Early Childhood Services Registration  
and Standards Board of South Australia)  
History Trust of South Australia  
Skills Commission, South Australian  
TAFE SA

By the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services (Hon. J.K. Szakacs)—

Official Visitor Annual Reports 2022-23—  
Aaron Cooke  
Joanne Battersby  
La Nina Clayton  
Lauren Messer  
Timothy Fitzgerald  
Tristan Colmer

## VISITORS

**The SPEAKER:** I recognise the presence in the gallery today of members of the Combined Probus Club of Lockleys, guests of the member for Colton.

*Question Time***INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAM**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:02):** My question is to the Acting Premier. When did the Acting Premier find out about the results of the federal government's 90-day review into the Infrastructure Investment Program? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** This morning, the federal government revealed about \$500 million of funding is to be cut from the South Australian infrastructure project list, including the Truro freight route, Hahndorf access upgrades, the Main South Road productivity package, Old Belair Road upgrade at Mitcham and the Onkaparinga Valley Road upgrade at Nairne.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister has the call.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:03):** I note the Leader of the Opposition did not mention the \$2.7 billion just put into South Australia. However, the state government received confirmation today of the commonwealth government's plans. The commonwealth government plans obviously are disappointing. We had money budgeted for all these projects. We were prepared to do our bit. We had done the detailed design work, we were doing more detailed design work, and in some cases we had even compulsorily acquired properties.

I know this is bitterly disappointing for some communities, especially those in your community, sir. But I do point out that the Onkaparinga Valley Road works, which were budgeted for by the commonwealth government for just over \$2 million, I understand from estimates from my department that those works could have been nearly 10 times the cost, which makes you think members opposite were telling people that they could deliver projects for a fraction of the cost.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Hartley! Member for Elder!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Perhaps—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —next time, members opposite, rather than just plonking money and giving it a name, will actually do the detailed design work, will actually—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hartley is warned.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** I think those references to leashes are—you're better than that. I am disappointed; these are important projects. The Hahndorf township improvements would have seen upgrading of the Mount Barker interchange, a very important piece of work. We would have seen an upgrading of the Verdun interchange, a very important piece of work. You would have seen an extension to the Pioneer Women's Trail. You would have seen an updated car park facility at Verdun.

At Truro, sir, you would have seen some very good works done, that were funded 80-20, although I do point out that I have been lobbied by Mr Pasin, and members of this house on the opposition benches, who called for us to actually build a dual-lane highway rather than having a single carriageway to do it. I point out that the \$202 million allocated to the Truro bypass project would have been insufficient to do the works, as found by the commonwealth's infrastructure review.

Here it is again: good infrastructure works that need to be done that are important for this state are underfunded to try to get the announcement value, to go out there and say, politically: here is the benefit for the Marshall government to have this announcement, not put enough money in, not do the detailed design work, and then—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Morialta!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —afterwards say, 'Well, how dare you come up with problems?'

*The Hon. J.A.W. Gardner interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Morialta is warned.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Newland!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Our view on these cuts is they are disappointing. I have made that known to the commonwealth government. I have said that publicly just now alongside the Treasurer, when we voiced our disappointment, but, at the same time, we voiced our gratitude for \$2.7 billion.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAM

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:07):** My question is again to the Acting Premier. Can the Acting Premier confirm that without federal funding these projects will not proceed?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:07):** Yes. They will not proceed, and the question is: if the opposition think that these projects are important, commit to them today.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** The shadow treasurer interjects, 'What about the election commitments?' The three overtaking lanes that we promised at the last election will be completed—they will be completed.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** This is a commonwealth overtaking lane work that has been cancelled, not ours. Every election commitment we made, every commitment that the commonwealth government made at the last election, they will be honoured. No election commitments—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —will be broken, but I look forward to members opposite getting up today and committing to all the projects that have been cut.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Florey! I call the member for Hartley.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAM

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley) (14:08):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Has the minister spoken to federal infrastructure minister Catherine King today and, if so, what was the nature of those discussions?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Morialta! The member for Newland! The member for Wright!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** The last conversation I had with Catherine King was last night at about 7 o'clock. Today, you might have noticed, she has been busy in the media.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Can you imagine it? Can you imagine Steven Marshall asking about people not taking your calls?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Sorry, sir. I've referred to the—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —former Premier by his name. I shouldn't have done that. I should refer to him by his official title: the job applicant—I'm sorry, sir.

**An honourable member:** Applicant B.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Applicant B.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is a point of order from the member for Morialta.

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Chaffey, you are warned. Your colleague is seeking the attention of the chair. Member for Morialta.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Thank you, sir. The minister is trying to make a mockery of the house. Standing orders and conventions—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —apply even to the member for West Torrens.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I am not sure that making a 'mockery of the house' actually appears anywhere in the standing orders, but I assume it is standing order 98.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The convention about reference to members by titles.

**The SPEAKER:** Very well.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, you appear to be inviting a good deal of interjection. I remind you of the standing orders in total.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Thank you, sir. I speak to the federal minister regularly. I have not spoken to her today. I spoke to her last night.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** 'Unbelievable', he says.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** The state government—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —will consider all the changes made—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Elizabeth! Member for Newland!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —by the commonwealth government. We are disappointed, in the cuts made by the commonwealth government. They are for them to explain, not the South Australian government. We stand ready with our funding packages, but I suspect that the commonwealth government will not re-engage in these projects under the current time lines. Now, I think the Truro bypass has tremendous value. I think all these projects have tremendous value, but we had a funding partner and we have lost our funding partner. If members opposite are saying that we should do all these projects on our own—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —that takes money away from Health—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —takes money away from Education, takes money away—

*The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Hartley! The member for Hartley is warned.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —from policing and emergency services. We need to make sure that we have funding partners for this important infrastructure, because the benefits that a lot of these projects derive are not just for South Australia but there are national benefits, and because there are national benefits there should be, of course, a national contribution. And while the national government is removing its contribution it is not fair of the opposition to be saying that the South Australian taxpayer should pick up all that burden, because if you do that, if all the states did that every single time, you would see the commonwealth government—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —continually cut programs in the hope that state governments would pick up the slack. Now, I know that members opposite—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —aren't really that interested—

*Mr Patterson interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Morphet!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —in making sure that South Australia gets its fair share, whether its GST or any other form of income, but we are.

*The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Hartley!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** We are. We are not going to step in here and let the commonwealth get away with any of these cuts.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Hartley.

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAM**

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley) (14:12):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister then advise whether state funding that was allocated under the Infrastructure Investment Program will be reallocated and, if so, where to? With leave of yourself, sir, and the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA:** The federal infrastructure minister announced that the commonwealth will not fund the Hahndorf township improvements, the Main South Road productivity package, the Old Belair Road upgrade, Onkaparinga Valley Road, Tiers Road, the Nairne Road intersection upgrade and the Truro freight rail, totalling millions of dollars of unallocated South Australian taxpayer money.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:13):** All those decisions will be made through a collegiate process through the cabinet process and the budget process. Now, what we will do is we will, of course, look very carefully at what the commonwealth government has done today. We welcome the \$2.7 billion worth of extra funding for the north-south corridor, which will cover the actual costs of building rather than the pretend number—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —of \$1.9 billion.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** When it comes to these numbers, the truth is this: our contributions to the projects that have been cancelled have been budgeted for. We are ready to go.

*Mr Cowdrey interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Colton!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** We have done detailed design work. We will be expecting reimbursement, of course, on money that we have expended on these projects, and the commonwealth government has agreed to that. What we will do now through the budget process is to see how to allocate those resources to make sure that the South Australian public gets a good bang for its buck when it comes to the allocation of that money.

**The Hon. V.A. Tarzia:** You've wasted 18 months.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hartley is warned for a second time.

#### **HUNTER CLASS FRIGATE PROGRAM**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:14):** My question is to the Minister for Defence and Space Industries. Has the minister sought and received assurances from the federal Minister for Defence that nine Hunter class frigates will be built at Osborne?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (14:14):** I think this has been canvassed extensively in this chamber. We are awaiting the federal government response to the surface ship review. Both the Premier and I have urged the Deputy Prime Minister to release that response as soon as possible, in order to



address the uncertainty that exists not only with the shipbuilding force itself but also, of course, the supply chain. We await that review response as soon as possible, but the Deputy Prime Minister has consistently said that it will happen in the first quarter of next year.

*Parliamentary Procedure*

**VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the leader, I see now in the gallery members of the Lockleys Combined Probus Club, guests of the member for Colton. I also see in the gallery guests of the member for Adelaide, Kim and Ruby Budimir. Welcome to parliament.

*Question Time*

**HUNTER CLASS FRIGATE PROGRAM**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:15):** My question is again to the Minister for Defence and Space Industries. Has the minister received any advice regarding a change in the scope to the Hunter class shipbuilding program?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (14:15):** Again, the change in the scope that is directed by the commonwealth government, should there be any, is presumably part of any response to the surface ship review. There has been a proposal from BAE that there be an alternative model of frigate, which may be what the leader is referring to, but that is simply a proposition that is being aired by BAE at this stage.

**IMMIGRANT DETENTION**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:16):** My question is to the Acting Premier. Have there been any murderers, sex offenders or criminals who have been released from detention into the South Australian community and, if so, how many? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** On Tuesday, the federal Labor immigration minister confirmed that there were multiple murderers and sex offenders amongst a group of more than 80 hardcore criminals set to be released into the community. On Wednesday, police commissioner Grant Stevens confirmed that some of these criminals would be released here in South Australia.

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services) (14:16):** I can answer this question and assist the leader in his inquiries. Of course, this is a matter that the federal government has been coming to terms with from an operational perspective. This was not a policy decision undertaken by the Albanese Labor government. This was a decision undertaken by the High Court of Australia overturning a precedent that was set some 20 years ago.

I should note that the commonwealth government did oppose the application that was made by the plaintiff in this matter. Subsequently, the High Court, in their prerogative, did decide against the commonwealth. There are, to the best of my advice, around 90 individuals who either have been released as a result of the High Court decision or will imminently be released. The commonwealth government has advised, as is proper, diligent and consistent with the law, that the decision of the High Court will be implemented and executed with a high order of priority. Again, I reiterate that this wasn't a policy decision of the commonwealth government, but we are mindful that the commonwealth are acting according to the High Court's new precedent.

As the minister, I was immediately in communication with the police commissioner who was also party to the immediate convening, by my understanding, of a cross-jurisdictional working party of Border Force led by the AFP to establish risk profiles that would be seen from the execution of the decision of the High Court.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Flinders!

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** Don't you want to know?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister!

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** Intellectual lightweights! High Court, what's that? What's the High Court?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Newland! Member for Elder! Member for Chaffey, you are warned.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Newland! Member for Elder!

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** It's Dennis Denuto over here!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Chaffey! Members to my left and right, order! The minister has the call.

*The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Hartley! Member for Unley, you are warned, and the member for Hartley is warned for a final time.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** You are an idiot. You are a total boofhead.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** You are a total and utter boofhead.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, minister! Member for Wright, member for Newland and member for Elder! There is a point of order from the member for Morialta.

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Chaffey! We turn to the member for Morialta.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Point of order, sir: I haven't checked the list of unparliamentary words lately, but the minister said that, 'You are an idiot.' I am pretty sure that is out of order.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, it might be straightforward to withdraw and continue your remarks.

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** Of course, I withdraw and apologise, sir. As I was reflecting, the attention span of those opposite has got two minutes into a four-minute answer on a very serious matter. I will take it that the question was a serious—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Chaffey is warned.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Hartley, you are on a final warning.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** As I was continuing, sir, I will attempt to provide the leader with the best information available, that of the 90-odd who were to be released by the High Court decision, about five are based—

*The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Hartley, this is your final warning.

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** About five we are projecting to be coming—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, please be seated. The member for Hartley continues to interject after his final, final, final, final warning and will depart under 137A for the remainder of question time.

*The honourable member for Hartley having withdrawn from the chamber:*

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** We are expecting, on intelligence, that about five of those individuals may choose to travel to South Australia. I am advised that none of those five have any outstanding criminal matters afoot. They are not before the courts, they have no outstanding orders against them and, under the ordinary application of the law, would not be subject to electronic monitoring.

I am very pleased to learn today from the commonwealth that they are investigating a law change that would enable jurisdictions to apply electronic monitoring in appropriate—

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, your time has expired.

#### IMMIGRANT DETENTION

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:22):** My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. Has the minister received any advice about any costs to SAPOL to monitor and keep track of any immigration detainees who may be released into the community; if so, what is that cost?

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services) (14:22):** I might finish my previous answer, and then get onto—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! No, minister, you will not. The standing orders require you to answer the question that has been put to you.

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS:** Thank you, sir. I will endeavour to be helpful to the member, because the simple answer to the member's question is that no, SAPOL do not electronically monitor individuals. They never have. They are not charged under the law to do that. That is an entirely different government agency.

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LABOUR MARKET

**Ms SAVVAS (Newland) (14:23):** My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer update the house on the South Australian labour market?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:23):** I thank the member for Newland for her question. I know it's a matter of interest to her, but she will not be alone in being interested in the performance of the state's jobs market, because there is further unalloyed good news today: once again, recording a record low unemployment rate of 3.6 per cent. That is the second lowest unemployment rate in the nation.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** In fact, our unemployment rate is lower than the national average.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** I know the member for Dunstan is excited. It's jobs day, and that always excites the member for Dunstan, and it seems today that he has had a little something extra at lunch, maybe a little can of Bubblicious, to fire up for question time.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** He is on the edge of his seat when it comes to the jobs figures. He is listening with bated breath about the extraordinary performance of the labour market.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** It's not just the unemployment rate—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Florey is warned. Member for Florey!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** —there are now 52,000 more South Australians in work now than at the time of the last election—52,000 people more.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Colton! Member for Schubert! Member for Morphett!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** And when the unemployment rate under the previous government was 4.9 per cent, it's now 3.6 per cent.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** There is a considerable number of interjections being made. It must be said that they are from both sides of the chamber, but they are equally contrary to the standing orders.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** It is remarkable—52,000 more South Australians in work. For those people who have found work, it's almost as if the conditions couldn't be better.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr Whetstone:** What policies?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** What policies?

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Chaffey!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** My advice to the member for Dunstan is it's not just about the CV. Make sure you've got referees, because if they can't verify the performance, they won't take you on—CVs and referees, for the member for Dunstan.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for West Torrens! The member for Morphett is warned.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** The good news is it's not just the jobs numbers, not just the unemployment rate, but what will be really welcomed—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Schubert is warned. The member for Chaffey is on a final warning.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** —by the member for Dunstan is that wages have gone up over the last year. Maybe he has timed his run perfectly. Wages are up 4 per cent—good news. It is really good news—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Chaffey!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** —particularly for those seeking a change, for those wanting to try something new. It's terrific news for those people looking to enter the labour market.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Chaffey! Member for Unley!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Conditions have never been better, but this does come as a double-edged sword, of course, because it's also tough for businesses to find appropriately skilled workers.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Morialta!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** That's why it was really pleasing to see the minister and the Premier only a couple of weeks ago announce more than \$400 million extra to skill up the South Australian workforce so those people who are seeking new work opportunities have got the skills necessary to take on a new job.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer's time has expired.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Dunstan is warned. The member for Florey, you are on a final warning. Member for Dunstan, order! Member for Elizabeth, order! We will turn to the member for Flinders when there is order.

#### IMMIGRANT DETENTION

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:27):** My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. Has the minister received advice about any role for the Department for Correctional Services to monitor and keep track of any immigration detainees that may be released into the community and, if so, what is the cost?

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services) (14:28):** Whilst I have not received any formal advice, considering this has been an announcement the commonwealth have only made in the last 24 hours, I can advise the member that the cost would be marginal, minimal. There are extensive electronic monitoring protocols in place. The Department for Correctional Services maintain a suite of additional electronic monitoring devices, considering the fluctuation in bail, remand and parole of prisoners. So I will be able to provide a reassurance to the member for Flinders that there would be no cost implication, and of course the state would be in a position to support the commonwealth in any request that is made, as is usually the case.

#### WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:28):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. Is the minister taking action to reduce processing times for working with children checks applications and, if so, what? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Ms PRATT:** I have been contacted by a constituent who applied to the Department of Human Services for a working with children check on 10 August this year. That application has not been processed, and 14 weeks later my constituent is still unable to get a job that requires it.

**Mr Whetstone:** Give them a call.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:29):** Thanks very much for the question. I am happy to follow up the specifics, but I understand I have signed a letter back to you this week regarding a constituent. There are many reasons that—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** They are feisty today, aren't they?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** There are many reasons why some checks can take a longer period of time, but I understand and I am happy to get the exact time frame—

**The Hon. D.G. Pisoni:** Such as?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** You right?

**The Hon. D.G. Pisoni:** What are the reasons they take a long time?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is warned. And the member for Chaffey, before he interjects, is on a final warning. Minister.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** There are many reasons why—

**The Hon. D.G. Pisoni:** So you're not telling us what the reasons are?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is warned.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Elizabeth!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Yes, many reasons can be behind protracted times in terms of approval and, of course, as I said, I would be happy to follow through the specific—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I would be happy to—

**Ms Pratt:** There has been a delay; the delay is not acceptable.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Frome!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** It's your question time. I am very happy to—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** There are various reasons and often those are challenging reasons for the person waiting for the check, and—

**Ms Pratt:** She has been waiting a long time, and it's not her fault.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Frome!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** —I am not privy to all of the individual circumstances around the person's check itself and the details as to why there would—

**Ms Pratt:** It was direct to the department.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Ms Savvas interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Newland! The minister has the call.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I might just start again, I think. I understand there has been an inquiry from your office. I believe I have signed off on that response. I am happy to chase up an individual case. I did so not long ago for the member for Colton and that was remedied fairly quickly, I understand, but there are reasons—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Oh, 'Hang on, off the record'—

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Chaffey!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** There are often—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** You could give them a job in your office, if you like, if you're that worried. But anyway, there are many reasons. I am happy to follow up the individual case—wow, every time my mouth moves, the mouth moves opposite. Are you listening?

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, it is better not to respond.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think I have answered enough. Well done, thanks.

#### **GREENHILL ROAD, CLELAND**

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (14:32):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Will the minister take any action to accelerate any necessary works to restore any normal traffic flow to Greenhill Road at Cleland? With you leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr TEAGUE:** In June 2023, a traffic barrier on Greenhill Road at Cleland was damaged by particularly bad weather at that time. Vehicles have subsequently been reduced to a single lane of traffic, one-way traffic, and regulated by traffic lights at each end. On 2 November 2023, the department advised my constituent, noting that the fire danger season is upon us and that, and I quote:

Currently working on a structural design prior to remedial works with anticipated final completion by the end of June 2024.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:33):** I thank the member for raising this important issue with me. I will chase it up personally after question time. I agree that is not acceptable if it is impeding traffic that way as we head into bushfire season, but I do not know the circumstances around why there is a delay. I will endeavour to get to the bottom of it asap because, when issues like that come up, it's important that members not assume that the minister's office is aware of it, which is why we have parliament and question time, and correspondence with ministers, so thank you for raising it with me. I will chase it up for you immediately.

#### **WEST BEACH PRIMARY SCHOOL AIR QUALITY MONITORING STATION**

**Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:33):** My question is to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. When did the minister plan on telling residents of West Beach about the installation of an EPA air quality monitoring station at West Beach Primary School?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (14:34):** I understand that the air quality monitoring station has now been removed. It was determined that there hadn't been an appropriate approval process gone through and it has been taken away.

#### **ADELAIDE CENTRAL MARKET REDEVELOPMENT**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:34):** My question is to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. Is the minister able to provide an update to the house about the Adelaide Central Market redevelopment?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (14:34):** I presume that that question is particularly in relation to the asbestos question that was raised the other day. My information is that indeed, as one would expect in a building that was built in the era that it was, there was asbestos found. In September the EPA was contacted. The EPA is not required to be contacted by demolition companies in the ordinary course of events if they are operating under an agreed process, but they were required to be contacted in order to facilitate the removal of asbestos over a weekend. That occurred in September.

While it is clear that there are tents present on the site, neither the EPA nor SafeWork—when the EPA checked the other day when this question was raised—have been informed by the demolition company that they have found asbestos or that they are dealing with asbestos, but nor is that necessarily required if they are operating under the existing agreement.

#### **COMMUNITY SPORT, CONCUSSION EDUCATION**

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (14:35):** My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. How is the Malinauskas government promoting concussion education amongst community sport?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:35):** Thank you to the member for his important question. I do acknowledge his passion and support for sporting clubs in his electorate and the importance of sporting clubs in regional communities everywhere. I acknowledge those who have suffered or do suffer through concussion, their loved ones, and particularly those who have tragically lost precious family members and friends.

Concussion is a serious issue that needs to be addressed and have awareness raised about it at all levels of sport. It can sometimes be an invisible injury and education is absolutely paramount. The days of get up, shake it off and get back out there are well and truly—rightly—over. It should no longer ever, ever be seen as brave to continue participating after a head injury, and the risk of doing so should be something that every person involved in sport is aware of and supported to act upon.

Our state government strongly encourages players, clubs, medical professionals and sporting associations to ensure best practices are adhered to. That is why the Malinauskas Labor government, through the Active State Collaboration Program, has provided \$300,000 to the South Australian Sports Medicine Association (SASMA) to deliver crucial education about concussion.

I was delighted to attend the launch of SASMA's community concussion education program, ahead of their delivery of at least 18 workshops with sporting associations and clubs each year for the next three years, with a number of those to be held in regional areas. Generous SASMA members—sport medicine experts—collaborated on the development of this program, providing vital wisdom and expertise.

This excellent program is about responding to a critical emerging issue, one that for too long we have not responded to as we should. Like all aspects of community life, things change, awareness is improved, and our community appetite to alter behaviours increases. Concussion is an issue that, rightly, our community now demands we address. Through growing awareness of the dangers of what used to seem like a minor knock, something that was all just part of the play, we now know that pushing through cumulative harm is just not the right thing to do.



In the short term, concussions can manifest symptoms such as headaches, dizziness and confusion. Athletes in particular are at risk due to the nature of contact sport. Recognising and promptly managing concussions is crucial to prevent further injury and promote recovery. Concussions can, of course, extend beyond the realm of sport, affecting individuals in various personal settings. Understanding the significance of concussions has spurred advancements in research, diagnosis and treatment, emphasising the importance of proactive measures to safeguard brain health and prevent long-term repercussions.

I extend my congratulations to SASMA for their outstanding work in developing this crucial program, and in particular the CEO, Danielle Grant-Cross, and President, Dr Luke Mooney, who are both passionate advocates for change. I wish everybody involved in the program success. I know it will be incredibly valuable in empowering sport to tackle this critical issue impacting the sector, our community and our state.

Finally, I inform the house about the Team Up Triathlon being held this Sunday on the Semaphore foreshore. This event, created by Luke Ivens, a former SANFL footballer who suffered multiple concussions, aims to support efforts in raising awareness about the effects of concussion. I encourage everyone to visit [www.teamuptriathlon.com](http://www.teamuptriathlon.com) for more information.

#### **ARDROSSAN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**

**Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (14:40):** I have a question for the Minister for Health. Will the government provide the same solution to Ardrossan Community Hospital that they did at Keith? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr ELLIS:** When the Keith and district community hospital shut, the government stepped in with almost \$10 million to transfer it to an SA Health facility. Ardrossan Community Hospital has currently shut only temporarily and is hopeful of similar treatment.

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:40):** I thank the member for Narungga for his question and his significant advocacy on behalf of residents for their health care on Yorke Peninsula. This is an issue in relation to the Ardrossan Community Hospital. For people who are not aware, this is a private hospital in Ardrossan. It is one of what was a number of private community hospitals based in regional areas. As the member makes reference to, the other very prominent version of that was in the member for MacKillop's electorate in Keith.

This government has gone through a process in relation to the Keith district hospital whereby it has now transitioned to be part of SA Health in the Limestone Coast Local Health Network. That was a very significant piece of work that the government undertook, working with the local health network, working with the Keith board and working across government agencies to enable that transition to happen a couple of months ago. I thank the member for MacKillop in that instance for his advocacy and support in relation to that transition.

We are aware that the Ardrossan Community Hospital is facing a number of difficulties. We have been providing support to the hospital that was started under the previous government and has continued under this government. I am advised in the order of \$180,000 per year has been extended to the Ardrossan hospital, but we are certainly in discussions with the hospital and its board about its ongoing operations and ongoing viability.

We obviously want to make sure that there are community services, particularly health services, readily available right across country South Australia. Ardrossan Community Hospital, while the number of people who have been going there for hospital needs has been reducing, I am advised, in the order of approximately 60 per cent of separations over the past couple of years, it still has a very significant aged-care operation. Having been to the hospital, there are some million-dollar views outside that hospital.

We certainly want to work with the Ardrossan community board. Those discussions are ongoing with the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network and the board. I am very happy to make sure that we continue to keep the member for Narungga up to date as that work and those discussions progress. I would say that the government is open-minded to how we resolve these

issues, but we are also mindful that what happened in relation to the Keith district hospital was a very long process to enable that solution to be found and implemented. These things will take a significant amount of work, looking at all the options working with the local board.

#### CHIEF SCIENTIST

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:43):** My question is to the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science. Will the government employ a replacement Chief Scientist and, if so, when? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr PATTERSON:** On 25 August, South Australia's Chief Scientist, Professor Caroline McMillen AO, stepped down from her role.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (14:43):** Thank you for the explanation as well as the question. Yes, Professor Caroline McMillen has stepped down. She has returned to Melbourne for various personal reasons, and I wish her very well. She was an excellent Chief Scientist. I picked up my relationship with her again, having worked with her at the University of Adelaide many years ago.

We are in active pursuit at present for a Chief Scientist. There will certainly always be a South Australian Chief Scientist. We are just going through the process of identifying the qualities and disciplines that we are most interested in and then seeking interest.

#### CHIEF SCIENTIST

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:44):** My question is again to the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science. Can the minister provide an update on the government's plans for the Office of the Chief Scientist of South Australia? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr PATTERSON:** Information received by the opposition under the Freedom of Information Act reveals internal concerns by staff commenting, 'Sounds like there are decisions already made and a step towards dissolving the office. It would be good to understand what the future plans are. Some notice will allow the team to consider our own futures and next role.'

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (14:45):** I am not sure which staff were saying that. It sounds like there is a degree of anxiety, which is completely unwarranted. The office will continue and there will be a new Chief Scientist.

#### GLENELG DRUG AND ALCOHOL REHABILITATION CENTRE

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:45):** My question is to the Minister for Planning. Will the Minister for Planning reject the change of use application for a proposed drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre at 5 Maturin Road, Glenelg?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Morphett, there is a point of order from the member for West Torrens, Leader of Government Business.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Standing order 97, sir, which is: cannot involve purported facts.

**The SPEAKER:** Very well. I will give the member for Morphett the opportunity to recast.

**Mr PATTERSON:** My question is to the Minister for Planning. Can the Minister for Planning provide an update on the change of use application for a proposed drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre at 5 Maturin Road, Glenelg? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr PATTERSON:** A number of concerned local residents have now launched legal action against the Minister for Health on the basis that the change of use application is not essential infrastructure and is therefore not eligible to be sponsored as a Crown development.

**The SPEAKER:** I will allow the question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Chaffey is on a final warning.

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Planning) (14:46):** This is an application under section 131 and the development application has been lodged with the State Commission Assessment Panel who formally considered it on 27 September 2023. They have recently provided me with their recommendations and it's now pending decision, but given that there's an application for judicial review before the Supreme Court, I don't propose to give a running commentary about it.

### STATE PLANNING SYSTEM

**Mrs PEARCE (King) (14:47):** My question is to the Minister for Planning. Can the minister update the house on key performance indicators of South Australia's planning system?

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Planning) (14:47):** I thank the member for King for her question and her passion on the issue of housing. We are clearly in a housing crisis and we know that there's a national emergency stemming from a chronic undersupply of housing over years across the country, in Greater Adelaide and, of course, in our regions. This is a government that's acting to address that crisis.

One of the things we need to do to address that crisis is have a planning system that's both transparent and efficient and we are lucky in South Australia that we have exactly that. South Australia's e-planning system, PlanSA, is the only comprehensive electronic planning system in the country. Recent figures by PlanSA show that more than \$5.9 billion worth of development was approved through the planning system over the last financial year. That includes \$2.5 billion in residential development across the state.

This investment in residential housing is aided by our fast-track planning approval process. For simple applications, such as housing in new estates, the planning approval time is 1.86 business days statewide, and the government's newly accepted development pathway has further increased those efficiencies. Planning approval is no longer required for many new houses in greenfield areas and it's this responsiveness that garners national praise for our planning system.

The figures also show that \$2 billion of mixed-use development was also approved over the last financial year. That is the sort of development that this government wants to see more of. Mixed-use development creates great economic, social and environmental benefits to communities, and many of the new mixed-use developments were enabled through the statewide code amendment process.

Landowner-led rezonings can happen in just under nine months and South Australia is the only state in the country that allows that in their planning system. So far in 2023, our planning system has paved the way for initiation of code amendments on more than 1,690 hectares of land. This land has been approved to begin the rezoning investigation process. On top of those initiations, code amendments on more than 275 hectares of land have been adopted, and this is land that has been rezoned to support residential and mixed-use development, land that can now be subdivided and developed.

Our planning system has supported a 39 per cent increase on the approval of land division certificates over the last financial year, paving the way for 3,576 additional development-ready allotments. So, you can see, Mr Speaker, we have a planning system that is supporting the high growth that this government wants for this state. It's for those reasons that organisations like the Business Council of Australia recognise our planning system as being the very best in Australia, an

efficient planning system, delivering for the state, delivering for communities and delivering housing for individuals.

We are doing all we can to fast-track development. We are doing all we can to alleviate the pressures on housing availability and housing affordability. And that of course stands in pretty stark contrast to those opposite, who didn't release enough land, who ignored the build-to-rent sector, who ignored the community housing providers—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There's a point of order.

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION:** —who ignored their own constituency on regional housing.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, there's a point of order. Be seated.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Standing order 98, sir.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Chaffey is on a final warning. Member for Flinders, order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION:** It talks about your inaction and this government's action on housing.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, the rules are slightly different in the state parliament as compared to the commonwealth parliament. Minister, you have the call.

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION:** Thank you, Speaker, for your education once again. It is true we have a nation-leading planning system. We want to do all we can to address the housing crisis, and, of course, if one was to make a comparison it would be an unflattering one to those opposite.

#### TEACHERS DISPUTE

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:51):** My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. Will the government resolve the EB agreement with the teachers' union this year?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:51):** I thank the member for Morialta for his question. I certainly remain hopeful that we can do that. Of course, I would like to see no more disruption to our schools by any further industrial action. I have said in this place on a number of occasions in response to questions from the member for Morialta that I didn't think it was necessary for industrial action in the first place because we have remained negotiating at the table in good faith with each other, and that continues now.

There is not even a disagreement, which is uncommon, I think, in these enterprise bargaining negotiations. There is no disagreement on what the priorities should be. We have said from the outset that our teachers need to be paid more; there is no doubt about that. We have said from the outset that we need to do something about workload. That's an issue here in South Australia, it is an issue nationally, and an issue that the education systems are seeing internationally. We are agreed on those things. The union put forward two key priorities in terms of how to tackle those workload and salary issues, a pay rise, which of course is one of the issues that we are not in agreement on, and an increase in non-instructional time, which we are now agreed upon in terms of the quantum—one hour. What we are not agreed upon is how quickly they can be rolled out.

We have made three offers in pretty quick succession since 21 July, when the union officially lodged its log of claims. Since then, we have made three offers. We have moved our position, increased the total package on each of those three occasions. The first was a record, the second surpassed that and then the third again. Of course, what I need to be able to do and what the

government needs to be able to do is to look the workforce in the eye and tell them that the things we are committing to as part of the enterprise bargaining agreement are things that we can deliver.

A salary increase of 8.6 in the first year and 5.5 after it was clearly not achievable. The union has now moved its position on salary, but we remain in a disagreement around how quickly the extra hour of non-instructional time can be rolled out.

The reason that that is a complex thing to do is twofold. Of course, in order to increase non-instructional time by an hour without reducing the amount of class time that students actually get, we need to backfill the teacher who goes to have an extra hour of non-instructional time, and that requires additional staff. The example of an extra hour per week across the system requires more than 500 teachers.

Of course, when we look at the premise of the union's enterprise bargaining claim here, it is around a national teacher shortage crisis. Fortunately, here in South Australia, we have protected ourselves against that, and the election commitment the Malinauskas Labor government made around increasing permanency is certainly a key part to that, but we do have about 60 vacancies at the moment, fortunately nothing like the Eastern States, but nonetheless that is certainly an issue—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Mr Teague interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Heysen, it is not the moment for a soliloquy. The minister has the call.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** So, of course, we have committed to a seven-year rollout because we believe that is what is achievable in terms of recruiting the workforce to actually be able to backfill those teachers and deliver an extra hour of non-instructional time without reducing class time. We are still at the table and still hopeful that we can come to a resolution without further industrial action, without further disruption to our education system.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:56):** My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. Can the minister confirm there have been no reported examples of the use of AI during the SACE exams over the last two weeks?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:56):** I thank the member for Morialta. I am not aware of any. I assume that what the member for Morialta is getting at here is that there has been some inappropriate use of AI to achieve or gain some kind of unfair advantage in those exams. None have been reported to me. I am happy to go away and ask a question around whether or not that has occurred.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** It's fantastic being lectured to by the member for Flinders about anything to do with intelligence, artificial or otherwise, but there you go.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** Amazing!

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister has the call.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** Listen up. But it does go to highlight, I think—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** That was off the record, okay?

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, I think you'll find it's not.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister has the call.

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** It does highlight the complications that AI will pose for not just society but the education system, and despite the fact that we have taken a different position here in South Australia with trialling our own version of ChatGPT, which we co-designed with Microsoft, which has a whole lot of other extra security protocols built in to make sure it is safe.

We have done that because we accept that, whether or not we like AI, and I am certainly of the position that there are upsides and lots of downsides, we need to teach our young people in our schooling system how to use it safely. We need to teach them what those pitfalls are, because I am certainly of the opinion that one of the measures of the success of any education system is how it prepares the young people who exit it for the world that will greet them, and the world of today, let alone the world of tomorrow, has AI as a very keen and important part of it.

I want to make sure that the young people in the South Australian system leave their high school with some knowledge of how to use it in a safe manner. But, of course, there is no application for doing that in exams, and I would take any instances of that very seriously, as I am sure the SACE Board would as well. I am very happy to make inquiries on the member for Morialta's behalf about whether there have been any instances of that in this exam period.

#### TAFE SA

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:58):** My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. Did the minister's new appointments to the TAFE SA board have any experience in managing or delivering training activities in any public or non-government training providers?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:59):** I would have to have a look at that. I think the appointments that we have made are important in terms of this government delivering on the commitment it made before the election to rebuild TAFE which, of course, is important even in the vacuum of the national skills crisis that we are facing at the moment, but even more so, I think, given the opportunities and challenges that face the state around building the workforce we need for things like AUKUS and things like hydrogen. We know that we need TAFE to be a really important part of that. I'm happy to come back to the member for Morialta about it. There were some very famous appointments from the former minister for skills to the Construction Industry Training Board, of course, so it does strike me as a bit rich—

*Mr Telfer interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Flinders!

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** —if we have to make sure the people we appoint are—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Mr Telfer interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Flinders! Minister.

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** I will come back to the house with an answer, but I think we have followed appropriate process at every step. We have taken the skills mix that is needed on the TAFE

board to make sure it is modern and capable of delivering the election commitments of this government, and capable of delivering on the commitments and recommendations made by Jeannie Rea in her roadmap for TAFE as well. I am happy to come back to the member for Morialta with further information.

#### TAFE SA

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:00):** Supplementary: do any of the appointments have any connections with the Labor Party, either as members, donors, former members or participants in a preference deal swap with the Labor Party?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I anticipate a point of order.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Sir, the minister is not responsible to the house for the membership or otherwise of any of those people appointed to any boards.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I will hear the member for Morialta on the point of order.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** On the point of order, the people in question have been appointed as paid positions to a government board, and the qualifications they have and the reasons for the minister's appointments, the government's appointments, are a valid question for this house.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! It may be that the question can be put differently. I will give the member for Morialta the opportunity in the last minute of question time. However, I observe that the question as formulated would be contrary to the standing orders, if I were to permit it.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Thank you, sir. Can the minister update the house as to the purpose for the appointment of the members of the TAFE board? With leave, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Previous oppositions have drawn connections to any political involvement of appointments to paid government boards, and it is appropriate that the minister considers that in his answer.

**The SPEAKER:** That contribution by way of leave could be contested. It therefore follows that it is not necessarily a series of facts, and on that basis I am going to rule it out of order. There are 10 seconds remaining.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (15:02):** My question is the Minister for Human Services. Is the minister taking action to reduce the agency's future liabilities and to support employees with returning to work and, if so, what? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr TELFER:** The Auditor-General reported in the agency statement for DHS that the workers compensation provision had increased by \$11.7 million to \$60.6 million in 2022-23 due to a higher number of claims and estimated claim value for injured workers.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (15:03):** Thanks very much for the question. I certainly have got some information regarding the Auditor-General's commentary. Certainly, we are making every effort we can to ensure that our workers are working in a safe working environment that has the highest degree of expectation around that. I think it's probably best that I take that question on notice and come back with a more specific answer, because it's a very important question.

*Grievance Debate***AMBULANCE RAMPING**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (15:03):** I rise today to talk about priorities—or perhaps warped priorities, skewed priorities, priorities that do not align with the priorities of the South Australian people, because that is certainly what we see from those opposite. This week, I think, revealed a huge amount about the priorities of the government. It also allowed us to reflect on what the priorities are of the people of South Australia.

Let's think back in time. Just 18 or 19 months ago the big priority for the Labor Party was health care; it was all about health, health, health, and that central election commitment, 'We will fix the ramping crisis, we will fix ramping.' Well, what has happened? Fast forward to the present day and what is the situation? Has ramping been fixed? Is there any evidence of that? Is the trajectory in the right direction? Not at all. They have single-handedly taken our hospital system and our ambulance service to the worst condition it has been in in our state's history.

The stats speak for themselves. The October ramping statistics showed that ambulances lost 3,322 hours to the ramp, which is more than double what that same recording was in the last month of the former Liberal government—1,522 hours. Now, 1,522 hours is not great, and we wanted to do better, but is 3,322 hours any better at all? No, it absolutely is not; it is so, so much worse.

That means that our most vulnerable South Australians, when they pick up the phone, or a family member does likewise, to call an ambulance to transport them to hospital, they worry about the ambulance not arriving, and then they worry about being stuck on the ramp for hours, and then they worry about being stuck in the emergency department for hours with maybe a faint hope that eventually they will get into a hospital and receive the care that they need.

We saw, this week, people waiting in emergency departments at the Lyell McEwin Hospital for up to 10 hours. When they are at their most vulnerable, when they need our public services more than at any other time in their life, perhaps, this situation is what confronts them.

Earlier this week we had SASMOA, the representative body for our salaried medical officers, call two inspections at the Lyell McEwin Hospital. They did so because doctors had contacted them and said, 'This place is not safe to undertake our jobs, this place is not safe to administer patient care.' Does that sound like a health system fixed? Does that sound like a government that has responded to its primary election commitment, as outlined for weeks and weeks in the lead-up to the 2022 election, as shown on corflutes posters up and down highways and streets around the city and our state?

The rhetoric coming out of this government now is very different; the priorities are completely skewed, they are completely different. In fact, we find it very difficult to even see the Premier turning up to participate in a press conference about anything to do with health. We managed to drag him out to one this week after we raised, in this place, that he had not been seen talking about health for weeks and weeks, and we got him down to an ambulance station at Woodville, and he did one.

What does the Premier care about? What is the Premier on about at the moment? Footy, sport, LIV Golf, VAILO 500, the Gather Round, and so on and so forth. These are distractions: 'Look over there, look over there South Australians! Don't look at our hospitals, don't look at our emergency departments, don't rely on life-saving care when you need it. Look at the football, look at the VAILO 500, look at LIV Golf.'

There is no great issue with the events by themselves, and we support many of these events, but let me tell you: it is all about priorities.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** We need health over sport, not the other way around.

*Mr Brown interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Florey is warned.



**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** In the early Roman days there was a phrase, 'Bread and circuses.' This is what I think this government is all about—but I do not even think it is about the bread because, in a cost-of-living crisis that they are not responding to, bread is not being provided to South Australians but circuses—'Look over there!'—distracting us. It is all circus, Mr Speaker, and South Australians are suffering as a result. All circus and no bread.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Mount Gambier.

### **SOUTH-EAST REGION ROADS**

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:09):** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Florey and the opposition front bench will come to order. Members to my left and right, question time has concluded, and the member for Mount Gambier, who is an Independent member of this house, is wishing to make a contribution. He will be heard.

**Mr BELL:** I rise to talk about the state of our roads, particularly the roads in the South-East. I have put a motion forward this week which we did not get around to, but it was quite interesting that the motion before, which did take up a fair bit of time, was talking about injuries and deaths on our roads. Our roads in the South-East are the worst in my living memory, and yet we seem to be spending more and more on road infrastructure and maintenance and repair.

What we see at the moment is a contract that has gone out to Fulton Hogan, who have their base in Naracoorte, which is one hour away from Mount Gambier, the state's second largest city. The response times and quality of the repair leaves a lot to be desired.

Previously, our road maintenance was done by the Highways Department or the Department for Infrastructure and Transport. What I am calling for is a return to locals looking after local roads. Re-establishing a Highways Department in Mount Gambier for the South-East would add a number of benefits, not only the skills and the training, but it would avoid ridiculous situations. I will give an example. A few months ago, our office was contacted by the RAA, who were saying that they have put a van pretty close to a dangerous pothole because numerous calls were coming in to the RAA of people damaging their rims and tyres.

So I decided to get in my car, drive out towards Millicent on the Millicent Road and have a look at the pothole for myself. Sure enough, RAA vans were parked there, and two cars were on the side of the road with damaged tyres and rims. Fifty metres up the road, there was a District Council of Grant roadworks. I rang the CEO and said, 'Listen, we've got a very dangerous situation here. Can a few of the guys just put a couple of shovel loads of gravel in the hole until it gets repaired?'

Full credit to the CEO—he is a very diligent CEO and a good friend of mine—he said, 'Troy, we can't touch a state government road. As soon as we do, we are liable.' So you have the crazy situation of an immediate repair not being carried out through threat of litigation or fault down the track. Of course, that is no comfort to the people to whom I have spoken who have had their cars damaged, so we need to get back to having a local solution for our state government roads.

Not only that, when I was growing up my dad was in the E&WS. He worked his way up pretty much all the way through. We had ETSA. The number of apprentices that these departments churned out year in, year out, who now own their own businesses in the South-East or elsewhere was high. It was a fantastic breeding ground for high-quality skilled tradesmen for our state and the benefit of all people in our state.

Of course, I have written to previous Minister Wingard and current Minister Koutsantonis and explained my reasoning and the issues that I have with the state of our roads and asked whether or not the budget is large enough to cope with the required maintenance. I quote the Minister Koutsantonis:

They took the cheapest possible price they could and roads have deteriorated. The private contractor is constantly asking for changes to the contract...The people of the South East know the road maintenance outsourcing has been a failure.

I wholeheartedly agree with Minister Koutsantonis, and I am calling on the state government to rectify this urgent issue. Renegotiate this contract in the interim period whilst looking for a long-term sustainable future, and that would be the re-establishment of a highways department in the South-East.

### **GLENELG SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB**

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (15:14):** I take this opportunity in parliament to speak about the Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club and the important role that it plays in keeping the beaches safe in Glenelg. I also thank the many volunteers who patrol and pay tribute to a club legend, Pete Tidswell. This summer's surf lifesaving season commenced in October and, overall, the Glenelg Life Saving Club has 11 volunteer patrol teams who patrol on weekends and public holidays.

While not being able to acknowledge all of the approximately 150 volunteer surf lifesavers, on behalf of their teams I would like to acknowledge the patrol captains this year, including Dave O'Shaughnessy, Dan Everett, Ursula Simpson, Shane Limmer, Angus Stevens, Tash Tunney, Damien Fox, Lincoln Jeffrey, Shane Harris, Georgia Sumner and Benn Findlay. On behalf of our community, thank you for your service in keeping our beaches safe.

Additionally, lifesavers also show their skills at competitions, none bigger than the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships. The Aussies were held in Perth this year and the girls under-23 surf boat team, the Glenelg Grenades, won the gold medal, which is an amazing feat. Congratulations to Madi, Ella, Siobhan, Tilly; and sweep and surf boat legend, Pete Tidswell.

The Grenades were also recognised at Surf Life Saving SA's annual Awards of Excellence in June, with the Surf Sports Team of the Year. Other winners on the night from Glenelg were Amanda De Ieso, Assessor of the Year, and also Pete Tidswell, Coach of the Year. In November, Surf Life Saving Australia held their national awards of excellence and, in big news, Pete Tidswell was awarded the National Surf Sport Coach of the Year. It is a nationally significant achievement that puts Pete, the Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club and also Surf Life Saving South Australia on the national stage.

All members of Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club are so proud of Pete and thank him for his coaching, and also for teaching the next generation of lifesavers. Of course, it would not have been possible for Pete to win without the support of his family—wife, Sarah, and his kids, Abella, Jacob and Holly. I had the chance to congratulate Pete personally last week and, in typically modest fashion, Pete says he would have much preferred the girls under-23 surf boat team to have won rather than himself. So that says a lot about him.

I also take the opportunity in parliament to recognise the passing of obstetrician and former Mayor Dr Ken Rolland on 24 October. Ken's funeral was held last week at Our Lady of Victories Church in Glenelg, and was attended by family, friends, colleagues and the many people that Ken touched. Ken was raised in the country and finished his schooling as a boarder at PAC before studying to become an obstetrician in Adelaide. Ken met his wife, Anne, while studying and got married to Anne also at Our Lady of Victories Church. Over the next few years, they welcomed their children, Fiona and Bill.

Professionally, Ken delivered over 10,000 babies, many of them at the Glenelg Community Hospital—so close to where his family lived. He was so dedicated that he would rarely take holidays so he would not let expecting mothers down and could be on hand to deliver the baby.

Despite working already long hours, Ken was elected to the Holdfast Bay Council and was Mayor from 2002 to 2014. He would often take up community causes and work closely with the local service clubs, especially the Rotary clubs, in the area of Glenelg, Holdfast Bay and Somerton Park. Many times when making a decision at council, he would quote Rotary's four-way test; and many of the attendees at the funeral were from these Rotary clubs. Ken encouraged me to run for council in 2010, and I learnt a lot from him when he was Mayor and remember him fondly.

After finishing at council, Ken would often be seen having coffee at his favourite spot, the Broadway Kiosk, that overlooks the ocean. In fact, I saw Ken walking down there only two weeks before his death.

In 2018 Ken commissioned a beautiful statue to be placed at the end of Broadway of a mother dolphin and her child. It is a worthy gift from a person who gave so much service to Glenelg and the wider community. Holdfast Bay Council should also consider making a permanent tribute to recognise his service, and this is something that I would support.

My heartfelt sympathies go to his wife, Anne, his children, Fiona and Bill, and his grandchildren, Madeline and Amelia. Vale Dr Ken Rolland.

### **BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS**

**Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (15:19):** We have all seen in the news reports of late coming out of Queensland in regard to some of the uncontrollable bushfires that are burning across their state. We have seen the Northern Hemisphere summer come and go with devastating effect in Maui, Canada and Europe. We know that right here in South Australia we have just come off the warmest winter on record.

We also know that La Niña has hit the road and she is to be replaced by her much angrier brother, El Niño. A few examples of El Niño's work include the summer leading up to the Ash Wednesday fires in 1983 and also the Sampson Flat and Pinery fires in 2015. El Niño is bringing with him a positive Indian Ocean dipole, and their combination is going to bring a much drier and warmer summer than we have experienced over the last few years.

My community know only too well the constant threat of living in a high bushfire risk area. Surrounded by native bushland and terrain that is often inaccessible to firefighters, we know that we need to be prepared for all that nature can bring. I am passionate about building a resilient community, one that understands these risks and threats and does what it can to be prepared.

I know our local brigades are as ready as they can be. They train every week and practise as much as they can to be prepared, but there are limited resources and limited volunteers who already give so much, so it is a joint responsibility across our community. Individual residents need to also be prepared, have all the information they need, and be ready and able to make good decisions on unbearable days. I believe we can never know enough, though, so I have been doing what I can to bring our community together to learn more.

The weekend before last I brought them all to the Blackwood Memorial Hall with experts from multiple agencies so that my community could learn about the risk, learn about what could happen, what our different agencies are doing, and also to ask questions about what the upcoming fire season may look like. Close to 300 people attended my bushfire resilience forum. Held in conjunction with our federal member, Louise Miller-Frost, we welcomed our state and federal emergency services ministers, the member for Cheltenham and Senator the Hon. Murray Watt. They joined us to talk about our government's commitment to keeping our bushfire-prone communities and our firefighters safe.

Locally, we are investing in five new aircraft. These are being added to the CFS aerial firefighting fleet, increasing the number from 26 to 31 following a \$27.6 million state government investment. These planes can make all the difference in rough terrain, as we saw at Montacute earlier this year.

Following a briefing from our ministers, my community heard from a raft of experts. Dr Doug Bardsley spoke to us about El Niño and climate warming. He was followed by Alison May, Director of Community Risk and Resilience from the CFS. Alison spoke about the CFS as a whole, about being prepared, where residents can go to get more information, and also that residents have various types of communication available to them, including the Alert SA app, the CFS website, social media and, of course, a battery-powered radio.

Our Sturt group of the CFS comprises Eden Hills, Blackwood, Belair, Coromandel Valley and Cherry Gardens. Group Officer Dale Thompson has been in the service for much of his life and also works for the MFS. Serving his community is in his nature. Dale spoke about the capacity of his

brigades and gave advice on leaving the area on a catastrophic day and to not be on the roads if a fire was active in the area.

Following the CFS briefing, Ian Tanner, Manager of Fire in the Mount Lofty Ranges from National Parks and Wildlife, let us know about how our parks are managed. My community is fortunate to live with the oldest national park in the state, Belair National Park, as well as Sturt Gorge, Shepherds Hill Reserve, Brownhill Creek, Waite Conservation Reserve, Watiparinga and many other pockets of state-managed parks. Ian explained how these areas are being prepared for the bushfire season, especially where they meet with residential areas.

His presentation was thorough and somewhat alarming as he spoke about fire behaviour and the chances of saving property in densely thick scrublands, especially those located on slopes. Ian was joined by Tony Magor, who is the new manager of the district replacing Richard DeGroot. We thank Richard for all of his work over the past years.

Josh Lanes from State Flora concluded our panel discussion with information about building a resilient garden for bushfire preparedness. I know many in the audience will be paying Josh a visit soon at the Belair National Park. I want to thank all of these dedicated specialists for coming out on Sunday but also for being there for my community.

Our forum did not stop there, though. Once the panel had finished, I invited on stage to join them Paul Roberts from SA Power Networks, Daniel Willetts from SAFECOM, Mayor Heather Holmes-Ross on behalf of the City of Mitcham, Councillor Geoff Eaton on behalf of Onkaparinga council and our two ministers to be available for questions from the crowd—an impressive group of experts available for our community to ask questions that they had. I was very pleased with the outcome from the event and thank all who came along and my staff and volunteers who helped with the event. It is going to be a very challenging season. Last night, we had another forum in Upper Sturt with another 60 people. I encourage my community to do all that they can to be prepared.

#### TRURO BYPASS

**Mrs HURN (Schubert) (15:25):** I rise to speak about some disappointing news that my electorate has just received today, and that is that the Truro freight route in my electorate has been axed by the Labor government. This is a project that was announced in 2021 and had security in funding by both the former Coalition government and also the former Marshall Liberal government. It was a \$202 million project that was ready to go when we left office, unfortunately, in 2022.

I would like to paint a bit of a picture for the house about what currently occurs in Truro on a daily basis. Each and every day in the Truro main street, there are 4,500 vehicles that move through, and 30 per cent of those are heavy vehicles. What that means is that there are approximately 600 B-doubles and road trains that are coming through a small township and its main street, a main street that has beautiful businesses, residential homes and, of course, children who are crossing the main street just to be able to go to school.

Really, the whole value of seeing this project was not just getting trucks off the main street and therefore providing a bit of road safety relief for residents, who have been fighting for this type of project for such a long period of time, but it was also going to be an extraordinarily significant boost for the productivity of our whole state. I speak to people in the trucking business who also do not want to be driving their B-doubles or road trains through the main street of Truro, and to be able to have a freight route that would take them off the main street and hook them back up with the Sturt Highway would have been so beneficial.

Delivering this project, as I mentioned, was on track under the former Liberal government. In fact, when we did leave office, we should have been seeing shovels in the ground on this project late in 2022. Of course, we did not see that. The irony of this whole situation is that, had the Labor government actually stuck to the time frame and ensured that shovels were in the ground by the end of 2022, then the Truro freight route project would never have been caught up in this infrastructure review that has led to around \$400 million worth of projects being axed right across South Australia.

When you have a look at the make-up of where these projects have been cut from, it is super disappointing to note that the majority of these projects are in regional South Australia. Regional South Australians deserve credible and valuable infrastructure, just like those people in the city do.

As I was writing to the minister not just in South Australia but also in Canberra, as I was standing with locals, whether that was at community forums or street-corner meetings, they really wanted certainty provided to them much sooner than today.

In fact, when we did write to the minister, Catherine King from Canberra, we asked her to come out to Truro and see for herself the massive impact of having 600 B-doubles come through a main street. When I speak to residents, they often talk about their houses absolutely shaking from 600 trucks going through their main street. I speak to local families who genuinely do not want their kids to be walking to school in what is an absolutely tight-knit town. That is not what we should be seeing in regional South Australia, and that is why it is particularly disappointing.

When we were asking for this government, this Labor state government, to stand with us and take the fight up to Canberra, they really failed to do so. We saw every other state in the nation have their premiers and transport ministers take the fight up to the federal government. We did not see that here in South Australia. All that we saw were, frankly, a silent minister and a silent Premier, who were just waving the white flag, almost in an accepting way, just accepting that these projects would be scrapped, and that was really, really disappointing to see. I have been on the phone already to locals in my community who will continue to fight for this project.

This is a huge kick in the guts for the residents of Truro. It is a huge blow for their ambition to get trucks off the main street. It is a critical blow for productivity right across South Australia. Let's not forget that so many of the goods and services in South Australia come through the Truro main street to head interstate to get onto people's plates over on the eastern seaboard. Abandoning these critical infrastructure projects is not just a setback for South Australia but is a massive blow for my local community and a kick in the guts for regional South Australia.

#### **LINES, MR PERCY WILLIAM**

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (15:30):** While giving a recent tour of Parliament House to members of my community, a local constituent of mine, Lance Wright, mentioned to me that his great grandfather had become a well-known local figure outside parliament in the early to mid-1900s. I was fascinated by his great-grandfather's story and wanted to share it today as an important part of our city's history.

What we know about Percy Lines' story is thanks to a feature article about Percy that appeared in *People* magazine published on 5 December 1951, more than 70 years ago. The article opens as follows:

For two generations of South Australians, Percy William Lines, 'the blind man with the accordion', has been as much a part of the City of Adelaide as the town hall clock. But few know who he is and fewer still can remember back to the time when, as a stricken yet determined young man, he first appeared on the streets to earn a living.

This is Percy Lines' story: for six days a week for almost 45 years, Percy Lines would play his old accordion on the streets of Adelaide. He first appeared in 1907 at the lower end of Rundle Street. In 1939 he moved to the intersection of King William Street and North Terrace, across from Parliament House where we are today.

For six days a week he would leave his home in the outer suburbs early in the morning, walk half a mile to the tram and then would wait at the North Terrace intersection until either a pedestrian or the policeman on the beat would come to assist him to cross the road to the corner of King William. Why? Because Percy was blind.

In his early 20s, while working in a mine in Broken Hill, a stick of dead dynamite, that had failed to go off and was considered harmless, had exploded fully in Percy's face, blinding him. He moved to Adelaide for treatment, spending a year in hospital, but the lenses of his eyes had shrivelled, the optic nerves had been rendered useless and he would be blind for as long as he would live.

His year in hospital was followed by the Institute for the Blind, earning a small income making mats. He had no compensation and no pension. Those years were hell, Percy says in the article. When the cloud finally lifted, he took his accordion to play on the streets of Adelaide to earn a living for his family of six—five boys and a girl. Placing a sign on display that read 'totally blind' and sitting on his canvas stool, Percy would play his old accordion for the passers by.

At lunchtime, he would feel his way along a fence to a cafe nearby where there would be a table waiting for him and he would, and I quote, 'eat with his fingers, his head close to the plate, pausing every few seconds to listen to the conversation around him'. In the afternoon, Percy would wait for one of his regulars to come by and put him on the 5.45pm tram home. To quote Percy himself from the article:

When I took my accordion into Adelaide to play on the streets, I knew I was setting out on a hard road, but I knew too that I was spinning for myself and that money or no money I would at least find satisfaction. I found both. The money at first was light, but at least it was enough to live on. When I became better known my income improved and with the improvement came a conviction—the conviction that, though blind, I could provide for my family like any other father—that I could hold my head.

At 74 years old, Percy lost his wife, a shock he never fully recovered from. One of his sons lived with him to keep him company. He also had 15 grandchildren. I will end with a quote, from the article, from Percy himself:

I have always been independent, always insisted on paying my own way, and I don't intend to stop now. In heart I'm a happy man. I have my pipe, I have my glass of beer and I have my radio. Best of all, I have learned to put up with myself—and like it. Life has been worth living after all.

Percy Lines died in September 1952, 10 months after his story was told in *People* magazine. He was 77 years old. Thank you to my local constituent Lance Wright for allowing me to share his great-grandfather's story and to Percy's extended family for keeping his memory alive. For those listening and who will read this in *Hansard*, I simply ask that next time you stand on the corner of King William Street and North Terrace please take a moment to imagine Percy Lines there, sitting on his canvas stool playing his old accordion to earn a living, one moment for a man who could teach us so much about true grit, perseverance and pride.

### *Bills*

## **SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRATION (COMMENCEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (15:36):** I did commence this speech before the lunch break. I do not intend to take up too much time. I think other members have comprehensively covered the nature of this particular bill. In summary, we are going to see an extended and staged approach to get into social worker registration, the setting up of the body that will be responsible. Part of the approach is to ensure that we can make necessary changes as we go along through regulations so it does not have to come back to the house, which is a very efficient way of doing it.

Ultimately, we would all like to see a national body, but we do need to get some of the other states on board when it comes to that approach. The changes will ultimately mean there will be greater professional accountability amongst social workers and there will also be that scope for additional professional development. It is an important step, and it is something that has been supported by the Australian Association of Social Workers.

I could speak at length about social workers. I have known quite a few of them over the years, including my sister, who was a social worker. She started many years ago in what I think might have been the Department of Community Services at the time—I am not too sure; it has had a lot of changes over the years—and she was in that area of child protection, but there was also a bit of a community development focus back then as well. She was one of those people who went to work in Port Augusta.

Eventually, she moved to the Eastern States to work as a high-level professional social worker in the social security field until she got so disgusted with the approach of the Howard government and its approach to some of the most vulnerable people in our society—and this was in the western suburbs of Sydney—that she left and became a social worker in the private health field. She had a long history of working as a social worker. Indeed, accidentally—I am not sure how you do this accidentally—I also ended up doing the four-year social work degree and at least ended up with a qualification, but I have never worked as a social worker. I think the degree, in a number of

ways, has stood me in very good stead. It was a bit unusual because I was going to go to Flinders to do a science degree, so it is a long story and I am not going to bore you with it here.

Clearly, social workers work across a whole range of areas. It has been said by other members that the Department for Child Protection alone employs 700 social workers, so it would be probably by far the largest employer of social workers at a state government level in this state. However, they work for other government agencies, non-government agencies and indeed the private sector, and some of them are in private practice and delivering a service there.

The degree in some respects enables you to go on to other areas. Somebody like April Lawrie, who most of the people in this chamber would know—who of course has ended up as the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People—did a social work degree, and I had the honour of doing a social work degree with her. We did our degree together. I have known April for many years, and it is great to see how she has progressed and the work that she has done not only for the state in general but also for her community and Aboriginal people in particular.

That is very positive and reflects the importance—and I know that it is another bill and we should not reflect upon another bill before the house, when it comes to the university amalgamation—of regional universities and the number of people who come out of those regional campuses, many of whom then go back and service our regional communities. When we did the particular degree it was three years in Whyalla and a final year in Adelaide.

The work that social workers are exposed to is some of the most intense work, and sometimes it can be very disturbing work, especially in the area of child protection. They are damned if they do, they are damned if they don't. There are often very difficult decisions that have to be made, so it is not an easy job by any means, and it carries with it for some practitioners a significant degree, a high level, of stress.

We should acknowledge the work that social workers do, and it is incredibly important work. It will be good to see us reach the final outcome here. It is somewhat delayed but for good reason. It has been somewhat delayed to get to that point where social workers can be registered so there is that, as I said, greater degree of professional accountability. With those few words, I commend the bill to the house.

**Ms SAVVAS (Newland) (15:42):** I am always proud in this place to speak about the wonderful work of social workers in our community. I would like to acknowledge all those people involved in protecting our most vulnerable. Somewhat like the member for Giles—and I did appreciate his contribution—I did commence studying social work at one stage. I commenced my postgraduate studies in social work when I had first gone into a grad program after my undergraduate degree.

I very much did want to end up at some stage working in social work, but for me that was very much, I guess, something that I wanted to do in response to my own personal experiences growing up and having known the really positive influence that social workers had on particularly those children in my life who were in the child protection system.

Of course, we know that not all social workers are involved in the child protection space, but such a large number do play a really vital role in the lives of young people who do not often have those close familial supports of their own. For us as kinship carers for many years, I have nothing but respect and warmth towards those social workers who became incredibly central in the lives of my family members and also those social workers who in different ways assisted us in our journey through domestic and family violence.

For me, going to at least commence studying social work—and I never completed my postgraduate studies in social work—it was a way, I think, to acknowledge and give back to a profession that had really shaped my life and also a profession that I had seen firsthand having such a really positive impact on particularly those vulnerable people who did not have others in their lives. I know that the relationships that particularly my cousins made with their social workers over many years were so important, and I do not think that we can ever underestimate the value of those relationships and the impact that those relationships have on lives, particularly of children who grow up without those familial influences.

We know that the Social Workers Registration Act was assented to in December and was due to commence on the two-year anniversary in December this year. Social workers in our state are, of course, often working with our most vulnerable people—not just with children, but with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in our prison systems and in many other spheres as well. I think it is important to note that in the work that we are doing today, we are not just prioritising the safety of vulnerable people, but the safety, the protections and the professional development of social workers themselves. Introducing this bill, and bringing in the registration scheme, is a really important part of doing that.

There are a range of benefits to bringing in the social worker registration scheme. Some of those include improved public safety; higher standards of conduct and accountability through the provision of accessible mechanisms for complaints and review, which increases transparency as well; and improved professional development opportunities for people within the profession.

In a profession that can be incredibly emotionally charged, can be incredibly draining and can take an incredibly personal toll on the lives of a lot of those individuals working within it, I do think a system which allows for greater development opportunities and also greater cohesion within the profession—to be able to have those supports, to be able to rely on each other and to have that support amongst those peers—is not just important or helpful but integral to maintaining those positive social work influences in the lives of people in our state.

It would not be a surprise to know that a lot of social workers decide to leave that profession because of the difficulties that are faced within the profession, or perhaps the specific circumstances that many are confronted with. I do think that something like a registration scheme is really important to allow for that camaraderie in what can often be a very emotionally charged profession.

This bill will amend two sections of the act and that has been described at length by other members. One of the things that I think is really important to note here is the way that it very much prioritises investment and care for the most vulnerable people in our community. Our government committed \$4.7 million to support the establishment and introduction of this scheme for social workers here in South Australia. We really recognise that the work undertaken by social workers is very much often under-recognised. There are social workers working in a range of professions, but over 700 of them are working in the sphere of child protection. We really cannot underestimate the role or the value of those social workers.

Good governments need to invest in not just valuing those roles but in empowering those roles to continue to be driving forces for change. When we think of the way that social workers influence the lives of people, we also need to think of the impacts that that has on our state as a whole and the benefits there are for the community at large when people are supported by individuals in professions such as social work who are able to provide that support and often, I guess, a supportive ear and supportive conversation at times for those who may not otherwise have it. They often do take on that role, particularly for young people: the role of being strong, positive role models in the lives of young people who, due to no fault of their own, often do not have those positive influences.

Today I would like to commend the work that so many of those social workers have done. In my life I have known a number of really wonderful social workers. I was thinking a moment ago of a dear family friend, Rose, who worked in child protection in its various iterations for over 30 years, and the influence that she has had, not just on the children whose lives she supported but on people in her broader community, and what she was able to do for so many people in our family when we were going through difficult times. That skill set and that heart, I think, of being a social worker in the child protection system was something that I will always think about and always consider in my life. She was really very much a driving force in my life for change and for strength when there was a lot of difficulty going on at home.

When we have a scheme like this, the benefits are obvious in terms of the protection they provide to vulnerable people, but I think that giving a centralised way to seek improved professional development and support in what is often an incredibly difficult profession is just as relevant here. We seek to protect those individuals who are seeking the support of a social worker and, of course, we seek to empower those social workers to continue to give adequate and improved support.



The bill today amends the commencement of the scheme so that we can recruit a registrar, establish robust guidelines and appoint a registration board, and I would like to acknowledge—as has been done already—Professor Wendt who, I believe, is here with us today and who has extensive experience in the realm of social work, particularly in the family and domestic violence sphere.

The fact that Professor Wendt has also had a role in teaching the social workers of the future says a lot about the ability and breadth of experience being brought to the role, because so many social workers in our state have already benefited from that expertise—and will continue to do so, hopefully long into the future. As someone who has very much benefited from the work of people in the domestic violence and child protection space in my own life, I do always like to acknowledge the role of people like yourself and the influence those individuals can have on the lives of young people who are perhaps doing it tough.

Obviously, in that role it would be really important to be working with government and non-government bodies, but also to be using that lived experience, whether it be through teaching or research. This is a vital thing we are doing. We know we have to get this right and we know that, being nation-leading in having the scheme, it is really important to be putting in that groundwork and making sure we are doing this scheme in a way that benefits not only the workers but also those individuals who are seeking their services.

I acknowledge that there is a push for a national body of work similar to this, and although there is perhaps not that cross-jurisdictional support at the moment to implement such a scheme, I think it strengthens or increases the need for us to make sure that here in South Australia what we are doing is nation leading, that there is the right amount of research and the right amount of background work put into the scheme. I guess the hope is that states will continue to follow on from the work done here to implement systems very similar in their own states further on. That is further reason for us to go back to basics a little bit and make sure that, before the full implementation of the act, the registration scheme is ready to go and ready to support those workers.

This amendment bill will defer the commencement until 1 July 2025 to ensure that the registration scheme is in place at the time of its amendment, so that there is proper time to make sure that social workers are receiving those supports and that our system continues to be nation leading—which we often have been here not just in terms of being progressive but also in terms of pragmatic change, particularly in the lives of vulnerable people here in South Australia.

I am really proud—as I often am—to be part of a government that is prioritising better outcomes for vulnerable people, particularly those who perhaps do not benefit from the lottery of life in terms of their postcode or the circumstances they were born into. I will always be proud to be part of that work, to make sure that those individuals have equal opportunities across our state, no matter the circumstances that have been brought into their lives.

I am very happy to commend the bill. I would like to thank our dear minister and all the individuals who have been involved in this crucial work. Finally, I commend the work of social workers across our state. I, for one, am all the better for the wonderful work they have done and that they continue to do in the lives of vulnerable people.

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:54):** I rise also to support the bill and commend everybody who has had a hand in getting it to where it is at the moment. This type of concept was brought to me before I got into parliament, actually. I have had the pleasure of employing well over 30 social workers through the Independent Learning Centre and various other centres around South Australia. A lady called Kate Barnes, who is one of the most outstanding social workers that I have ever had the privilege of working with and learning from, probably first brought it to my attention back in 2007, so a fair while ago. Her reasoning is not only about recognition and having that standard but also, and most importantly, having the support and the professional development that goes along with that.

My own personal journey really started at Port Augusta, where I had my first teaching placement. Very quickly, I was a coordinator and then, quite quickly after that, I was the student counsellor. With zero experience, zero training in that field, you quickly realise the depth of issues, and breadth of issues as well, that a number of students are facing and confronting. Certainly,

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is pretty quick learning. I felt completely underprepared for that role, there was almost no support, and for most of it I was winging it.

We had some very confronting issues back in middle nineties. Train surfing was a popular fad, particularly with a number of students at my site, which was Port Augusta Secondary School; that was until one of the students fell off the train and got run over by the train, and there were about nine other students there who witnessed pretty much full decapitation and severing of limbs and arms. To deal with that as the counsellor was pretty horrific not only for students and their learning but, before we could even address that, there was a whole heap of family trauma and student trauma.

That was really the steep learning curve that I went on in terms of investing my time and energy into social work. I always have this philosophy, and I would love to see it one day, that for every teaching degree, you also have to do a social work degree hand in hand with it. When I had the Independent Learning Centre, I always used to say that every teacher is a social worker, and every social worker is a teacher. The skills are very transferable. Good teachers are also very good social workers in terms of their approach and care for kids. In the same way, our very good social workers became very good teachers.

In fact, what was really pleasing to me was the number of social workers that we had. Frazer Scanlon came in as a social worker. We provided an environment where he could complete his teaching degree, because it was a one-year addition. He has progressed through Reidy Park Primary School and is now the principal of Glencoe Central Primary School. Christine Hart, who was my head social worker at that centre, has achieved her teaching degree and is now the senior school assistant principal in a Victorian high school.

Bevan White is a very good social worker. He is now running his own business, looking after the wellbeing of young people. Carla Doody is a fantastic social worker as well. She is involved in the education space. I think she has just done eight years at Allendale East Area School. She informed me the other week that she has now just won a job with a NDIS provider. So, they are fantastic outcomes for a number of social workers. As I said, I think we employed well over 30 over a period of time. You get to see the skills that very good social workers bring and the difference they make to kids' lives.

We also need to recognise the difficulty in achieving a social work degree. For somebody who is out of school age and working, to try to do those placements is a prohibitive factor, particularly the 10-week one, which is unpaid. Three months without income coming in is just unachievable for a lot of people. We would have systems set up where we would bank hours and do a whole range of very creative things, probably frowned upon by other institutions, but there was a real desire to have people complete that degree, and now the registration of that I think is a brilliant step forward.

One thing we need to ensure for our social workers is support and professional development, but less so in an educational setting. I have painted a couple of examples already, but certainly the social workers that I know who are with Families SA or the Corrections department are facing a lot of confronting issues and sometimes, in their mind, hopeless situations. Their wellbeing and mental health has to be a priority as well, and I see something like this contributing to that network and that support mechanism that we can put around our social workers.

One other thing I want to briefly touch on, and this is why I think professional development is so important, is really making sure that social workers create an independent or empowering model. It is very easy to fall into a dependence model, because that can make you feel good when young people need your services. We would challenge each other all the time at the various centres that we had: 'Is this intervention a dependence model or an empowering model?'

Whilst it is just one very small example, the lightbulb really came on for me when we were buying taxi fares for students to come into the Independent Learning Centre. Over a week per student it does add up to well over \$100, even for Mount Gambier. We just thought, 'This is not sustainable; how can we do this better?' So as a group we sat down and talked about empowering models. It resulted in bikes being purchased for two students. Our person who did automotives helped the young people put them together, with maintenance and all that type of stuff, and gifted them a bike each, and they were able to turn up from there.

Another example of that was we had an ex-teacher who donated a small car. Our auto guys fixed it up. That person lived out of town with a young baby, and they were able to then get into the Independent Learning Centre. They are the types of empowering models that really stuck with me. The constant challenge from my social workers of 'How can we do this better?' I found very valuable, and the results are there. A number of young people have gone on to great lives and great careers. It is a testament to the social workers we had not just at Mount Gambier but at the Independent Learning Centres at Naracoorte and Millicent. They really did change kids' lives, and I am very grateful for the social workers that we had. Anything that I can do to support their professional development, their support mechanisms, I will do in this place. I commend the bill to the house.

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (16:04):** Can I first of all just say a wholehearted thank you to all of the members who have made really important contributions in this debate. It has been lovely and inspiring to hear different stories about members' own experiences with engagement with social workers at different points in their lives. It has been lovely to hear about members' appreciation of and support for the social workers in their own families. It has been lovely to hear from one member in particular about his undertaking of the degree in social work.

It has also been wonderful to hear, most recently, from the member for Mount Gambier his reflections on social workers who he has worked alongside and encountered during the course of his career. The quote that he said will stick with me. I hope I have it right in my mind, but that is that every social worker is a teacher and every teacher is a social worker. I think that is very, very true and, again, is a lovely reflection of those interactions with social workers that members have had. Thank you very much to the members for Mount Gambier, Newland, Giles, Elder, Davenport, Hurtle Vale and Heysen.

Thank you also to our inaugural director of the social worker registration scheme, who the speakers in the debate have rightly honoured. Professor Sarah Wendt comes to us with such a wealth of experience and expertise, and I know from speaking with her she has such a commitment to making sure we develop and implement this scheme in the best possible way for social workers in South Australia and for our community. I again place on record my thanks to Professor Wendt.

I also want to thank Matt Pearce and Ruth Sibley in my office for their work towards this bill, but also toward all of the aspects of bringing this scheme to life and getting it to the point that we are at today. I also very much thank Alex from the Department for Child Protection and parliamentary counsel for their work in progressing this matter.

Bill read a second time.

*Committee Stage*

In committee.

Clause 1.

**Mr TEAGUE:** As was just now referred to in the course of the debate, there has been an occasion to recognise and to honour the credentials and welcome the appointment of Professor Wendt. I will just ask the minister: under the recruitment process, when was Professor Wendt first identified as the candidate to whom the offer be made for the role?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** Thank you for that question. It is my understanding that the position of director was advertised in February, with applications closing in March. It is also my understanding that there was a recommendation for Professor Wendt to be appointed to the position in July. What I can absolutely confirm is that Professor Sarah Wendt commenced in the position as director on 18 September.

Clause passed.

Clause 2.

**Mr TEAGUE:** What consultation was undertaken with regard to the preparation of the bill and, in particular, with the Australian Association of Social Workers?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** What I can first of all say to the member in relation to consultation is that there was a great degree of consultation about the need for a social workers registration scheme over many years. He has certainly alluded to his time on the committee in the previous session of the parliament. What I can also advise the member is that, without going back into the exchange that was had previously, the proponents of the progress of the bill, being the member for Hurtle Vale and the Hon. Tammy Franks, certainly engaged broadly, as again is my understanding, around the need for the progress of the bill.

After some hesitation, the bill was finally assented to on 9 December 2021. What I can say is that, on coming to government, it was very clear that there had not been any progress in terms of the establishment of the scheme or thinking about the process for recruiting a director and how it would be implemented, nor was there any funding applied either. So in the Mid-Year Budget Review 2022, we allocated funding at last for this scheme that had been long called for. As I spoke about earlier, \$4.7 million was allocated, and then I have just outlined the progress in terms of appointing the exemplary director, who will now establish this really important scheme.

In terms of this bill, given this bill is about changing the date of implementation, of course, given earlier consultation about the need for a scheme, the elements of the scheme, etc., that kind of consultation was not required for a bill that is about a different date for the start of the scheme itself. Certainly, my Chief of Staff did speak with the director—I think that is the correct title—of the AASW. There was certainly a conversation about this bill and the reasons for the bill being introduced into the parliament.

**Mr TEAGUE:** We got there in the end to some extent. Given the last part of that answer began to answer the question that I asked, is there any indication of when the minister's Chief of Staff spoke with, or communicated in any other way with, the Australian Association of Social Workers?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** What I will add to my previous answer is that I have of course met with the Australian Association of Social Workers. I met earlier this year with Cindy from the AASW, and also my Chief of Staff spoke again with Cindy in September. I was also really pleased that the AASW were present at our incredibly successful deep conversation that we had through our child protection and family support symposium just last week.

**The CHAIR:** Do you have a supplementary?

**Mr TEAGUE:** I could repeat the question, I suppose. The minister, in concluding the answer to the question as originally asked, indicated, in respect of consultation with regard to the preparation of the bill—that is, this bill, the bill that extends time for the implementation—that the minister's Chief of Staff spoke with, and I think the minister described the relevant position as the director, and I will not cavil with the appropriate term but there was relevantly communication from the Chief of Staff by speaking with the director and that that contact involved something resembling consultation, if I understood the answer correctly. So I am just asking: is there any indication as to when that happened and is there any record of it?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** I have actually answered the question that I think the member is asking again in this second speech/question.

Clause passed.

Clause 3.

**Mr TEAGUE:** When, if at all—I do not make the presumption—did the minister, or in light of the previous answer, the minister's Chief of Staff, communicate with the Australian Association of Social Workers that the government would request or seek the endorsement of the parliament for an additional 18 months before commencing the scheme at 1 July 2025?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** Again, as I answered two questions ago, in September. My understanding is that there were not further questions arising from that particular discussion.

What I can reiterate again is that I am so incredibly proud that Professor Sarah Wendt has been appointed to the position. I am really, really pleased. I have such faith and clearly, from the contributions earlier, I think everybody in this chamber has great faith in Professor Sarah Wendt's

ability to now take forward the scheme in a way that is thoughtful, that is considered, that ensures that social workers and our broader community are deeply engaged in that process. I really look forward to continuing to hear about the progress of that.

I think I mentioned in my speech that it is my understanding that now Professor Sarah Wendt independently gets on with implementing the scheme and it is my understanding that steps will continue to appoint board members and to begin that process of broader consultation heading to implementation and then the scheme's operation. I really look forward to that. Again, I have great faith in her ability to progress the scheme as it should be.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Just in case we might be at completely cross-purposes—I hope we are not—the question I asked of the minister was: when, if at all, did the minister communicate with the Australian Association of Social Workers that the government was requesting of the parliament an additional 18 months in which to commence the scheme? That remains the question.

As I understand the answer, we are all aware Professor Wendt was appointed commencing on 18 September. We understand the productive work that is expected following Professor Wendt's appointment. My question remains: when, if at all, did the minister, or in light of the previous answer the Chief of Staff or anyone from the minister's office, communicate with the Australian Association of Social Workers that the government was seeking an additional 18 months within which to commence the scheme?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** I am not quite sure how to give you the information other than to say the discussion occurred in September.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Okay; I will just say what I understand that answer to mean. I understand that answer to mean that in September, and around the time of the appointment of Professor Wendt, the minister's Chief of Staff had some form of conversation with the director of the Australian Association of Social Workers, at which time the minister's Chief of Staff indicated to the AASW that the government would be seeking an additional 18 months with which to introduce the scheme. Is that the correct sequence of events?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** I am just not sure what you are trying to get at here. This is a really great step forward. I will say it again: I am advised that that discussion took place in September.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Just to be clear, we will put the pieces together. I want to know when, if at all, anyone associated with the minister had a conversation with the AASW about the government seeking the additional 18 months—not the appointment of Professor Wendt, not the good work ahead, the seeking of the additional 18 months. There must have been a time at which the government formed a view that it was not going to get this done before the time allowed under the act for commencement and that it needed to go back to the parliament to seek the extra time in which to implement the scheme. That must have been a position that the government became appraised of at some time.

I have understood answers from the minister in the course of this committee process to be that any communication with AASW relevantly was constituted by some form of verbal communication between the Chief of Staff of the minister and the director or the person in the equivalent role at AASW—that is the contact. I am asking when, and in particular when if at all, was AASW—ahead of following the debate in this place, following the introduction of the bill—appraised of, informed or consultation sought in relation to the need for the additional 18 months?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** I will just try one more time. I am advised that in September my Chief of Staff spoke with the AASW director about the need for more time.

**The CHAIR:** There are no more clauses, sorry.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I know. I would like to know whether they were on notice of 18 months at that point or whether it was just, 'Well, we're going to seek more time and it's just a question of the pragmatics.' Do we know that?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** What I will say again is that we are absolutely committed to getting this right. It was really disappointing that there had not been any earlier work done on it; nonetheless, we have funded the scheme. We have appointed an exemplary director. We have

enabled that director to get on with developing and implementing the scheme. I have answered the question. I suggest that if there is any more, something, that the member is looking for he gives me a call.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (16:24):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (16:24):** On the third reading I just wish to reflect on the course of the second reading debate. Of course, the bill is an occasion to revisit the question of social worker registration, and of course there is an occasion to reflect on, including through personal experience and study, the important vocation that is social work and to welcome, of course, the recent appointment of Professor Wendt.

I just indicate to the chamber that it is my sincere hope that this additional time that has now been afforded to the government to commence the scheme is such that when next this house has the occasion to speak to the important work of social workers it is not in the context of seeking yet further time to implement the scheme.

As the course of the debate has also indicated, it is my sincere hope that, in the course of progress towards the implementation of the scheme, the important role of the Australian Association of Social Workers, and indeed its contribution to the committee process that preceded the implementation of the act and the report that ensued, is all put to good use, including by keeping in close contact with the association going forward. I otherwise commend the work ahead and commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a third time and passed.

*Parliamentary Procedure*

**SITTINGS AND BUSINESS**

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (16:27):** I move:

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 28 November 2023 at 11am.

Motion carried.

*Bills*

**WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY (INDUSTRIAL MANSLAUGHTER) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 2 November 2023.)

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (16:28):** Mr Deputy Speaker, what I will say is that I spoke at length in support of this bill in the previous week of sitting, and I will leave my comments at that point that I made at that time.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You still have five minutes.

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** No.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You do not want to use them?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** No, I have gone on for some time.

**Ms CLANCY (Elder) (16:29):** I proudly rise today in strong support of the Work Health and Safety (Industrial Manslaughter) Amendment Bill 2023, which seeks to amend the Work Health and Safety Act 2012.

Reform such as the bill before us today is one of the many reasons why I am so proud to be union, proud to be Labor and proud to be a part of the Malinauskas government. This government, and indeed the broader union movement, are firmly committed to the idea that every worker deserves the right to come home safely at the end of each and every working day. Sadly, even in a nation as wealthy and fortunate as ours, this is too often not the case. In the last 10 years alone, more than 100 South Australians have lost their lives at work, including 15 who lost their lives in 2022. These statistics, while already disturbing, do not account for deaths from occupational diseases such as asbestosis or silicosis or deaths related to mental illness caused by work.

When somebody dies at work, something has almost certainly gone wrong. Accidents can and do happen, but it is simply not an accident when an employer has been reckless about something they know causes a serious risk. The first responsibility of every employer, as I know it is for many of the wonderful businesses in my community, must be to provide a safe and respectful workplace.

This bill to criminalise industrial manslaughter ensures there is an appropriate penalty for those dodgy employers or businesses who do not meet the obligations they already have, rather than introducing any new legal obligations. This way, we do not introduce any burden on the overwhelming number of businesses in this state who are doing the right thing. However, we will not be shy in holding to account those who place a worker's life at risk, ensuring the most serious health and safety breaches carry a penalty more appropriate to the crime: a maximum penalty of a fine of up to \$18 million for companies and up to 20 years' imprisonment for individuals.

Those of us who currently reside on this side of the house will unashamedly prioritise legislating in the interests of labour and in the interests of working people, not because we do not support business, or whatever slander may be thrown at us that says otherwise, but because we understand that a rising tide can lift all boats, so long as you have one. As policymakers, we can legislate in the interests of working people not to the detriment of capital but in support of all South Australians. South Australians recognise this, and they understand the power of government to make the lives of people better.

This bill, which has been supported immensely through consultation with both the South Australian union movement and the South Australian business community, shows we can get this balance right. Both agree: if you kill a worker, you should go to jail. Prior to our election, we promised the people of South Australia that we would recognise this crime and treat it like one. Through the passage of this bill, we will fulfil our commitment to introduce an offence of industrial manslaughter in South Australia.

The bill allows for a person to be convicted of industrial manslaughter if they breach a health and safety duty, either recklessly or with gross negligence, and this causes the death of another person. This includes the primary duty of care of a person undertaking or conducting a business to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers they engage. Industrial manslaughter laws must serve as a potent deterrent for grave violations of workplace health and safety, imposing penalties that go some way to acknowledging the irreplaceable value of human life and the profound impact on South Australians when their loved ones do not come home from work.

This reform has, unfortunately, taken too long. Instead of being a national leader in workers' rights—and I always love it when South Australia is coming out ahead and doing something first—we now lag behind the rest of the nation. In addition to the commonwealth committing to introduce their own federal industrial manslaughter laws, industrial manslaughter is now already a crime in the ACT, the Northern Territory, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. By passing this bill, South Australia joins other parts of the nation in recognising the severity of preventable workplace deaths.

We should also strive for consistency with the recommendations of the 2018 national review into the model work health and safety laws, which recommends the introduction of an industrial

manslaughter offence in the model work health and safety act as well as the industrial manslaughter laws of other jurisdictions across the country.

It is also important to note that this reform was developed through community consultation. In addition to our mandate to criminalise industrial manslaughter following the state election, our government sought the insight and experiences of a cross-section of South Australia to strengthen this bill even further. Without genuine consultation across the community, especially those with vested interests in capital or labour, the legislation would fail to accomplish its goal of deterring unlawful dangerous behaviour. We need consultation and cooperation throughout the business community and their representatives, a balance I firmly believe is reflected in this bill.

Following our government's election, we released a discussion paper and held roundtable forums with unions and business groups to discuss the design of laws to criminalise industrial manslaughter. This discussion paper and the roundtable conversations were followed by two consultation drafts for comment. A number of other forums and discussions were also held through this period to provide further constructive feedback on the bill.

I would particularly like to thank every single worker, unionist and business leader who participated in the extensive consultation process that helped bring this bill before us. They have been part of something so incredibly important, so meaningful, and, we hope, genuinely life-saving. I would also like to thank my friend the Attorney-General and his team for their tireless work in bringing this election commitment to the South Australian Labor Party and empowering us to fulfil that commitment to the people of this state in only our second year of government.

As the Attorney-General touched on in his contribution in the other place, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to Andrea Madeley and Pam Gurner-Hall for their advocacy and integral role in this reform. Their leadership and strength in the defiance of the loss they experienced when their loved ones never came home is inspiring, and it has made a difference. Every single member in this place should be inspired by your tireless efforts to make South Australia a better and safer place.

Every single South Australian deserves to come home safely at the end of the day, and our work in this parliament is not over until that is a certainty. This is not radical or antibusiness. It is simple: if your gross negligence or recklessness causes the death of another person at your workplace, you should go to jail. I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (16:36):** I rise to make a brief contribution to the Work Health and Safety (Industrial Manslaughter) Amendment Bill, and want to take up some of the points that have been put through to me.

Before we start, there is no person I know who goes to work with the intent of seeing one of their workers not come home. That has not been anything I have ever witnessed. We need to be a little bit cautious when we are talking about industrial manslaughter in terms of existing legislation and greatly welcomed requirements around occupational health and safety and workplace changes.

A number of industries in Mount Gambier are potentially extremely dangerous industries. If you have ever been to a timber mill you will know that there are a lot of moving parts, and its whole purpose is to move and cut timber. You are dealing with a very hazardous workplace. Certainly, in my tours over the many years I have grown up there, and having friends who have worked there, the improvements in safety we have seen are quite unbelievable, all with the whole aim of making sure that every worker gets home safely.

In terms of taking it to the next level of industrial manslaughter, there are a couple of things I would not mind talking about. Under the criminal jurisdiction, there have been multiple cases in the past in South Australia where an individual who has a health and safety duty has been convicted of manslaughter under common law by reason of an unlawful and dangerous act in the workplace. The introduction of industrial manslaughter legislation within a work health and safety framework is potentially an unnecessary piece of legislation—as I said, it already exists, and has resulted in convictions for manslaughter.

However, if the bill does pass, I would like to have consideration for a couple of amendments. Under section 30A(1)(d) it states the person is reckless or grossly negligent as to the risk to an



individual of death. The position is that the term 'reckless' should be removed from this section such that the section should be amended to read 'the person is grossly negligent as to the risk to an individual of death'. Alternatively, the bill could be amended to change the word 'or' to 'and', such that the section states 'the person is reckless and grossly negligent as to the risk to an individual of death'.

'Grossly negligent' is well defined under the proposed section of the amendment and sets a high threshold for prosecution for individual manslaughter. 'Reckless' is not defined under the bill; however, reckless conduct is defined under the category 1 offence under section 31(1) of the Work Health and Safety Act 2012. Reckless conduct is a lower threshold than gross negligence, and therefore the current wording of section 30A(1)(d) of the amendment creates inconsistency.

Point 2 refers to inclusion of workers in the bill. Section 30A(1) states, 'A person (being a person conducting a business or undertaking, or an officer of a person conducting business or undertaking).' The position is that a 'worker of a person conducting a business or undertaking' needs to be included in the bill.

Section 28(b) of the WHS Act requires workers to take reasonable care to ensure that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. Workers currently have a duty to follow any reasonable instructions in the workplace (section 28(c) of the WHS Act), and a duty to cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the PCBU (section 28(d) of the WHS Act). Such a breach of duty could, for example, include a serious failure to follow directions from the PCBU as to the safety procedures or processes.

The position is that the bill should therefore not only be confined to PCBU or an officer of a PCBU but also to a worker who preforms gross negligence in the workplace, whose conduct subsequently results in the death of another employee in the workplace.

Lastly, I refer to the notion that there are alternative verdicts built into this bill. Section 30A(3) refers to a person potentially being found guilty of a category 1, 2 or 3 offence, where a finding of industrial manslaughter is not satisfied. This has the potential of prosecutions for industrial manslaughter being brought as a matter of course, knowing that an alternative verdict may also be found.

This bill should not reflect a position where an unsuccessful prosecution for industrial manslaughter automatically defaults to a possible verdict of a category 1, 2, or 3 offence. The prosecution should ultimately decide as to whether they are seeking a verdict of industrial manslaughter and if the verdict is unsuccessful then the case is dismissed. There would also, of course, be an opportunity to bring back a prosecution as a category 1, 2 or 3 offence, but it is not a drop-down or alternative verdict situation.

In my research around this, there is actually a very good article by Samuel Joyce, who is a barrister here in South Australia. He has put together a paper, which is in the Australasian Legal Information Institute, titled 'A short history of industrial manslaughter prosecutions'. I will not read it, but it is very good reading in terms of the difficulty at common law with industrial manslaughter through this type of bill, as opposed to, like we talked about previously, the common law having the protections already for a manslaughter charge to be laid and prosecuted. I will just read the last bit of it:

So what can we learn from history?

Nothing in the criminal law, the Robens legislation where it remains, or the uniform legislation abrogates the accepted position at common law that the Crown may present an indictment alleging manslaughter against a [person or] corporation. The history of the law workplace death shows, in the words of Professor Sarre, that there are 'grave limitations on the criminal law as a regulatory tool.' And so it should be. The criminal law is not an ideological plaything. History shows that while prosecutions for manslaughter proper in a workplace have in some cases been successful, [as I have said] the prosecutions for statutory industrial manslaughter in Australia have not. In truth they are largely symbolic measures, designed to raise employers' performance and safety attitudes.

They are the words of Sam Joyce, a barrister in South Australia. With that contribution, I look forward to the committee stage.

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (16:45):** I might start where the member for Mount Gambier left off, although I might say at the outset I could not put it any better than the member for Mount Gambier in terms of the careful way in which the member for Mount Gambier has both appreciated the gravity

of the human circumstances that we are dealing with in an industrial space—there could not be more serious responsibilities—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Heysen, sorry to interrupt, but are you the lead speaker?

**Mr TEAGUE:** No, the lead speaker has already spoken.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Go ahead. I do not want to shortchange you of time, that is all.

**Mr TEAGUE:** As I was saying, with respect, in acknowledging the contribution just now of the member for Mount Gambier, I think we all acknowledge that we are dealing in this area of consideration with the most potentially awful of circumstances in terms of the expectation that, when one goes to work, one should have every right and expectation to return home safe and healthy.

When that does not occur, and in the most thankfully rare but awful of circumstances, we acknowledge that the death of a worker is a terrible thing. That is where, on the concerns that the member for Mount Gambier has raised and my colleagues on this side of the house have articulated as well, there comes a parting of the ways both in principle and in practice about how best to address it.

The passage of Mr Joyce's article that the member for Mount Gambier has quoted from bears reflecting upon with great seriousness because the law has always recognised that there is this important if not fundamental inconsistency as between the criminal law on the one hand and the civil regulation of work health and safety on the other. To repeat, there are grave limitations on the criminal law being used as a regulatory tool, and we ought to be very conscious of it.

In terms of the way that the new offence would operate in practice, I think we see on display how much of a problem might ensue. It is there that the member for Mount Gambier raises, I think, a very real example and an attractive proposition as well in terms of practice, that the difficulty of imposing these new provisions is that we would see—I do not know how absolutely clearly—the possibility for there to be a charge laid not under section 13 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act for manslaughter but under the relevant section of what would be incorporated into the Work Health and Safety Act for industrial manslaughter, and that there is the potential for that to sit alongside what are work health and safety actions of long standing that are well familiar in terms of responses to workplace accidents.

There is a very real difficulty that is associated with any circumstances (a prosecutor is always going to have to form a view as to whether or not to commence a prosecution), but without some very clear delineation, we could find ourselves in circumstances where that vice that Mr Joyce is talking about might not only be there as a highest level form of recourse—we debate the merits of using the criminal law as a regulatory tool at all—but in terms of practice, the very real possibility that the prosecution in this space might be brought, if it is permitted, on grounds that there is enough to charge industrial manslaughter and, if it does not quite come up to proof, then there are these alternatives in the same proceeding of the more longstanding category 1, 2 and 3 offences. I think that creates a very real difficulty.

It has been suggested by the member for Colton that there be a clear separation. I understand that that is the proposition raised by the member for Mount Gambier as well: to say if we are ever in this space—and I am speaking for myself, and I think I have heard other members express it in these terms as well—we have a perfectly good mechanism in section 13 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act in pursuing any relevant charges for manslaughter.

But if we are in this space and we address the merits of being able to pursue a prosecution more broadly than against a natural person, then there ought to be a very clear delineation between this potential proceeding for this kind of what is termed 'industrial manslaughter' on the one hand and just about anything else that ought to be really very separate.

Maybe not directly going to the point that I have just addressed, but certainly going to the point in relation to what has been perceived by the government in recent days, even in the course of the debate since the bill was introduced, there is a need to make it clear that prosecution under these provisions would proceed as a major indictable offence and to make clear the consequences of that

procedurally. I think it indicates that there is a degree to which it might be observed that there is a rush procedurally and, given that we are yet to consider the government's proposed amendment—to make just that point clear—it seems to me that there might be reflection on both making it clear that we are dealing with a major indictable offence and also on the clear distinction, one from the other.

I do not think any argument needs to be made. The elements of manslaughter, those matters that need to be proved, are well familiar; there is no particular difficulty about that. Again, the adequacy of the criminal law in that sense is there and is quite plain. To reflect on an area in which I have had some professional experience, albeit in the civil context, there has been a long debate about the extent to which the wrongdoing of employees can be sheeted home to an employer, even in civil cases, by what is known as a process called vicarious liability. For a long time, the High Court and the authorities going back as the laws developed, particularly in the UK and in Canada, made clear that the employment relationship and the responsibility of an employer for the criminal conduct of an employee was regarded as incompatible with the nature of employment full stop.

I concede that we are not relying entirely on the law of vicarious liability; in fact, we are not considering the elements of manslaughter. We are not even looking at circumstances of deliberateness. We have had reflections about the necessary threshold of recklessness and gross negligence. Again, it is important to reflect on the important difference between what has been long recognised as the important work of the regulatory tools that are contained within the work health and safety legislation and criminal law. In my view, the two ought to be kept completely distinct. If this bill is to progress, then I certainly commend the house's close consideration not only of the government's own amendments, so as to make clear the nature of the proceedings that will need to be followed, but also of those matters that the member for Mount Gambier has raised in the course of his contribution to the debate.

Just while reflecting on the importance of principle in this regard as well, I think it is important to highlight the nature of the relationship between employee and employer, indeed, the nature of the circumstances of any productive workplace, as being characterised by a mutual responsibility. That is in circumstances, of course, of a very well-developed occupational health, welfare and safety process across a wide range of industries.

It has long been settled that despite, and in the context of, what might be necessary training, the implementation application of policies and all the various mechanisms that are designed to ensure the most healthy and safe workplaces day to day for workers, it is nonetheless an environment characterised by, at its core, a mutual responsibility. You cannot achieve what is desired in a workplace without a healthy core of mutual responsibility. Again, it is not for no reason that you have decades and centuries of both law and practice building up that keep separate, to the largest extent, regulatory process on the one hand and the provisions for very serious criminal offences on the other.

I am quick to acknowledge that over the last 20 years or so, and not just in Australia but around the world, we have seen the advent of legislation for various forms of industrial manslaughter. I think as far as Australia is concerned, the ACT might have been the first to legislate a form of industrial manslaughter, and Victoria had been early on considering it as well for inclusion in its statute. There is a form of it in the UK as well.

So it is not as though it is some completely novel step into an otherwise unknown area and it is not entirely creating law, but it is there that I think it is then important to think about the way in which these, in this case, most serious charges might be brought and, if we are to be heading down this path and contrary to the sounds of caution that have been raised in the course of the debate, that we as far as possible keep separate these concepts of regulatory tools on the one hand and criminal offences on the other. There may be important questions to deal with in terms of the burden of proof as well that might arise depending on an intermingling of various different processes under the act. Those might be matters that can be considered in the course of the committee process as well.

In the short time that is available to me, I just want to express and repeat my acknowledgement of the very thorough response and consideration of this bill that has been given

by the Australian Hotels Association. They have made detailed and thoughtful submissions—they have been adverted to in some detail by the member for Colton earlier in the debate—and I recognise the AHA's important role and particular contribution to this debate.

I also acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of Business SA and also the Motor Trade Association, each of whom in their different ways have emphasized that principle of mutuality, of mutual responsibility that applies in the workplace. Much like some of the other issues that have come along to this house in recent times—without reflecting on any particular legislation—these are matters for consideration by the parliament in principle and in whole.

They are not matters that ought be come at on the basis of winners and losers and some sort of tug of war of rights, whether it is tenant versus landlord or whether it is employee versus employer. Our responsibility is greater than that. Our responsibility is to ensure that there is, in this case more particularly, an atmosphere of well-regulated, well-supported but mutual responsibility with a view to maximising health and safety in the interests of all concerned.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (17:06):** I indicate that I am going to be providing a few comments on behalf of the opposition in relation to the Work Health and Safety (Industrial Manslaughter) Amendment Bill 2023. The opposition will be opposing this legislation in its current form. We have a great deal of concern that industrial manslaughter, as it is currently defined and proposed to be dealt with in this body of legislation, does not strike the appropriate balance between the business and the employee.

It could create a number of situations that we have great concern about where the balance is out of whack with regard to personal responsibility, and we have significant concern about perhaps unintended reputational damage both to individuals and businesses as a consequence of some of the mechanisms contained within this legislation.

We certainly do not oppose this legislation on the intent of the bill because I believe that everyone in this parliament and the vast majority of people in the community do hold a shared view that we must take all reasonable steps to reduce instances of workplace injuries and workplace deaths. That is something that must weigh heavily on, I think, the vast majority of employers all of the time—the desire and the need and the responsibility to keep those who work within their businesses as safe as possible and to ensure that everyone goes home at night to see their families after a long day in the workplace.

However, we do not believe that this bill is the right way to go about achieving this outcome. The bill creates the offence of industrial manslaughter. I want to just provide the definition, which is outlined in the proposed act, and that is that an individual or body corporate commits industrial manslaughter if, and there are a number of options here:

- the individual or body corporate has a health and safety duty;
- the individual or body corporate engages in conduct that breaches that duty;
- the conduct of the individual or body corporate causes the death of a worker to whom that duty is owed; and
- the individual or body corporate engages in conduct with gross negligence or is reckless as to the risk to a worker of death or serious injury or illness.

The bill provides for a very substantial penalty where a breach of the existing duties occurs through gross negligence or recklessness which then results in the death of an individual. The maximum penalty is 20 years' imprisonment for an offence by an individual, or a fine of up to \$18 million for an offence by a body corporate. The bill proposes that the two-year limitation period for prosecution under the act would not apply to industrial manslaughter prosecutions which, of course, significantly widens the scope of the legislation, and we believe is something else that might get this legislation a bit out of balance when it comes to striking the appropriate penalty regime versus consequences.

The opposition appreciates that the government has presented two versions of this bill for consultation, but we still have significant concerns about the impact of the legislation. We note that business peak bodies also share our concerns, or perhaps we share theirs, and those concerns have not been addressed in the version of the bill that is before the House of Assembly today.

Canvassing why we believe that this legislation presents the wrong mechanism to achieve what I believe is shared political intent and the shared intent of many employer organisations, it is worth just thinking about the decades-old principle that has underpinned workplace safety and the principle that underpins current WHS legislation, particularly the Work Health and Safety Act, and that is the concept of mutual obligation within the workplace. All participants—employers, employees, directors of businesses and, in the context of this bill, bodies corporate—should have a shared responsibility for workplace safety.

It is the Liberal Party of South Australia's firm view that we cannot achieve what is desired here—and that is to reduce, as much as practically possible, workplace injuries and deaths—without working together. Employers and employees coming together under the umbrella of mutual obligation, we believe, is essential and should be more recognised within this legislation than it is. The opposition is concerned that, in the event of an instance of an offence of industrial manslaughter being committed, only an individual or body corporate can be prosecuted, and there is not the recourse to pursue an employee or another individual: an individual, perhaps, with what you would normally suggest is a sphere of influence with regard to a particular incident.

This bill, unfortunately, creates an 'us and them' approach to workplace safety. That is a message and an approach that the Liberal Party of South Australia cannot support. At the end of the day, employers and businesses do need to be held accountable for ensuring that the very best procedures, training and maintenance are followed, and they should be held accountable for their actions when these fall short of expectations. In the same way, employees have an obligation to their fellow workmates.

In the circumstances where the most egregious breaches of workplace duties occur, where gross negligence or reckless actions have led to the death of someone in the workplace, the individual, individuals or otherwise should rightly be held responsible and they should rightly face a very significant penalty—but all individuals should be treated equally. A number of the submissions from employer organisations such as the Motor Trade Association or the Australian Hotels Association (South Australian Branch) have made it very clear that they have great concerns about the lack of equality within this legislation.

Under this bill some individuals may have a health and safety duty and may engage in conduct that breaches that duty, particularly where an employer has taken all reasonable steps to mitigate that outcome. But, under this bill, they would not be prosecuted to the same threshold as those who own and operate a business, a body corporate and the like.

Within any organisation there rightfully should be collective responsibility for employers and employees to ensure that everyone works in a safe environment, and if something unthinkable was to occur at a workplace, everyone should be held responsible and accountable for their actions equally. In addition, the opposition is concerned that under the proposed bill an individual or body corporate could suffer significant or detrimental reputational damage as a result of being charged with industrial manslaughter despite eventually not being able to be found guilty of an offence.

We need to ensure that charges for industrial manslaughter are quarantined for the most egregious offences, rather than us see instances that could significantly damage an otherwise good reputation of businesses trying their best to employ South Australians. The opposition has moved a number of amendments to address our concerns, and we hope that they will be supported by the government. Our firm view is that when industrial manslaughter charges are brought they should only be done in circumstances where there is near certainty of a successful prosecution.

Businesses, like individuals, can suffer reputational damage. Given the complexity that would come from suggesting any sort of suppression regime, where the principle of the right of innocence until proven guilty could be maintained, we strongly urge members that this is carefully analysed, that a legislative regime is put in place that would enable an approach such as the alternate verdict framework to be changed. That would ensure that when charges are brought, they are done so with certainty, and that potential reputational damage to South Australian businesses and individuals is limited. The proposed amendment is also in line with the submission that was provided to the minister by Business SA.

In closing, again I want to emphasise that it is my firm view that the intent of both sides of the house, and of the vast majority of South Australians would be to ensure that at every single opportunity employees in their workplace are treated with respect, they are given the opportunity to stay safe, and be able to make an income in an environment where they are protected by their employer, but it is our firm view that a mutual obligation must be embedded within that.

I want to thank the many employer representative organisations that have spoken to the opposition about this: Business SA, the Motor Trade Association, the Australian Hotels Association, and others who have come forth and particularly spoken to the shadow attorney-general about this matter, and worked through the complexities of what is a difficult piece of legislation to both comprehend but also to implement. The opposition will be opposing this because we think the balance has not been struck, and I commend the bill, as it stands with the amendments that we have proposed, to the house.

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (17:18):** I rise to speak to the Work Health and Safety (Industrial Manslaughter) Amendment Bill 2023. We have seen throughout this country's history that unhealthy workplaces can engulf a generation and, unfortunately, become the most defining part of one's life. The devastation resulting from the mining and milling of blue asbestos and the suffering of the victims and their families are marks on our nation that should never be repeated and never be forgotten. Then, there are the workplace accidents that end lives suddenly. The shining light of families whose lives end almost as quickly as the blowing out of a candle. When a person closes their front door heading off to work each day, they do so with the intention of walking through that door at the end of their shift. When we say goodbye to a loved one as they are heading out the door, we do not expect it to be for the last time but, for so many, this has been the reality.

Attendance at Trades Hall over the years as the delegate for the teacher's union and a delegate and a member of the executive of SA Unions for the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance exposed me to the many tragic stories of serious worker injury and death and the dedication of the union movement to do what they could to address it.

Today I recognise the men, women and young people, the teenagers, who have lost their lives over the years through workplace death and their families who have had to live their lives without them. The bill before us today delivers on our government's election commitment to legislate an 'offence of industrial manslaughter in South Australia.' The bill aims to deter unsafe work practices by applying an appropriate penalty when a person conducting a business fails to 'as reasonably as practicable' ensure the health and safety of the workers in their employ. Through this, it recognises the traumatic loss, the heartbreak, suffered by the families of victims of workplace tragedy.

The Work Health and Safety (Industrial Manslaughter) Amendment Bill 2023 will mean a conviction for industrial manslaughter can result if a person is found in breach of a health and safety duty, either recklessly or with gross negligence causing the death of another person. Following an extensive consultation process with businesses, unions, and health and safety professionals has led to this bill being present here today.

The penalties are a fine up to \$18 million for companies and imprisonment of up to 20 years for individuals. The bill brings South Australia into line with Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the ACT, all of which have introduced industrial manslaughter laws.

We all know accidents happen and we know that the majority of businesses in South Australia take the health and safety of their workers seriously. For those employers who do not, the bill before us sends a clear message: if you are an employer who is reckless or grossly negligent with workers' health and safety, there will be a significant price to pay.

Statistics reveal that, on average, 12 South Australians die every year at work; this is on top of those who suffer serious injury and illness. The devastation of losing a loved one through a workplace death is no more present than at the International Workers' Memorial Day service each year hosted by VOID, Voice of Industrial Death. If you are not familiar with VOID, I encourage you to look at the Facebook page, a page that overflows with grief.

On this day, family members light a candle for the loved one they have lost and each year the number of lives lost collectively increases; the number of candles increases; the number of

families suffering increases. The bill before us today aims to address this, helping to ensure that workers return home at the end of their shift.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley) (17:23):** I do not want to go over what has been raised by other speakers in the Liberal Party, but I want to talk about some of the anxiety and perhaps the reasons for that anxiety in the small business community in particular about this bill.

I think Innes Willox from the Australian Industry Group has probably described the current environment under wall-to-wall Labor governments, particularly the Albanese government and its endeavour to return Australia back to the industrial relations system of the 1950s. He said:

...the federal government's proposed industrial relations changes are simply 'modest'—

and this is what was claimed by ACTU Secretary Sally McManus. She made this claim in the *Australian Financial Review*. Innes Willox went on to say:

...Australian employers and their workforces would be intrigued to know what unions would see as their real demands.

Rather than being modest, what is being proposed is a radical makeover of Australia's workplace relations. He continues:

Redefining who is an employee is not modest. Nor is fundamentally redefining who can be a casual. Granting the Fair Work Commission, a tribunal that has only ever regulated employment arrangements, sweeping new powers to also set conditions for independent contractors and an almost open-ended capacity to intervene into commercial arrangements between businesses across Australia's supply chain is certainly not modest.

This, of course, refers to the reintroduction of the TWU's 'fair rates' that was responsible for the suicide of contract truck drivers the last time that was brought in by the Gillard government. It restricted the ability for contractors to price their work as truck drivers with their own rigs, favouring the big union companies, the companies that employed union members as employees. He goes on:

Giving union delegates the right to represent workers who do not even want to join a union is not modest. I doubt that many employers would regard the proposal that they be required to allow an uncapped number of their workers with an unspecified period of paid time off work to attend union training as modest.

Similarly, expanding union rights to wander around workplaces and to comb through the employment records and personal details of workers without even providing advanced notice is not modest.

Mr Willox goes on to highlight a number of the quite extreme measures that the Albanese government is putting through at the federal level. Another one here is letting unions hold the power to block employers from entering into enterprise bargaining agreements, even if the workplace supports it. Again, he says that is not a modest return. Winding back this legislation is winding back all the very progressive legislation in the industrial relations area that was introduced by the Hawke and Keating government in accord with the union movement.

You can see that when small business learns about the rollout of industrial manslaughter laws and the criminalisation of industrial manslaughter, they are concerned about getting a fair go, because what they are seeing from the agents of the labour movement, the Labor government, Labor governments around Australia, is a grab for their businesses by others who believe that they know how to run businesses better than those who are investing their own money in those businesses.

Another area I am concerned about with the industrial manslaughter laws is that all the responsibility lies with the employer for the industrial safety of the workplace. Starting my life on the factory floor as an apprentice, I witnessed some quite awful matters, and one very serious one where a fellow worker took shortcuts in setting up the spindle moulder. For those who are not familiar with a spindle moulder, it is a bit like a reverse router but instead of moving the router around the piece you are shaping you actually move the piece you are shaping around a very large cutter. It is very important that that is protected, and it takes time and some skill to do that.

A wood machinist, which is the trade that delivers that, requires that you have the skills and ability and that it is your responsibility to ensure that machine is safe. Unfortunately, this employee, this work colleague of mine, thought he would take a short cut and ended up losing, I think, three fingers in that process. It was a horrific accident. Sure, he paid a very big price. He was only in his late twenties when that happened, but it was his responsibility to ensure that machine was set up properly and was properly guarded.

I think where we are seeing a challenging situation in the modern workforce is in the area of people turning to medical cannabis, for pain relief in particular. One of the biggest issues with medical cannabis, of course, is that even if you are taking medical cannabis that is prescribed and you turn up for work and there is a very rigorous occupational health and safety program at that employment site, you are sent home if you are detected having drugs in the system.

Many of the treatments for medical marijuana have traces of THC, and even though you might not be impaired—although it is very difficult to come up with a formula of impairment for THC in the blood—you will be sent home and, if you are recidivist in failing the drug testing, you will lose your job. We heard a witness in the select committee on marijuana explain that.

I also asked David Henry, the then National Work Health and Safety Coordinator at the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, when he gave evidence, if there would be difficulties, with employees using prescribed cannabis for pain relief, in managing a workplace and what would happen if the employer, for example, decided, 'Yes, we're very progressive here. There are at least two medical cannabis medicines approved by the TGA; it must be safe. If somebody can show us that this is approved—it is a prescription and is medicine for pain relief—we will ignore that THC reading on the drug test.'

What happens, in that instance, if that person is actually impaired, with this new policy in place, and their impairment in operating machinery—using a forklift, driving a vehicle, driving a B-double down Cross Road or in other densely populated areas with lots of traffic—was the cause of an accident that saw either his or somebody else's death? I do not know that this legislation covers that employer off.

It is a risk, so what will happen to those people who are on medical marijuana may very well be that they have to come off medical marijuana; go onto opioids, which we know can do terrible damage to the body with long-term use and are addictive; simply put up with the pain; resign from their job; or get the sack. I think this is just one example of the challenges of legislation like this and is an unintentional consequence of this legislation.

I think those that have read the piece by Mr Willox in the *Australian Financial Review* of a couple of weeks ago would also see that, combined with the industrial manslaughter laws, as just another tool that the union movement has to throw at employers if they want to throw their weight around.

Many small employers are not in the union system. Their employees are very happy with the arrangements that are made with their staff. They often have several members of the same family working for them because of the environment and security that the small business can offer, and everybody works as a team. It is not like working for a big company, such as an automotive company or a large building firm, where there may be a culture that may predict how people behave or there may be a reason for a type of behaviour in a workforce or by management.

My experience has always been in my own small business, in many small businesses that I did business with and those that I have visited as the member for Unley and as minister for innovation and skills, learning how these businesses work, you see that a lot of it is based on trust and mutual respect. That is how industrial relations should also be managed. Health and safety should also be managed with mutual respect, particularly in those small businesses where everybody has something at stake for that business to be successful and for those industries to survive. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

## **PETROLEUM AND GEOTHERMAL ENERGY (ENERGY RESOURCES) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.



**ADVANCE CARE DIRECTIVES (REVIEW) AMENDMENT BILL***Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill with the amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

No. 1. New clause, page 4, after line 8—Insert:

5A—Amendment of section 15—Requirements for witnessing advance care directives

Section 15—after subsection (1) insert:

- (1a) Without otherwise limiting the requirements that may be set out in regulations made under this section relating to witnessing an advance care directive, the regulations—
- (a) cannot require an advance care directive to be signed or witnessed in a particular order; and
  - (b) cannot require a substitute decision-maker appointed under the advance care directive to have completed a part of an advance care directive form before the advance care directive can be witnessed.

No. 2. Clause 7, page 4, after line 21—Insert:

(2) Section 21—after subsection (3) insert:

- (3a) Without otherwise limiting the requirements that may be set out in regulations made under this section relating to the appointment of substitute decision-makers, the regulations—
- (a) cannot require an advance care directive to be signed or witnessed in a particular order; and
  - (b) cannot require a substitute decision-maker to complete a part of an advance care directive form before the advance care directive can be witnessed.

**STATUTES AMENDMENT (NATIONAL ENERGY LAWS) (OTHER GASES) BILL***Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

**GAS (OTHER GASES) AMENDMENT BILL***Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

At 17:38 the house adjourned until Tuesday 28 November 2023 at 11:00.