

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 9 April 2024

**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.

*Members*

### MEMBER FOR DUNSTAN, NEW

Ms Cressida O'Hanlon, who made an affirmation of allegiance, took her seat in the house as member for the district of Dunstan, in place of the Hon. S.S. Marshall (resigned).

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

*Parliamentary Procedure*

### STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (11:04):** I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable me move a motion without notice forthwith.

**The SPEAKER:** An absolutely majority is required. It would appear to be present; we will make a brief count. I accept the motion. Is it seconded?

**Honourable members:** Yes, sir.

Motion carried.

### VISITORS

**The SPEAKER:** Mr Premier, before you proceed I wish to acknowledge in the gallery today family members of Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE: Ms Deborah Edwards, Ms Amy O'Donoghue, Ms Ruby Edwards and Mrs Mahailia Levinson. It is an honour to have you present with us.

*Condolence*

### O'DONOGHUE, DR LOWITJA

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (11:04):** I move:

That this house records its sincere regret at the death, on 4 February 2024, of Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG and places on record its appreciation for her lifelong commitment to improving the rights, health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and offers its deepest sympathy to her family and community on the loss of a remarkable South Australian.

I come before the house to mark the life and work of a truly extraordinary South Australian. We farewell Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG, respected elder, trailblazing activist, and advocate for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Noel Pearson called her 'the greatest Aboriginal leader of the modern era'. Paul Keating declared her, 'A remarkable Australian leader...whose unflinching instinct for enlargement marks her out as unique.' She inspired, challenged and counselled multiple generations of Indigenous workers and activists in every state and territory. She was a leader of leaders.

Born in our state's Far North, Dr O'Donoghue was taken from her family as an infant and raised in a mission home in the Flinders Ranges. She never knew exactly where she was born. That was not the only thing that she would not know about her own life. The birth date given on her official

documents, 1 August 1932, was chosen by missionaries. She would not even know her true name until she was finally reunited with her mother 33 years after she was taken away from her.

While she was reticent to describe herself as 'stolen', she spoke of a childhood without love or affection, even from those who treated her with kindness. But while love was denied to Dr O'Donoghue in so many ways throughout her youth, her love for her people remained strong and true throughout her life. While at Colebrook children's home, the young Lowitja was told that she would never amount to anything. How wrong they were.

Dr O'Donoghue spent her adult life fighting for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and reshaping public policy for the better. All her life, Dr O'Donoghue considered herself first and foremost a nurse, a qualification she wore with justified pride. It was an honour she had to fight for, having been told Aboriginal people could not be admitted to a nursing degree. However, her determination and passion saw her case taken all the way to Premier Thomas Playford himself and she became the first Aboriginal nurse to train at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

She was the founding Chair of the National Aboriginal Conference, a key figure in the 1967 referendum, and a central figure in the state Department of Aboriginal Affairs throughout the 1970s. Her compassion was legendary. The story goes that she always had a full picnic basket packed in her red Volkswagen ready to deploy whenever someone needed a feed.

She was the inaugural Chair of ATSIC in 1990, a leader on the Mabo decision, and the first-ever Aboriginal person to address the United Nations General Assembly. She was consulted by Prime Minister Rudd for the apology to the stolen generation and she could have been our first female Governor-General, a suggestion made to Paul Keating in 1995.

Her many honours include being the first Aboriginal woman to be made a Member of the Order of Australia, alongside Commander of the Order of the British Empire; Australian of the Year; and an Australian National Living Treasure. She was even invested as a Dame of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great by Pope John Paul II, despite not actually being Catholic. But this litany of achievement was not simply in service of her own ambition. She was determined that Aboriginal people, especially Aboriginal women, would not face the same struggles and barriers that she once did—and she did so on her own terms, every step of the way.

During her nursing career, she was encouraged on multiple occasions to seek a card from the Aborigines Protection Board that would make her exempt from the Aboriginal act and thus have the rights and privileges reserved for non-Aboriginal people. Every time, she refused, declaring that she 'would not have a dog metal of any kind'. The responsibility to open doors not just for herself but for all who followed was a responsibility that she carried with courage, with grace and with dignity at all times, but most importantly it was a responsibility she carried with the love that she inspired in those around her.

Dr O'Donoghue leaves behind her family, her community and a nation vastly better for her efforts as she embarks on a new journey. The life and work of Dr O'Donoghue is not merely a gift that she leaves us; it is also a challenge and an example. Dr O'Donoghue shows exactly what can be done with a life lived with courage, hope, independence and love: a legacy of incredible significance, of sweeping change, of pioneering achievement. The flame she lit cannot be extinguished. The work will go on. I move that this motion be commended to the house.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (11:11):** On behalf of the opposition, I rise to also make a contribution on the condolence motion moved by the Premier for Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG, a remarkable South Australian whose legacies for Aboriginal Australians will endure forever, but I like to think her legacy for all Australians will also be significant. Dr O'Donoghue was a leader, a lifelong campaigner and an advocate for improving the rights and outcomes of Aboriginal people. But beyond being an advocate, she was a change maker, someone who saw policy reform in practical action, personally achieving many firsts for Aboriginal Australians and, in particular, for Aboriginal women.

Born in August 1932 on a cattle station in the Far North of South Australia, she was born to an Aboriginal mother, Lily Woodforde, and a father of Irish descent, Thomas O'Donoghue. At age two, Dr O'Donoghue was removed from her family and sent to a mission, the Colebrook Home, which

at that time was located in Quorn in South Australia's Flinders Ranges. She lived at that mission with her siblings, initially receiving an education from the Quorn Primary School and later at Eden Hills and Unley High School following the relocation of the Colebrook Home to Eden Hills in 1944.

Lowitja started work at 16, but after several years she applied to study nursing at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Aboriginal people were not accepted at that time into nurse training; however, in an act that became characteristic of her motivations throughout her life, she lobbied the then government, including the Premier at the time, Sir Thomas Playford, and in 1954 at the age of 22 she became the first Aboriginal trainee nurse at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, paving the way for Aboriginal people to enter nursing. She continued to serve and devote 10 years of her life to her nursing career and in time was promoted to charge nurse, leaving the hospital in 1961.

From 1962 until 1972, Dr O'Donoghue continued campaigning to improve the rights of Aboriginal people. Again, her focus was particularly on women. She was a founding member of the Council of Aboriginal Women of South Australia and worked as a nurse and welfare officer for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in South Australia, working in Coober Pedy, Oodnadatta, the APY lands and Point McLeay.

The year 1967 heralded significant advancements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia, with a referendum gaining support for more than 90 per cent of Australians to change the constitution to allow for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to be included in the Census and for the commonwealth to make laws for them. Dr O'Donoghue advocated strongly for this reform, but her role as an advocate was far from over.

She went on to become, at various times, a member of the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee, the regional director for the South Australian branch of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs—the first Aboriginal person to be promoted to this level—and she was a board director of the Aboriginal Development Commission.

As a testament to her significant personal contribution towards improving outcomes for the Aboriginal community, she was recognised with the nation's highest honours in 1976, when she was invested as a Member of the Order of Australia for service to the Aboriginal community, the first Aboriginal woman to be inducted into the new Australian honour system. By 1983, she was invested as a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for service to the Aboriginal community, and, in 1984, she became Australian of the Year.

Dr O'Donoghue witnessed many policy transitions. She was the final chairperson of the Aboriginal Development Commission in 1990, and was subsequently announced as the inaugural Chairperson for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). In 1992, she became the first Aboriginal person to address the United Nations General Assembly in New York for what was the launch of the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples.

I was interested to learn that our current South Australian Governor, Her Excellency the Hon. Frances Adamson AC, was actually present for Dr O'Donoghue's address to the General Assembly. She was a young diplomat at the time and said that Dr O'Donoghue's address 'was deeply moving, it was quite shocking but, as with everything she did, it was done with grace'. From what I have learned about Dr O'Donoghue's advocacy work, I understand that this was her consistent approach: she did not avoid confronting the difficult realities, but used her personal experiences to motivate reform and better outcomes for Aboriginal communities.

In 1998, Lowitja was declared an Australian National Living Treasure, and the following year, she was awarded the Companion of the Order of Australia for public service through leadership to Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in areas of human rights and social justice, particularly as chairwoman of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission.

In 2006, Dr O'Donoghue was invested as Dame of the Order of St Gregory the Great, a papal honour by Pope John Paul II, awarded to people often of Catholic faith—but not restricted to that, as the Premier mentioned—in recognition of their personal service to Holy See and to the Roman Catholic Church, through their unusual labours, their support of the Holy See and its aims, and the examples that they set to their communities.

Dr O'Donoghue was involved in the formal national apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly to the stolen generations, on behalf of the nation at the Australian Parliament House in 2008, and she announced her retirement from public life several months later. In 2009, she was honoured with a NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr O'Donoghue passed away on 4 February 2024. Throughout her life, she challenged stereotypes and expectations, and encouraged people, particularly Aboriginal people, to aspire to great things. She advocated for change and elevated the voices of Aboriginal Australians. Her legacies will endure, including the significant work of the Lowitja Institute, which works to influence policies, programs and practices that make a positive difference.

Her achievements are significant and they will be remembered by many people in many different ways. To Lowitja's family and friends who are gathered here today, on behalf of the opposition, I offer you our sympathies, but also acknowledge that this is a woman whose legacy will live on for decades if not centuries to come. Vale Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue.

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (11:19):** I also rise to mourn the loss of Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue—a great leader and a force for her community and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across our country. The seen and unseen impact of Dr O'Donoghue on the health and other systems in South Australia was transformational for both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous Australians.

Dr O'Donoghue was born on 1 August 1932 and passed away peacefully aged 91 in February earlier this year. Born in De Rose Hill in the remote north-west corner of South Australia, like many Aboriginal children at the time in its shameful part of our history she and her two sisters were removed from their mother at the age of two, part of the stolen generation. Her dedication to health and wellbeing has been well recorded and recognised in the public record, in addition to the Lowitja Institute and the establishment of the Lowitja O'Donoghue Foundation.

In 1953, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue applied to complete her nursing training at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. She was refused because of her Aboriginal heritage. She fought this unfair and unjust decision and sought support from the then South Australian Premier Sir Thomas Playford. She of course did not just fight this decision for herself; she fought it for many other young aspirational Aboriginal nurses and doctors and other healthcare workers who were to then follow in her footsteps. This was just one of many first steps where she paved the road for other Aboriginal people in this country.

The decision was eventually overturned, and in 1954 she was the first Aboriginal trainee nurse at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, where she worked for 10 years. By 1959, she had been promoted to the role of a charge sister. Dr Lowitja always referred to the Royal Adelaide Hospital as the RAH and it became an institution that she was proud to be part of. The same institution that had once turned her away, she made her home.

In South Australia, we now have 225 Aboriginal nurses and midwives working across SA Health. They prove every day they are leaders in this field, and it is because of inspirational pioneers such as Dr Lowitja that they are able to have those roles. The generous mentorship that Dr Lowitja provided directly and indirectly, in particular to young Aboriginal women, has had a ripple effect that will be felt for generations to come.

I strongly believe that Dr Lowitja's leadership paved the way for other fearless Aboriginal leaders in health, like the late Mary Buckskin, who now has an SA Health Excellence Award named after her, ensuring future Aboriginal trailblazers can be honoured for their excellence. There are also many other leaders, such as Janine Mohamed, a proud Narungga and Kaurna woman, who has been the CEO of the Lowitja Institute and served for many years as a nurse within the Aboriginal community-controlled health sector at a state, national and international level.

Throughout her life, Dr Lowitja continued to campaign relentlessly for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. She fought for the recognition of Aboriginal people at the 1967 referendum and went on to join the South Australian branch of the Federal Office of Aboriginal Affairs. In the early 1970s, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue was a member of the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement and was appointed to the position of regional director of the South Australian Department

of Aboriginal Affairs. Here she was responsible for the local implementation of national Aboriginal welfare policy, becoming the first woman to hold such a position in a federal department.

Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue was the founding Chairperson of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and also played a role in drafting the native title legislation arising from the High Court's historic Mabo decision. She was the first Aboriginal person to address the United Nations General Assembly, proving her reach went well beyond South Australia and even Australia.

The Lowitja Institute, named after Dr Lowitja as its patron, is Australia's only national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health research institute. I hope the Lowitja Institute will continue to support the next generation of Aboriginal health researchers for many decades to come by continuing the work that Dr Lowitja started herself back in 1954 and which continues to play a role even as recently as a couple of weeks ago in working with governments to address Aboriginal health inequalities across this country. The Lowitja O'Donoghue Foundation, proudly established by the institute on Dr Lowitja's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, will help to keep her incredible story alive through education and scholarships.

Dr Lowitja's participation in the 1997 national forum led to the development of strategies focusing on increasing the numbers of Aboriginal people in nursing and the establishment of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses. She is now the founding patron of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives, which continues this support for our nursing and midwifery workforce.

Many people recognise Dr Lowitja for her work and impact within Aboriginal affairs and health sectors, but just as important is her impact on non-Indigenous Australians. She truly believed in reconciliation and tirelessly demonstrated this in all aspects of her work and life. Her story brought a real face to reconciliation, and she led through example to face and overcome many barriers to achieve success. As a visible and outspoken Aboriginal woman during a time when examples of Aboriginal excellence were scarce in the media, she was able to be a guiding light for many and changed the narrative for all of us.

Noel Pearson once famously described her as 'the greatest Aboriginal leader of the modern era...the rock who steadied us in the storm'. We recognise her fearless and passionate advocacy and the impact she had on the lives of countless people both in South Australia and nationally. Her accomplishments will stand the test of time and become a lasting legacy.

As a final note, at the state funeral, which many of us were honoured to be at recently, afterwards the Premier and I had the opportunity to meet a whole cohort of the staff from the aged-care residence in which Dr Lowitja had been cared for in her final years. Very passionate nurses spoke about her passion, particularly for nursing, but also what a delight it was for those staff to be able to care for Dr Lowitja. Vale Dr Lowitja.

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (11:26):** Today we honour Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG, who passed away on 4 February this year. Among those spilling out from the cathedral following the conclusion of the state funeral on 8 March, I looked around and saw Noel Pearson, Frank Brennan and Tim Costello. I saw a Prime Minister and a Premier, members of government, members of community, those with whom Lowitja had worked over her lifetime, and I reflected, as I have reflected since: how are we worthy to reflect fully on that great life, that great person, that great woman of South Australia? We attempt to do so this morning against particularly the beautiful sounds of the Ernabella Choir to send us out.

There is a lot of cause for reflection. It has been said already this morning that Lowitja was among the greats. I say she was truly the most inspiring and most able and accomplished Aboriginal leader Australia has known. Lowitja had integrity and competence. She knew what her leadership roles were, she dedicated herself to them and she did them superbly well. Much has been said and ought to be said about all of those roles.

I now pause for a moment for the words of Stuart Rintoul in the authorised biography that was published only in 2020. As is recorded there:

In August of 1932, somewhere a station called De Rose Hill, Lowitja takes her first breath. Her birth is not registered. Nor her name, nor the day, not the place.

When her father handed her over to the missionaries, she lost her name, she lost her mother, her family, her language and her identity. She said:

I remember in my very earliest days standing up for what I believed in. One of the earliest memories I have is of coming between the matron and the strap. I would often stand in the way when the strap was intended for others, with the result being that I, too, got a beating.

So she stood up early, and she made a lifetime's commitment of standing up. Can I unpack then, in some ways, the practical journey that Lowitja took in that standing up.

After what we know was an unhappy time at Colebrook—it is well documented—first in Quorn and then near Adelaide upon the moving of Colebrook, she went to live with the Swincers at Waitpinga. It was there, as a teenager, that she became a convinced Christian. It was while attending church alongside Joyce Swincer that she came into contact with Alice Tuck, and the question was asked, 'So you want to be nursing?' Lowitja said, 'Yes, I want to be nursing,' and Alice said, 'Right, well, you start right now.' So she started her training under that much-loved matron of the South Coast District Hospital at Victor Harbor.

It has been observed that she ran into a barrier part of the way through that training. She undertook her first stages of training at the South Coast District Hospital, and in that way she was taking up a pathway that was available there. But the brakes were put on that, pronto, when she went to complete her training at the only place she was able to, at the RAH. Although the matron there, the leading nurse, was celebrated for achievement in a whole lot of ways, there was a big blind spot. Lowitja was told, 'You should go to Alice Springs and go and look after your own people at Alice Springs.' It was completely foreign territory to her. She said, 'No, I won't do that. I want to complete my training and I want to then go and achieve in nursing.' So we have heard it described.

In a way, it was the first point of political engagement for Lowitja, built out of what she has described as her earliest days of determination to press on and to achieve, even against all those odds of birth and the practical odds that she encountered when looking to pursue professional studies. She got there. She completed her nursing training.

One might have thought that, having done that, you might then stay and take up opportunities that might be presented to you locally. She did not do that. She went to the Far North and provided what might have been the only medical assistance at Ernabella, Fregon, Mimili, Indulkana, Pipalyatjara and at the outer camps as well. This was before the establishment of what we now call the APY lands, but it was there in those lands. Those are places that are familiar to me through a childhood of going to visit them, and I know that to get to those places is hard enough, let alone committing yourself to going back and helping those who you know will need your assistance.

For the last several decades of her life, there is no doubt that when Lowitja spoke she spoke with a national authority. I am not aware of any Aboriginal person in public life ever disagreeing with her, such was her leadership.

To reflect again on the personal life, it was nearly 40 years ago that an opportunity was presented. My father has explained this to me. He was suffering some broken ribs from a football match and, finding himself sitting next to Lowitja O'Donoghue and travelling together, Lowitja became the nurse again. In the course of nursing those minor ailments, she shared that major pain of her life.

She talked about the chance that came only decades along the way to find her mother and to do so by travelling on her own from Coober Pedy to Oodnadatta, arriving at the end of the day at dusk and finding her mother alone in a frail humpy on the outskirts of town. She said that her mother recognised her but refused to converse with her because she felt unworthy to do so.

Her mother's silent protest was that she was poor and dirty and uneducated and had nothing to give, but she had a great deal to give; she could give herself. Eventually, Lowitja said, the next day she was able to give that assurance, but not without great pain, not without great pain in the reconciliation.

Lowitja's service and memory is there for all to see in all sorts of public ways. On 25 January this year, and not with a thought about her imminent passing, I happened upon a plaque at the Davenport community that is dated 7 September 1989, towards the end of Lowitja's time as commissioner of the Aboriginal Development Commission and immediately prior to her taking on the

leadership of ATSIC. It recognises Lowitja O'Donoghue opening in that capacity the community centre at Davenport.

In honouring Lowitja today, I think we do well to do so with humility and to reflect upon what we need to continue to do to achieve more to come together, to achieve more to recognise what individuals can achieve in their life, even against the greatest of adversity, and to recommit ourselves to learn from that great life of service that Lowitja provided to all of us here in South Australia and across the country.

To end, I reflect on the words that Lowitja shared on that most extraordinary of international stages, when she said, 'We want you to share with us a future of peace and hope based upon mutual respect and understanding and a new partnership based on equality, equal opportunity and social justice.' Vale Lowitja O'Donoghue.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (11:38):** Sometime around August 1932, this country was given one of the greatest gifts, in the form of Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue. We will never know that exact date, because it was not recorded at the time, but we do know the profound and deep impact that this had upon this nation. She was born in De Rose Hill somewhere, north of Indulkana, east of Pukatja, under the clearest sky in the universe, a place of true beauty and power.

Despite her passing on 4 February this year, she lives on through the foundation named in her honour, along with countless people whose lives have taken a better path for knowing her. When you look at the list of achievements, you often wonder how one person could have blazed so many trails and smashed so many glass ceilings. But, her work was never done. There was always something else to do to make this country, to make this world, a better place, and Lowitja was there doing the hard yards.

I was an adopted child who did not know my birth family for decades; in fact, I did not know I was adopted until I was well into my adult years, and this experience has its own impacts. But, Lowitja and four of her brothers and sisters were all removed from their family, from their mother Lily, and taken to Colebrook children's home in Quorn in the 1920s and 1930s.

It is simply impossible to imagine the grief and harm that must have affected Lily and her five children after being separated for no other reason than Aboriginality, yet Lowitja overcame. She faced discrimination, the likes of which I hope we would never walk past or tolerate today, yet Lowitja overcame it. She fought for causes, including an Australian republic, in addition to many Aboriginal causes, with many setbacks and defeats, yet Lowitja overcame them.

Despite honours being heaped upon her, she simply kept working. The former king of Scotland, Robert the Bruce, is known for saying, 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again'. With all respect to the Scots, Lowitja made Robert the Bruce look like a lightweight. He barely broke a sweat and really did not try that hard.

She worked in hospitals in India and Australia, and for state and federal governments of all colours and types. She headed up boards, commissions and committees of every kind, not the least of which was the role as the inaugural Chair of ATSIC. She rebuilt connections with separated family after 30 years—that challenge incredible, amazing. She was recognised by the British honour system, our Australia's honour system and similarly recognised by the Pope. I am sincerely not a very religious person at all, but I am also happy to say the Catholic Church made a very good decision that day.

At almost every turn from the 1950s until the 2000s, Lowitja was there fighting for respect, equality and compassion. I would like to say that I understand a little bit where that came from through many experiences in life, but Lowitja went to Unley Girls Tech. Some people might not realise, but Unley Girls Tech in Wattle Street actually merged with what is called Mitcham Girls High School, Kyre Avenue-Rugby Street, Kingswood—my school. I went to Mitcham Girls High School, too, and I have only just discovered that this is part of Lowitja's journey.

The work ranged from Lowitja's own battles to be accepted to study nursing and fighting for the 1967 referendum—we all know how hard referendums can be—addressing the United Nations, pushing Mabo land rights legislation, advising our former premier on the APY lands and advising our

former prime minister on the apology to the stolen generations. It is often said that fact is stranger than fiction, and Lowitja's life and legacy make you wonder how she found the time, the energy and the persistence to achieve all of what she did.

Within the nursing community, of which I am a proud member, Lowitja is simply the stuff of legend. I had the absolute privilege of attending Lowitja's funeral and the even greater privilege of talking with some family, friends and absolutely dedicated community members who are continuing the legacy with the institution, the foundation. This came only months after I had had discussions and brought together people from the University of South Australia and Flinders University, of which I am alumni of both, to discuss how we can better ensure that people from community lead community and care and support community in the way of scholarships, being completely unaware of the mission of Lowitja's foundation and the scholarships. That day, I made a commitment that we would return to the table and have a discussion about how we in this place can better leverage support for those scholarships and ensure that people from community lead community and care for their community.

I do not know whether Lowitja would like to be called a hero. It is kind of weird terminology for Lowitja and Lowitja's people, but it is exactly what she was, and still is, to me and so many others. We need heroes to show us that we can be better as individual people and as a community. It is one thing to tell people to do better, but it is another thing entirely to do better and inspire people to follow in your footsteps. We have a generation coming through who will know Lowitja's story and feel the awe that comes from knowing what she did and how she did it.

At the recent Dunstan by-election, I was handing out flyers at Marryatville Primary School. When I looked to my left, I saw the most beautiful thing: a big sign declaring a section of the yard to be the 'Lowitja O'Donoghue thinking space'. It was a beautiful and moving moment to know that someone who was rejected when she tried to improve her education and training is now being held up as a shining light and a shining example for school students to follow.

I would like to reflect briefly on the place where Lowitja was born, in the APY lands in the far north of South Australia, where I set foot for the very first time only one week ago today. I had the pleasure of being welcomed by Anangu, many of whom shared strong, articulate and consistent stories. It makes me feel a varied set of emotions, but I feel very confident, sadly, that many of those stories—those strong, articulate, consistent stories—are no different from the stories that Lowitja told herself, decades and decades ago. So little progress has been made, and we have so much to do together to walk side by side together.

It reminds me that while Lowitja walked and succeeded in two worlds, we have an obligation to protect and support the world in the heart of our country. There is a deep value in protecting, preserving and celebrating culture, language and places. We have lost so much in so many parts of Australia, so we need to act to preserve every single bit of what is left. As many others have said, we are home to the oldest living culture on the planet, and despite more than 200 years of various efforts to stamp it out, it is still there in the beating heart of Australia. In remembering and honouring Lowitja, we can do little better than make a commitment in this place to do what we can do together, walking side by side, to support those whose lives are tied to songs, to stories and to the law of the APY.

To Lowitja's family and friends present in the house today, in particular Deborah Edwards, Amy O'Donoghue, Ruby Edwards and Mahailia Levinson: I cannot tell you how grateful I am just to know a small piece of Lowitja's story and be able to share that with you today. It is a huge privilege. Lowitja, I would love to say 'rest in peace', but I do not think you will; I think you will still be extremely busy. As I looked up into the sky—I think it was north-east of Pip—I thought, 'I am sure Lowitja is there trying to guide her community to much greater things,' and we can do that together. Vale Lowitja O'Donoghue.

**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) (11:48):** I want to particularly acknowledge that here in this place, we are together on land that always was, is and always will be Kurna land and pay my deep respects to Kurna elders past, present and future. In making that acknowledgement, I offer gratitude to the women, including the



extraordinary Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, whom we honour today, for the role that she and many other Aboriginal women leaders play in tirelessly advancing the interests of girls and women, often doing so over years, over decades and over the course of their lifetimes.

Today, with a heavy heart and with such deep gratitude and admiration, I pay tribute and respect to Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, a proud Yankunytjatjara woman whose legacy is both a story of personal triumph and a testament to resilience, strength, love and the power of one person to inspire and relentlessly and with such grace advance activism, courage and change on a local and indeed a global scale.

Dr O'Donoghue's advocacy for the rights and recognition of Aboriginal people has left an indelible mark on our collective conscience. Through her leadership, her capacity for love and steadfast yet gentle determination, she paved the way for greater understanding and acceptance of culture, challenging stereotypes and breaking down barriers.

In the months since her passing, I have reflected often on Lowitja's life. As I reflected on the theme of this year's International Women's Day, Count Her In, I was reminded that Lowitja lived with a system that did not want to count her in, a system that removed her from her mother. Despite that system, Lowitja lived with such courage and such grace and spent her whole life fighting to ensure every Aboriginal woman, and indeed person, counted. To spend your life and your leadership empowering others to be counted, to lead and to be treated with dignity and respect despite challenges put in front of your own life and leadership is such a very special gift.

I have been contemplating Lowitja's unwavering commitment to social justice, equality and reconciliation. As the first Aboriginal woman to hold several prominent roles, Lowitja carved out a path toward achievement, blazing a trail for generations of women to come. One of many stories throughout her life of resilience is seen in her early career pursuing nursing training at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, where she faced discrimination.

Undeterred, Dr O'Donoghue displayed remarkable resilience, challenging the unjust decision that tried to exclude her. She even personally appealed to the then Premier of South Australia, Sir Thomas Playford, for support. Through her steadfast determination, the decision was eventually overturned. In 1954, Dr O'Donoghue made history as the first Aboriginal individual to undertake nursing training at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Throughout her long career, Lowitja continued to forge new pathways for Aboriginal women at various levels in the Public Service in both the state and federal arenas. As has been spoken about, at an international level, in 1992, Lowitja was of course the first Aboriginal person to address the United Nations General Assembly during the launch of the United Nations International Year of the World's Indigenous People.

At every level and in every role throughout her life, Lowitja was dedicated to uplifting others, advocating so often for those whose voices went often unheard. Her tireless efforts in the fields of health care, education and community development have left and will continue to leave a lasting impact, improving the lives of countless individuals and communities.

I have felt so blessed to attend the funeral service for Dr O'Donoghue. In every essence of that beautiful service, Lowitja's beauty, grace and unsurpassed ability to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together was evident. The beautiful sounds of the St Peter's choir entwined with the Iwiri choir also entwined with the absolutely stunning music from the yidaki.

She was honoured by her family who were, in turn, honoured by Lowitja's broader community family. As she did throughout her life, her service was a testament to the faith and aspiration that Lowitja maintained, despite that faith being tested. She had faith in Australia as a nation and faith in us collectively as a human family.

Thank you so much, Dr O'Donoghue. You will continue to inspire every one of us. Your heart, your capacity for love and your legacy has reshaped our nation for the better, and you help all of us to walk a little taller. Your gentle strength, grace, incredible positivity in the face of adversity, and your ability to never give up will be qualities that I reflect on often, and will help all of us in this place as we continue.

To Lowitja's family, including those present today, Deborah Edwards, Amy O'Donoghue, Ruby Edwards, Mrs Mahailia Levinson, and the many others who are grieving, I offer you my love and condolences. Rest in peace, most remarkable and beautiful woman, Lowitja.

**The Hon. A. MICHAELS (Enfield—Minister for Small and Family Business, Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs, Minister for Arts) (11:56):** I want to add a brief word of condolence to the family and friends of Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG, who died peacefully with her family by her side on 4 February. We have heard many speeches this morning, which I think have been filled with great respect and admiration for Dr O'Donoghue.

It was one of my great regrets that I never got to meet Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue in person but for many years I have been well aware of her dedication to a life of service to others. I also hold great respect and admiration for her, particularly her passion for improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout the country. On behalf of all South Australians I also want to add my deepest sympathies to Lowitja's family and friends on her passing.

She certainly led an extraordinary life—and we have heard much about that this morning—having been removed from her mother at the age of two and sent to work as a domestic servant for a family at Victor Harbor at age 16. She was never one to step back from a fight. Dr O'Donoghue led a campaign to seek her own admission for nursing training at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, having been refused that opportunity due to her Aboriginality, as we have heard, despite already having worked as a nursing aide in Victor Harbor. Due to her determination to succeed and overcome the obstacles society had placed in her way, Dr O'Donoghue became the first Aboriginal person to train as a nurse at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Compassion was a hallmark in Dr O'Donoghue's life. Initially shown through her work as a nurse, her commitment to social justice was cemented during her time nursing in India. While in India, Dr O'Donoghue gained a greater understanding of Indigenous cultures and that set her on a course to fight for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here in Australia. Upon returning to Australia, Dr O'Donoghue campaigned for the yes vote in the 1967 referendum, which returned a vote of over 90 per cent in favour of change.

Dr O'Donoghue worked to establish the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement and was a lead negotiator on native title in Australia after the Mabo decision. Dr O'Donoghue was a persistent force in improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout the country. Her advocacy delivered significant outcomes in health, education, political representation, land rights and reconciliation.

I want to extend my deepest sympathies to Dr O'Donoghue's family and friends. Vale Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue.

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (11:58):** I stand to add my voice to the condolence motion in this place today for Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue. We have heard about the remarkable person and the remarkable woman that Lowitja was: a ground breaker, the first Aboriginal to train at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the first Aboriginal person to address the United Nations, and the inaugural patron and namesake of the Lowitja Institute.

Dr O'Donoghue achieved so many firsts. She achieved so much by opening doors, doors that in many cases had not ever been previously knocked on. A true believer in the process of reconciliation, Lowitja was an intelligent, compassionate, brave, caring, courageous and resilient visionary. She was much loved by her family, extended family, so many from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and by those who came to know the amazing woman that she was.

Lowitja was a leader in the true sense of the word. I am so honoured to have been in her presence on occasion to hear her words, her voice. Lowitja passed this way, her solid footprints preserved as a foundation for the future, a future that she believed in. I extend my heartfelt sympathy to her family. Vale, Lowitja O'Donoghue.

**Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (12:00):** I rise to provide my condolences to the family of Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, her friends and everybody who knew her. We have heard today of the many

achievements of Dr O'Donoghue and it cannot be underestimated the influence, the inspiration and the leadership she gave to so many.

We heard that she was taken from her mother and her home as a baby first to Colebrook Home in Quorn but later to Eden Hills. Colebrook Home in Eden Hills is no longer there. It is now a place of reflection and peace. It is a place that is lovingly cared for by the Blackwood Reconciliation Group and the Tjitji Tjuta, of which Lowitja was a member.

When Dr O'Donoghue came to Eden Hills she joined other children and for their first few years they were schooled at the home because they were not allowed to go to the primary school. It was not until her later years of primary school that Lowitja and her Colebrook family were able to go there, then on to Unley and on to her journey and the incredible things that she has done not only for Aboriginal people but for people in general when they look to her for leadership.

Lowitja O'Donoghue was a very special person to many in my community: many meeting, sharing and loving Dr O'Donoghue, learning from her courage, her leadership and her lifelong commitment to progressing opportunities for others, for young Aboriginal women and for Aboriginal people.

I never met Dr O'Donoghue: something that disappoints me every day, especially as I continue to hear more of her stories from people throughout my community. Today, I am going to share some of their thoughts and memories. Members of the Blackwood Reconciliation Group and I joined community members when they had a meeting at Colebrook after the passing of Dr Lowitja and they shared some incredible stories. I asked them if they would mind me sharing them today because I think hearing from them and hearing their love for her is something that I can share with you today.

Dianne Grigg, an incredible advocate for Aboriginal people within our community, said the following:

Dr Lowitja's ability to think and act, utilizing accumulated knowledge, experience, common sense and insight was a call to the nation to seek truth and healing by listening to accumulated First Nations voices before making judgements and decisions. Some First Nations peoples believe she had the wisdom of the owl and called upon us to 'Overcome One Day' the ill intent of willful ignorance.

It was lovely to receive this from Mike Brown, who not only spoke at the memorial but speaks of Lowitja often. He said:

Colebrook Home was a central part of her personal story, both in Quorn where she was brought at the age of two in 1934 and in Eden Hills where they moved to in 1944. But she also used Colebrook as a platform to speak to Australia. At the first reunion of former Colebrook residents at Eden Hills, in June 1997, an unexpectedly large crowd of about 1200 people watched the emotional scenes as some of the former residents told their stories. Earlier that same week, the Bringing Them Home report exposing the injustices suffered by the Stolen Generations and their families had been tabled in Federal Parliament. It was in the headlines. In a carefully prepared speech, Lowitja spoke of the pain of separation. To the Colebrook residents, she said: 'Let us turn our anger and frustration into positive acts of reconciliation. We can forgive, but never forget the sorrow of our mothers.' She then went on to highlight the recommendation of the Bringing Them Home report calling for a national apology. She called on churches and communities to get behind it as well as governments. It was across every TV news channel that night.

She brought people such as the Hon Phillip Ruddock when Minister for Reconciliation to visit the site, and many such public figures—making sure they met some of those who had been in Colebrook with her, getting them to tell their stories.

But she brought many others too. At one time she brought a dozen young Hazara refugees from Afghanistan. Hearing the story of Lowitja's mother, they went on their knees around the Grieving Mother statue, sharing stories of their own mothers back in Afghanistan.

That statue, a life-size bronze of an Aboriginal woman looking down into her empty hands from where her child has been taken, meant a lot to Lowitja. In the first years after its unveiling in 1999, she would often come up on a Sunday and put flowers in the hands of the Grieving Mother, or sit by it talking to those who came to visit.

Through all the establishment of the Memorial, Lowitja was a strong supporter of the teamwork between the former residents and the local Blackwood Reconciliation Group. Her inventions helped raise much of the money needed for the Memorial, but it was her moral support and leadership that counted the most.

Mike Lawson also wrote that he was asked by family, 'Don't list her achievements; we all know that. Tell stories of her', which is how I decided I would rather do this today. Mike also spoke at the

memorial, and we all listened. There was a sad moment and then a laugh, so I will share his thoughts with you too. He says:

I hope that this adds an overall picture of a great lady. If you require any further information, I am happy to provide it.

Phil Hoffman wrote the following:

I'm really a newcomer to the scene. I was once for a time Minister of Blackwood Uniting church. And it was here at an event at Colebrook, it might have been the second local Reconciliation Walk in about 2015 that it was my task as emcee to introduce Lowitja to speak. And she began by giving me a public 'telling off': 'the church has got a lot to answer for', she said. And that was OK; I was happy to be told off by Lowitja.

Afterwards I spoke to her and she said, 'Why are we having meetings down there?'

She was talking about the church in Belair. Continuing:

'That's so far away! We ought to be meeting up there, at your place'.

At the Blackwood Uniting Church. Now Blackwood Reconciliation Group meetings happen there every month, and I attend as often as I can. He went on to say:

As it transpired, I was living at Henley Beach at the time and Lowitja at Lockleys. And one of the great privileges of my life was to transport Lowitja to BRG meetings [Blackwood Reconciliation Group]. She would have been there in her early 80s by then, on a walker, which it was my job to pack in the old Volvo to bring her. And we would always have to stop, here at Colebrook, for her to place a bouquet of flowers at the Grieving Mother statue; it still meant so much to her. She was delightful company and she would chat along the way. She loved a story and she would give a deep chortle and tell of encounters with public figures. Those conversations will remain confidential, but by the time Stuart Rintoul's biography was published I think I had already heard most of what I read.

I have watched on over many years and I see a challenge that our indigenous people, particularly their leaders face; a delicate balance between being true to the dispossession and disadvantage of the past, and yet, still being constructive in reaching for a future of healing and reconciliation. On the one hand, they can end up stuck as victims, which is well understood, but then to talk of the future without doing justice to our history is also only half the story. In my view, no Aboriginal leader has ever got that balance more accurate than Lowitja O'Donoghue.

And a final note. Late after one meeting we pulled into her driveway and she said, 'Reverend'—she always called me that, hers was very church background—'Reverend, are you any good at changing lightglobes?' Well, my family would probably tell you 'no'. My technical skills are very limited. But I did. I could help her out. So my memoirs, if they should ever be written, will be titled *I changed a lightglobe for Lowitja O'Donoghue*.

There were many more stories, and time is getting away, but I did want to share what happened at Belair Primary School on the day of Lowitja's funeral. The Belair Primary School children and their teachers wanted to show their respect to Lowitja. They began the day by holding a flag lowering ceremony as the state funeral started, where the children all learnt about flag protocols. The students then researched Dr O'Donoghue, her history with Colebrook children's home and why she is an amazing representative for International Women's Day—and her state funeral coincided with this day. Ramih, one of the students, when asked to reflect about what they had learned, wrote:

Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue was a great representative for International Women's Day because of all the work she has done for Aboriginal men and women. She has worked in the days when most men would work and women would stay home. But being such a proud Aboriginal woman, she has fought her way throughout her wonderful life. She should get a state funeral because she has been powerful and she should be remembered as a strong woman.

Emily wrote:

I believe that Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue is an amazing role model to represent International Women's Day because of her outstanding achievements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's rights. She was part of the Stolen Generation and taken from her mother when she was 2 years old. She only saw her mother again 30 years later. She was the first Aboriginal nurse in South Australia. Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue dedicated her life to the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. She also worked really hard for reconciliation and the right for Indigenous People to vote. She was an inspirational leader and woman and the perfect example to represent International Women's Day. She should get a state funeral because of her extremely amazing work that she has done for our country. The service will honour Dr O'Donoghue's lifelong work to improve the health, and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Young Will wrote:

Dr O'Donoghue has been awarded numerous honours in recognition of her contribution to promoting Aboriginal rights, including Membership of the Order of Australia (the first Aboriginal to become so), Australian of the Year in 1984, Australian National Living Treasure and a Papal honour from Pope John Paul II. Dr O'Donoghue is a

great representative for International Women's Day because she stands up [for] women's rights and Aboriginal people. It is very unfortunate that she passed away because she is very important to the Aboriginal community.

When we attended the small gathering at Colebrook it was incredibly touching to hear all those stories, and there are a lot more, as I said. But they also played *We Shall Overcome*, and I think it was incredibly emotional to hear everybody join in and sing together as it was a song that was very dear to Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue's heart and deeply symbolic of her lifetime of activism and leadership.

It is incredibly sad that we have lost such an incredible woman but I have really enjoyed hearing the stories of my community and how much they loved and cherished her. At her state funeral, I sat down next to people from out the other side of town who I had never met before and they all had incredible stories of Lowitja and what they remembered from their time with her. I want to take the opportunity again to pass on my condolences to you all and I hope sharing a few little stories shows you how much she was loved throughout my community. We will continue to do all we can to acknowledge all of the work she has done.

Motion carried.

### *Bills*

## **DISABILITY INCLUSION (REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Committee Stage*

In committee.

(Continued from 21 March 2024.)

Clause 4.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Clause 4 is requiring and providing for the means by which the minister will be obliged to seek the views of people with disability. Apart from making the observation that it might be trite to say so—one might expect that the government ought to be seeking the views of people with a disability—the new section, 7A, will formalise that and set out a structure. At the risk of minor repetition, given where we left off some weeks ago, I would just indicate this is important.

Perhaps this need not be entirely with reference to subsection 7A(2), but there is a discretion there for the minister to establish a committee to advise and assist the minister in relation to the operation of the section. The headline question, again, if there is a risk of repetition here, is: is that the government's intent—is the minister to establish the committee—and, if so, is there some indication, which might turn to new subsection (3) at this point, that is possibly given by the government about the perspectives that might be represented, including carers, those who are acting on behalf of those living with a disability and then those living with a whole variety of disabilities themselves?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think I can provide a pretty short answer to a really important question. The ministerial advisory committee, Disability Engagement Group, Autism Strategy: all of these groups have been established. I think the Disability Engagement Group was pre-established during the term of the previous government, and the others have been established within our leadership, but they have all been established with very similar criteria, and that is around lived experience and making sure that there is an absolutely broad spread of experiences within those representatives. That includes carers, people living with disability and, in some cases, all of the above.

Also, we have taken into account the capacity for us to inject cultural lenses within those. We also have a mission to ensure we have LGBTIQ+ representation, First Nations and culturally and linguistically diverse people, and we also have young people within all of our committees as well. The committees that are not set up specifically for disability and disability engagement, however, such as our youth ministerial advisory committee and our LGBTIQ+ advisory committee, all have people, again, with lived experience across all of those particular realms.

We have had four or five meetings in the last year or so with all of those committees plus had specific engagement in a less formal capacity by inviting them here, to parliament, and sitting around the table yarning, so to speak—so actually not having the formal agenda but really getting to

listen and understand. Then, of course, as the shadow minister would also appreciate, we have made sure across many trips regionally and remotely that we have sat with community members and specifically targeted some of these questions. In fact, I had the privilege of doing so last week, as I know both those opposite have done as well when visiting remote regions of South Australia.

Making sure that that is at the front of mind, we are ensuring that that engagement is happening regularly, that we are open to listening in a less formal way, that the doors are open for things to be raised in between times, and also that the information that is going out into the community to provide feedback is being offered in easy-read versions that are accessible to a wide and diverse community. Frankly, how lucky are we these days that accessible internet—to a point—is available across South Australia? Of course, there are still areas where there are gaps, which we know and identify, but we are making sure we are getting it out as broadly as we can.

**Mr TELFER:** To follow on, minister, obviously that short summation really did start to unpack a bit of the informal arrangements. This part of clause 4, 7A, talks about the formal side of it, talking about a singular committee rather than a series of committees. Does that structure which you have talked about sit below the formal committee structure which is being spoken about here? Within the aspect here of subsection (2) it does use the word 'may', so it does not obligate the minister to establish a committee to advise and assist.

It also talks a bit about the diverse range of people with lived experience of disability. We have spoken previously through the committee stage of this bill about the challenge of dealing with people with a range of disability and the different arrangements and circumstances you need to put in place. Obviously, when it comes to consultation and the results of it, the requests, I guess you could say, from a consultation process may vary depending on that wide range.

The minister has given a description of what is in place now and trying to address consultation with different cohorts. Does that informal structure sit below the formal structure that is spoken about within this bill and, if so, is there any formality to those informal structures that sit below it to feed into the formal membership of the committee, especially when it comes to that diverse range we speak about?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I guess to some degree there is. This bill is written in such a way that it provides scope for the delivery of all of those opportunities. The ministerial advisory committee, as I said, has been a formal process set up, and that is what is being referred to within here. It is also being chaired by a member of the committee. The first couple of meetings were not, but we have installed a member chair in these committees now to develop those committees with their own voice.

We have formal and public consultation processes, which probably sit below all of this as well, but in terms of all of the legislation and the policy work that is being delivered out of the Department of Human Services, we are always doing public consultation at every single level. We also subcontract a number of other expert groups such as JFA (Julia Farr) Purple Orange to help deliver on the consultation with respect to any areas that we want to make sure we get absolutely right within our community.

There are a number of engagement opportunities. Of course, we use YourSay and a range of other structured pathways, but I think the nature of delivering human services to humans is that often there is some spontaneity and we tend to try to harness some of the energy that is coming to us with suggestions and groups and use that as a process. There is this formal process, and then the structure below that is obviously dictated by the departmental team. Of course, I have Rhys here with me who is part of that team that ensures that engagement with Ksharmra as well—heavily involved in that—who was with me previously. So there is formal and really well-structured processes for informal opportunity.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I also appreciate the answer, which I think has really filled out addressing, substantially, the new subsection (1). So there are no limits on how, but the minister must go about the task of seeking the views of people with disability in those ways and it is then to zero in on subsection (2) and the discretion to establish a committee. I think the minister has given an indication that that is a committee that is already in existence. It would certainly assist me and it might assist the committee if that might be even more clearly spelt out than it already has been.

So the discretion, in other words, has been exercised already prior to the enactment of the provision so that if there is a committee that is already in place that the minister regards as fitting the bill for subsection (2) as it will be enacted, then that is good to know. The follow-on question from that might be, in a nice piece of drafting we see in subclause (4), that the procedures of that committee will be as determined by the minister or, in so far as that is not determined by the minister, then by the committee—so happy days. But this is all contemplating that a committee might come into being.

If the minister is telling this committee that that has already happened then, for completeness, where are we at vis-a-vis the new subclause (4)? Does the minister consider that procedures for the committee have already been determined by the minister and therefore we are in subclause (4)(a) territory, or is this committee charting its own course and are we then to anticipate that the future is going to be a committee that the minister has already described and there will not be a lot of change, if any, and it might be largely subclause (4)(b) territory?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Thank you for the question. I think, also, it is good to remind members that the early draft of the bill that went out to public consultation actually had a very long and prescriptive arrangement for the establishment of the committee and for consultation, which I do have a copy of in there but I am sure the member has read it. It was deliberately made more general so that we could seek advice from a variety of other committees, including the Disability Minister's Advisory Council, which I established as part of an election commitment, which in fact coincidentally came up separately through the engagement on the bill itself and the update. Separately, this piece of work was recommended and we had already done that in part.

It is also worth noting that the Disability Engagement Group, which I talked about before, is actually dictated and set up under the state plan. Under a number of authoritative documents, there are guidelines for the establishment of the groups. It is an interesting way you have set out the discussion, but I would like to say that we made a commitment to establish an advisory council. We then listened to the consultation on this group. As far as I know, for the first time the ministerial advisory council is a paid appointment which provides for opportunities for people who previously have not been able to afford to engage in such a process because of their level of affordability, etc., so I think that has been a really positive thing.

I think the development of the ministerial advisory council, as it stands today, has been a combination of 4(a) and (b) and lies available and ready to adapt itself and change as required by the scope of the work that is needed to be done under the guidance of such a committee. I feel really comfortable and confident that we have allowed the committee to guide its operations to this point as well.

Now we are at a point with the committee where we are able to start interrogating not just pieces of work within this portfolio but pieces of work that sit outside, such as housing and youth and education, roundtable-type discussions that we are having. I think there is a really good, robust process that is happening here of co-design, which—and I am sure the members understand—is absolutely what is asked for by the community, a true co-design process.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Again, hopefully that is some productive expansion that might assist in terms of the record and the time. So to understand, therefore: we are in a situation where the government acted on an election commitment to establish a committee, we are all aware of the ongoing review process, and that comes in to land in terms of review recommendations, and then it finds voice here in the new section 7A that now expresses the discretion in terms of a committee that the minister might elect to establish.

It goes on, though, to stipulate, in subsection (3), the membership of the committee, and the minister has had something to say about a range of inputs and so on. If we are to understand that the existing committee is going to be regarded as fitting the bill, is there anything about, then, the provisions, particularly subsections (2), (3) and (4), that is going to be a cause for the government to have to go and revisit either the make-up, the procedure or any aspect of the operation or underpinnings of that existing committee? As the result of the passage of this bill, are we going to see gazetted or are we going to see some regulation that is then going to say, 'That committee that

you are already becoming familiar with, what do you know, that is a section 7A committee and I have exercised the discretion in subsection (2)?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** This committee is under the DPC boards and committees establishment, so that is already recorded. As I stated before, we made that commitment because in my listening period, in the depths of darkness and opposition, I talked to a lot of people who felt they were not being provided with adequate opportunity to engage in that formal direct consultation with ministers. That is historic and, for whatever reason, committees have come and gone, and now this actually does, I understand, for the first time, provide the legislative framework to insist that there is this ability for us to establish that committee.

Again, as I said before, from the recommendations to the draft bill to now, there have been some changes. I do not see that there are any other changes. The podcast provided an excellent set of tips for good engagement, including committing to listening, particularly to firsthand stories. I can table this, if you wish. It is already in the review.

On page 34, there is a list of tips for good engagement, which we followed, that includes: firsthand stories, seeking out a diverse array of people with varying disabilities, paying people for their time and expertise, being open to criticism because we know we are all on the same team working towards the same goal, following up with people and letting them know what we have done and finding out how they feel about it, and good engagement never ends. We are following those recommended processes for benchmark engagement. We have no intention to deviate from that at all and have not, so I would expect that would continue.

**Mr TELFER:** Minister, we know that this has been a process which we have been following for a fair while, obviously, as it is a 2022 amendment bill. The consultation process was between 27 February 2023 and 6 April 2023, so now over 12 months ago. A fair bit has changed and developed within this space, such as the Disability Royal Commission, the NDIS review, etc.

What has the process been, as far as this goes and the operations of the department, with any external engagement or consultation that the minister has conducted across the disability sector in response to those changes that have happened subsequently vis-a-vis the Disability Royal Commission and the NDIS review? What work are you doing basically to prepare for those potential NDIS changes that we are going to be faced with? Do you see that there is potentially an increase in state services and thus cost to the state government for the provision of services for people with a disability in reflection of those potential NDIS changes?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** That is a great question and there is an interaction between all these things. I cannot remember how many meetings we have had as the national Disability Reform Ministerial Council, but there were a lot. We have been kept abreast of the royal commission and review terms of reference findings and ongoing recommendations—all of those pieces of work which have to the best of our ability been fulsomely communicated with the Disability Minister's Advisory Council under my guidance. The Disability Engagement Group has also been discussing this.

DHS is leading the delivery of the recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission and working across the nation with our other jurisdictional partners to pull that piece of work together, which is extensive and will be ongoing for many years. It is fair to say that, out of the hundreds of recommendations and thousands of pages across both of those reviews, there are unique, unique and common recommendations and targets for us to work on and deliver. For that reason, there is a lot of effort being put in by highly skilled people to pull that together and make sure that we deliver it efficiently and effectively and as much as possible in partnership with the community as well and with that lived experience at hand.

The Disability Minister's Advisory Council Chair also sits on a national group of disability councils to share information and we have people across our state involved in a range of different reference groups and advisory groups providing local feedback to federal ministers around all these pieces of work. Cooperatively, with the support of the federal government, we have pushed out the target date for delivery on our response to the Disability Royal Commission in acknowledgement of the complex piece of work, so that will be done later this year.



As you know, there is a piece of work now that will be helped by a review in committee of the NDIS suggested legislative amendments. All of that is being pulled together, along with state premiers, first ministers and in partnership with the people who will need to work out all of the funding mechanisms, as well as disability ministers, who are that connected piece with people with lived experience, so it is quite a complex piece of work.

There is not a simple answer to give you, except to say that there are pathways for feedback and opportunities for cross-engagement across all of these things. As much as we possibly can, we can provide information. If formal mechanisms of briefings are something that you are interested in, I offer you, my friend, to provide that as well with the group, because it is important that we are all on this journey together.

Clause passed.

Clause 5.

**Mr TELFER:** Looking at clause 5, which talks about the objects, and reflecting on the consultation report which you referred to before, there are a few different aspects I want to unpack a little to get the perspective of the minister on the feedback. As we know, especially in this space, language is so important. Having language that properly reflects all those people who are having to deal with the mechanics of this bill is really important. In the commentary on page 66 there was a comment I found interesting, and I would like the minister to reflect on it. I quote:

I note in the legislation the terminology about equal access is 'like other people'. I'd like to see this changed to 'like anyone else', which removes the implication that you are not like us, you are other.

That is at the bottom of page 66. Minister, in reflection of that and, as I said, noting the importance of getting language right and getting the structure right, do you contemplate updating that language to be more reflective of the feedback that has been received in that sort of commentary, recognising that this is what people with lived experience, on reflection of that bill, are commenting?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Sorry for the delay; I was just trying to find the place where particularly that might be within the act. I think what we are saying, though, and what we want to get across with that particular statement is that language is ever evolving. We are constantly changing and tweaking language in state plans, policies, statements, online information, information that is put out to the community, information that we use as part of the guidance for our committees and the work that we are doing. I am not sure that we are specifically changing that piece of language.

Certainly, on many occasions, I know that I will be corrected by somebody, or advised by somebody, that they prefer to use 'people first' type of language, and then I will have somebody say, 'No, that's a clumsy thing for me; I don't like the way that is said.' So all I can do is say that I do my very best. I think that it is almost like the royal 'I': all of us, we do our very best to ensure that we are using language that is sensitive to the person with lived experience.

I think that challenge is quite difficult sometimes because everybody's perception is different, and I know the member is as sensitive to that as I am with all the people in our community. Absolutely, we have endeavoured to ensure that we are using language that is as contemporary, co-designed and accepted as possible.

**Mr TELFER:** Minister, a subject that I have asked questions about in the house and that we have discussed is the Community Visitor Scheme. I know that recommendation No. 33 for the Community Visitor Scheme is currently being reviewed. The recommendation states that this important scheme should not be unnecessarily delayed. It is something that has had its set of challenges. Can you update the chamber, the committee, as to where the review of the Community Visitor Scheme is at currently and when, potentially, we can see legislation that we will be considering?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I appreciate that question as well. It is really important, and it is a piece of work that we have been doing over the last couple of years, alongside being quite patient with the recommendations that are coming out of the royal commission and the review. This goes back to the other conversation we were having. We are now knitting all of that together and working in the best possible practical way to overcome any barriers that might be in place for delivery, but we feel that we are getting very close.

**Mr TELFER:** Subclause (1) refers to:

...'people with disability' wherever occurring insert:  
, regardless of age,

An aspect is which piece of legislation takes responsibility for people. Although someone might trigger a point where they fit under a different piece of legislation to do with aged care and the like, there is still an underlying disability that is still having to be managed and that is sometimes exacerbated with age. Can you give a bit of an explanation? This is my reflection on why that would be put in place, but can you unpack that a little bit—the reasoning for the 'regardless of age' aspect in regard to the phrase 'people with disability'?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** It was to ensure that people with lived experience looking into the legislation could see themselves and to make sure that it was not excluding any particular group. Certainly, we want child friendly and adult friendly types of procedures, policies and actions to occur across our community. This was just to make sure that we are absolutely, explicitly saying that this is for all people and not isolated to any particular age bracket or disability. This inclusion act endeavours to be a catch-all for all members of the community. I think that was part of the clarification that was needed.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Just to focus for a moment on clause 5(2), which would add to section 8—Objects new paragraph (f). It takes us back to the debate at an earlier point in the committee stage, considering clause 3 and the new definition of 'barrier' that we see expressed there in the new paragraph (f). Paragraph (f) would provide what are effectively positive obligations:

...making significant gains towards achieving an inclusive community where the principles outlined in the ...Convention...underpin the development and delivery of services, especially by removing barriers...

It goes on to say that people—and we see the reference to 'regardless of age'—are able to:

...access services and to participate in the community in the same way as other members of the community.

There are perhaps three particular references there: a positive object to make significant gains; secondly, a specific reference to the removal of barriers; and thirdly, a specific reference to participation in community in the same way as other members of the community.

Then we see that paragraph (f) is all the more particularly making reference to the UN convention. The principles, of course, are set out in article 3—the general principles, that is—which include respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make choices, and independence of persons. Under 3: 'full and effective participation and inclusion in society' is included. There are references to non-discrimination, to equality of opportunity, to accessibility, to equality between men and women and to respect for the evolving capacities of children. We see that more particularly expressed throughout the convention.

With this new definition of 'barrier' in mind and the reference to their removal by the addition of this new object in paragraph (f), I turn to article 9 of the convention, which addresses accessibility. We see there that the convention—and there might be other references—in referring to a whole range of measures to be taken provides:

These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:

(a) Buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces.

It goes on:

(b) Information, communications and other services, including electronic services...

Focusing on the general principles that are specifically adverted to in the new paragraph (f) and then the way that the convention deals with accessibility by reference to the removal of barriers—the same term that is to be used now in the amended act—I come back to the circumstances of those who are affected by disability. This may be particularly apposite in these circumstances. They are affected by disability at some point in their lives, in such a way that it creates a fresh disruption to what they otherwise might have been getting on with.

I talked about my constituent, Tom Carr, at some length in two different ways: one in circumstances of his invention of a more practical means of transport, using the wheelchair roll-on roll-off transportation device; and secondly in positing the example of virtual fencing, the use of technology to be applied in fencing his property.

They are two examples of practical ways in which the disruption to the way that he would have conducted himself otherwise can be ameliorated by the removal of barriers and otherwise this perhaps more general expression 'making significant gains'.

I am really looking to address that in terms of what might be fresh obligations on those responsible for public regulation more broadly, to act on that when making rules, including with respect to what might otherwise be regarded as discrete questions of safety, and other considerations might flow in terms of the permitting of virtual fencing on the one hand and, on the transport side, where there is a clearly identified opportunity to remove a barrier to building that in as a positive new obligation on government to say, 'Well, all other things being equal, Tom wouldn't be quite so easily permitted to roll-on roll-off in this device.' Bearing in mind particularly new object (f), there is a positive obligation now, that is new and there is a pathway, if not entirely presenting a silver bullet, that is a step in that direction.

I realise I have raised that before in the earlier part of the debate in the committee some weeks ago now. It may be that the minister has some further reflection on the debate, the subject of clause 3, and in all respects it is a question that is open and by reference only to those perhaps two examples—I am sure there are plenty of others.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** If I try to bring it back to the broad capture of what is the intent here, we have the state plan Autism Strategy and a range of other guiding documents that are assisting us to deliver on accessibility and engagement opportunities for the community, which faces a range of physical or other barriers to achieving that on an equal basis within our community. Then the disability action and the DAIPs we see written at local level can help inform some of that local practice.

I think the big picture, which is probably good to place on record, is the guiding principles of this convention, where there are eight particular guiding principles under the convention and each one of its specific articles. They are:

1. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
2. Non-discrimination;
3. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
4. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
5. Equality of opportunity;
6. Accessibility;
7. Equality between men and women—

they might need to update their language—

8. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

There are some guiding principles in that convention that we are following in terms of producing our legislation, on which we are aiming to achieve best practice.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

*Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.*

**INTERVENTION ORDERS (PREVENTION OF ABUSE) (SECTION 31 OFFENCES)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Assent*

Her Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

**CHILD SEX OFFENDERS REGISTRATION (CHILD-RELATED WORK) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Assent*

Her Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

**ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TREATMENT (POSTHUMOUS USE OF MATERIAL AND DONOR  
CONCEPTION REGISTER) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Assent*

Her Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

**PASTORAL LAND MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION (USE OF PASTORAL LAND)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Assent*

Her Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

**SUPPLY BILL 2024**

*Message from Governor*

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

*Condolence*

**WEBSTER, MR F.R.**

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:02):** By leave, I move:

That the House of Assembly expresses its deep regret at the death of Mr Frank Raymond Webster, former member of the House of Assembly, and places on record its appreciation of his service, and that as a mark of respect to his memory the sitting of the house be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

I rise to offer the condolences of the house to the family and friends of former MP Frank Webster, who passed away on 1 March this year. Mr Webster made history as the first Liberal Party candidate to win what was then the seat of Norwood—now, essentially, the seat of Dunstan—since the Liberal and Country League's hold on the seat ended in 1953.

Mr Webster first stood for Norwood at the March 1979 by-election following the resignation of its sitting member, the then Premier Don Dunstan. He was beaten by the Labor candidate, Greg Crafter, but successfully wrested the seat from him at the state election that September. It was a hard-won victory, decided by a wafer-thin margin of 33 votes.

Mr Webster's Italian-speaking mother had reportedly made the translation for her son's advertisement; one imagines that family dinners were a little considered when it came to the discussion of politics. His maiden speech to parliament was delivered on 16 October. By the time parliament sat in mid-February 1980, Norwood was represented by Greg Crafter once again.

Mr Webster, following his defeat, returned full time to his career in law, founding his law firm, which has thrived and grown to the present day under the banner of Websters Lawyers. He was also a founding board member of the South Australian Foundation of Otorhinolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery, having had lived experience with throat cancer. It was a position he held until his passing, to his great credit.

His was a very private life after his brief time as the member for Norwood, and the end of that life was similarly private. He chose to forgo a funeral or memorial celebration, and his family have instead requested that his passing be honoured simply by opening a bottle of red wine. We recognise Frank Webster's service to the parliament, and may he rest in peace.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:06):** On behalf of the opposition, the Liberal Party of South Australia, I rise to speak on this condolence motion for Mr Frank Raymond Webster, a former member of the House of Assembly in South Australia and the member for Norwood from 1979 until 1980.

As the Premier described, although brief in terms of the period of time Mr Webster spent in our state's parliament, it was a notable time given the narrowness of his initial win and the perhaps quirkiness of his exit from parliament following a determination by the Court of Disputed Returns around the translation of the Italian language, which may have been made slightly incorrectly by his dear mother. As the Premier said, it could have caused some family difficulties into the future from that point in time.

Although Mr Webster's time as a member of parliament was brief, his service to the South Australian community was a lifelong commitment. When he was elected for the first time in 1979, he was 33 years old and practising as a barrister as well as serving as a member of the board of the Queen Victoria Hospital. He won the seat of Norwood by an extremely narrow margin of only 33 votes on his second attempt. At the time, that was the middle of three elections he contested against Mr Greg Crafter. I note that Mr Crafter is in the gallery today. That narrow election win, the first of a number of narrow election wins by various candidates in the seat of Dunstan, ultimately assisted David Tonkin to form government and become the 38<sup>th</sup> Premier of South Australia.

Mr Webster's legal career spanned more than three decades, from when he was admitted to practice in 1972 until his retirement in 2004. Mr Webster was involved in several legal practices, including Martin, Webster & Lovell from 1979 until 1983; Webster, Braes & Co. between 1983 and 1986; and later Frank Webster & Associates from 1993 until 2004, when he left the profession. At the time, the firm was rebranded Websters Lawyers, an organisation that continues to endure today.

On a more personal note, Mr Webster suffered from throat cancer, and as a result of his experience with this disease, he helped to establish the South Australian Foundation of Otorhinolaryngology (yes, it is written phonetically). The foundation is focused on world-leading research and peer-to-peer education to improve outcomes relating to head and neck cancer and other disorders of the ears, nose and throat. Mr Webster continued as a board member of the foundation until he passed in March this year, just shy of his 78<sup>th</sup> birthday.

On behalf of the Liberal Party in South Australia, I want to extend my thanks to Mr Webster for his service to our community and recognise his broader contributions to the legal profession and to the charitable sector beyond his parliamentary career. To his friends and family, I provide the Liberal Party's sympathies, remember Mr Webster, and commend this motion to the house. Vale Frank Webster.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

**The SPEAKER:** The house will stand suspended until the ringing of the bells.

*Sitting suspended from 14:11 to 14:21.*

#### *Petitions*

### **WESTERN HOSPITAL**

**Mr COWDREY (Colton):** Presented a petition signed by 2,730 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to ensure the future of the Western Hospital at Henley Beach and, in particular, ensures that the land on which the hospital sits remains zoned for healthcare services into the future.

#### *Parliamentary Procedure*

### **ANSWERS TABLED**

**The SPEAKER:** I direct that the written answer to a question as detailed in the schedule I now table be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

### **PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

Water Security Update 2024, Annual—Report

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

Rules made under the following Acts—

First Nations Voice—First Nations Voice Court of Disputed Returns

By the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water (Hon. S.E. Close)—

Murray Darling Basin Authority—Annual Report

South Australian—Victoria Border Groundwaters Agreement Review Committee—  
Annual Report

By the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport (Hon. A. Koutsantonis)—

Regulations made under the following Acts—

Harbors and Navigation—Port Adelaide (2024)

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

Regulations made under the following Acts—

Teachers Registration and Standards—Mandatory Notification Courses

By the Minister for Local Government (Hon. G.G. Brock)—

Local Council By-Laws—

Tatiara District Council—

No. By-law No. 1—Permits and Penalties

No. By-law No. 2—Moveable Signs

No. By-law No. 3—Roads

No. By-law No. 4—Local Government Land

No. By-law No. 5—Dogs

No. By-law No. 6—Cats

No. By-law No. 7—Domestic Bird Management

By the Minister for Planning (Hon. N.D. Champion)—

Regulations made under the following Acts—

Planning, Development and Infrastructure—Fees Notice (2024) (No. 2)

#### *Ministerial Statement*

#### **FESTIVAL PLAZA**

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:23):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** Festival Plaza is at the heart of the Riverbank Precinct and synonymous with the state's skyline that includes Festival Centre, the Casino, Parliament House and then further west along the riverbank. Adelaide is a growing, vibrant city, with our state's economy ranked number one in the nation by CommSec's State of the States Report, record low unemployment, along with an influx of private capital coming into the state.

Today, the Minister for Housing and Urban Development and I announced the proposed development of a 38-storey modern high-rise tower to be built on Festival Plaza adjacent to One Festival Tower. The building of this second tower on Festival Plaza is a sign of our state growing

up, seizing its opportunities, providing our capital city the skyline to warrant its standing as a global city.

The building of a second tower will see approximately 1,300 construction and associated jobs created throughout the tower's \$600 million development. Once built, the second tower will transform Festival Plaza, providing a vibrant public and civic hub that will see thousands of visitors daily, provide office accommodation for 9,500 workers and will generate an estimated \$1.3 billion in economic activity annually.

The second tower will incorporate the best A-grade office accommodation that can be offered, which is proposed to include 36 floors of commercial office space, an option of 3,000 square metres of public civic space across four podium levels, two floors of high-quality food and beverage space with direct access from Festival Plaza and 800 square metres of additional public realm adjacent to Parliament House—additional public realm.

On 3 November 2021, the former Liberal government negotiated a second deed to the development agreement which enabled the Walker Corporation to secure an additional lease over the air space above the proposed three-storey retail building and to request additional development rights for an alternative proposal, such as now being proposed.

The three-storey building was required to commence in June 2023. A proposal was received from Walker Corporation formally in 2023 and, following an evaluation of the proposal against key criteria, including value, contribution to the precinct and community benefits, the state government and Walker Corporation have finalised the key commercial terms, including securing payment of over \$40 million of direct value to the state.

The decision to proceed with the development of a second tower has enabled this government to be able to provide significantly more public space and public amenity on the ground and in the building to South Australians, while creating an active community precinct for the public's enjoyment in the heart of our city and its Riverbank Precinct.

The footprint of the second tower is smaller than the three-storey retail building, which provided very little public amenity, which Walker Corporation was contractually obliged to build under approval which was provided by the former Liberal government whilst obscuring the state parliament's northern heritage facade and balcony entirely.

The second tower also strives to deliver improved heritage outcomes which were an important consideration in the decision to proceed with Walker Corporation's proposal for a second tower, which include:

- the tower's footprint being smaller—smaller—than what was originally proposed, that is, with the three-story building;
- a glass foyer which allows for continuous sight lines between Parliament House and Festival Plaza, including revealing the Parliament House balcony;
- options allowing for new public artworks; and
- significantly more public space and public amenity at both ground and podium levels.

The government has made no precommitment to Walker Corporation to any tenancy in the second tower, with all commercial and funding risk to be borne by the developer.

A code amendment specific to the Festival Plaza footprint will be initiated and consider aspects such as building height, design, heritage and interface with the Riverbank Precinct's existing infrastructure.

The Walker Corporation must now go through the standard planning statutory processes to seek approvals for the commercial building and additional public space which will be considered by the State Commission Assessment Panel in due course.

Subject to planning approvals and tenancy agreements, construction is estimated to start next year, with the tower to be complete as early as mid-2027.

*Parliamentary Committees***PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (14:31):** I bring up the 72<sup>nd</sup> report of the committee, entitled Taplan Elevated Water Project.

Report received and ordered to be published.

**Mr BROWN:** I bring up the 73<sup>rd</sup> report of the committee, entitled SA Ambulance Service New Headquarters and Adelaide Ambulance Station.

Report received and ordered to be published.

**Mr BROWN:** I bring up the 74<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit.

Report received and ordered to be published.

**Mr BROWN:** I bring up the 75<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Flinders Medical Centre Upgrade and Expansion.

Report received and ordered to be published.

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (14:33):** I bring up the 47<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Petition No. 96 of 2021: Funding for children and students with additional learning needs in public schools and preschools.

Report received.

**Ms WORTLEY:** I bring up the 48<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Amendments to the National Health and Medical Research Council: Ethical guidelines on the use of assisted reproductive technology in clinical practice and research.

Report received.

*Question Time***AMBULANCE RAMPING**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:35):** My question is to the Premier. Is fixing ramping the Premier's number one priority? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** Fixing ramping was Labor's central election commitment in 2022. However, the latest ramping results from March were the second worst on record. The Labor government has now delivered the worst 22 months of ramping on record and more ramping in two years than the former Liberal government's entire four-year term.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:35):** Yes, addressing the challenge of ramping remains the government's fundamental priority. I would also put housing up there with the challenges we see within the health system. So those two challenges that we see in the state occupy the bulk of the government's policy effort but—

*The Hon. D.G. Pisoni interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Unley!

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** Not just policy effort but also investment in both those areas. We saw in the latest ramping statistics in full view the size of the challenge. Although, contained within them—and this is not an exercise in seeking to cherrypick only the positive, because we don't deny the size of the challenge that exists. But the turnaround that we have seen, which I am reluctant to call just yet to get a full trend, is a big turnaround within NALHN, particularly at the Lyell McEwin Hospital but obviously also including Modbury Hospital. It is a demonstration to the



government that notwithstanding growing demand on resources, which remains a big challenge, we can with thoughtful purpose design solutions for that particular context. We can get solutions to result in improved host patient flowthrough.

The most acute challenge is at the Central Adelaide Local Health Network, where of course the RAH remains a significant concern to the government in terms of its transfer-of-care hours lost. I think we should be able, in the space of the next week or so, to release our ambulance response time data. What we have been able to see with the numbers that we've got available to us at this point is that, notwithstanding the burgeoning demand on our hospital system, ambulance response times have maintained their level of improvement, which we are very, very grateful for, but the top challenge remains a central focus of the government.

I would say what we will start to see throughout the course of the second half of this year—as the health minister and I have been out most recently. We are starting to see rapidly approaching the commissioning of the new beds that we are putting into the system. They were beds that were funded in our very first budget handed down by the Treasurer in June 2022. Since then, the design and construction work has been happening at pace so that we now—

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

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** What we will see in the second half of this year is 150 beds coming online—they are new beds—and then another 130 beds next year. From there on, what we will see is more and more beds come online, particularly at places like Mount Barker, which I know is a massive project that is close to your heart, Mr Speaker, along with Flinders Medical Centre with the big \$450 million upgrade there, providing a lot more beds, which we only released the designs on in the last fortnight. So there is a serious plan for serious growth in the number of beds in the system.

Where we have also been able to deliver results most recently is in the recruitment of the nurses and doctors who will service those patients in those new beds. Now, we all would have liked that work to be completed sooner but, alas, it was this government that had to make the investments and, in the quickest time possible, we are getting those investments online.

*Parliamentary Procedure*

#### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the leader, I recognise the presence in the gallery today of senior students from Pembroke School. Welcome to parliament.

*Question Time*

#### **HEALTH SYSTEM, WINTER DEMAND**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:39):** My question is to the Premier. When will the government release a plan to tackle winter demand in South Australia's health system?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:40):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question; it is an important one. For the life of this government, in the two winters for which we have been responsible, we have released the winter management plan in May. The government is committed to, again, releasing the winter management plan in May. There is good reason for that. Obviously what we plan to do in winter needs to be designed in the context of the challenges that we've got and the opportunities we've got before us at the time. We would be doing the plan itself a disservice by pre-emptively doing that in a way that is out of context to those designs. So May is the appropriate time for that plan to be released and that is what the government is committed to.

### ELECTIVE SURGERY

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:40):** My question is again to the Premier. Was the Premier first made aware that SA Health were considering cancelling elective surgeries in the lead-up to Easter, and did he support that?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:41):** I just want to get my time lines right. The first conversation I had with the health minister, or indeed anyone in SA Health, regarding the prospect of a statewide elective surgery ban was on the day it was announced. In fact, I can be awfully specific for the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition because it is not a call that one receives frequently; it is the sort of one that I speak to the health minister frequently about, very frequently indeed. But that call was unusual so I remember exactly where I was. I was grabbing some lunch. I got out of the office for a moment, got out to lunch. I was at the Central Market getting something to takeaway. It certainly became takeaway after I got off the phone call from the health minister.

The health minister advised me of the challenge in terms of demand on the system at that particular point in time. He made me aware that an option was being contemplated within SA Health and that there was the prospect that the chief executive would make a decision to initiate a statewide elective surgery ban. The minister and I, during the course of that meeting, talked about the fact that, should that decision be made, a statement would be immediately released publicly, just as the minister is committed to do, that where such a statewide elective surgery ban takes place that the public are notified accordingly, which of course, I don't mind saying, is a departure from the practice that we saw that occurred under the previous government where statewide elective surgery bans were put in place without the public notification of doing so.

### ELECTIVE SURGERY

**Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:43):** My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Has the minister or his office received any advice about whether elective surgeries may need to be cancelled to manage the demands on the health system this winter?

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:43):** I thank the member for her question. As the Premier just outlined, we have been very clear that, if there are to be any statewide directions in place for elective surgery, as was put in place a couple of weeks ago for a two-day pause on nonurgent elective surgery, then that is something we would communicate publicly. I have no advice that such an additional move would be considered or is being considered at this time.

As the Premier has already outlined to the parliament as well, SA Health, the Department for Health and Wellbeing, and the local health networks are currently working away on this year's winter demand strategy. There are a couple of things to say on that. As the Premier said, we have put in place winter demand strategies for the past two years. That is different from what had happened under the previous government, where three out of four years there was not a winter demand strategy in place under those years. For three out of four years, it was not in place. We have decided to do that. There will be a winter demand strategy that will be put in place and there will be consideration of a number of factors across managing demand across our health system.

Having said that, we do face significant year-round demand in our health system as well. At the moment, we are seeing significant demand each season of the year on our hospital system, and peaks of flu, COVID and other diseases affecting our health system through the year. That doesn't mean that we are not aware that there could be substantial additional demand in winter. Obviously, we need to prepare appropriately for that, but we are also doing the hard work to make sure that our health system is more resilient right through the year and in every month.

We just had, before question time started, a number of additional Public Works Committee reports being brought to the parliament. One after one, these additional building works are either being completed, starting construction or soon to be underway to build that additional capacity. A key element of that has been building additional beds throughout our hospital system. We haven't seen significant additional beds being built for some time in SA Health. To see, over the course of this year—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. D.G. Pisoni:** We tore up the sale contract of the Repat.

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

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON:** —150 extra beds coming into the system, and next year 130 extra beds coming into the system, is basically the equivalent of opening another QEH within the course of the next two years, with more beds to come, of course, after that as well. So we are building the additional capacity that we need, to make sure that not only can we see emergency cases but we have also got the capacity to make sure that people who have needs for elective surgery can be seen without cancellations affecting them as well.

#### FLINDERS MEDICAL CENTRE

**Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:46):** My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Did the minister approve the Flinders Medical Centre's corridor care trial, and can he guarantee that it won't be replicated at any other hospital into the future? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mrs HURN:** On 26 March, *The Advertiser* reported the corridor care trial as a situation where patients are put in beds in corridors when the emergency department is full.

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:47):** I thank the shadow minister for her question. As has been publicly reported and discussed, Flinders Medical Centre has been under significant demand pressures. Through the course of the past few weeks, they had ordered a Code Yellow situation in that hospital. The Chief Executive Officer of Southern Adelaide Local Health Network, Professor Kerrie Freeman, took command of the situation and the incident management team, and they worked on a number of different measures to make sure that patients could get the care that they needed in a timely way. One of those which was trialled was allowing offload beds—they were fully staffed—to be utilised. I think there were three, off the top of my head. That was a trial that, I think, lasted a few days and is no longer continuing.

But the key thing that we are doing is building additional beds and building additional capital works. If you look at what is happening at Flinders Medical Centre, just in the past couple of weeks, in fact, the Premier released the plans for the new clinical services building to be built at Flinders Medical Centre: a new tower outside the front of the hospital that will contain, I think, in that building alone, over 90 beds. The totality of the project will be 160 beds across Flinders Medical Centre and the Repat site as part of a joint federal-state project which is now almost worth half a billion dollars.

We know that there is a critical need for additional beds at Flinders. We are building those. In fact, we are fast-tracking a number of beds at the moment. We have cleared out what was previously administrative space within the hospital to make room for additional beds to be constructed. Those beds are close to completion; some 20 additional beds will be coming online that were fast-tracked. That will be a help, but of course we need all of those other beds as well, and that is why we are determined to make sure that that investment is delivered.

#### FLINDERS MEDICAL CENTRE

**Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:49):** Supplementary: was the minister personally advised of the corridor care trial before it was rolled out at Flinders?

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:49):** I certainly was aware that Flinders Medical Centre was in incident management and was at Code Yellow. The phrasing that the shadow minister uses is her own, but I would have to check in terms of additional detail we were provided about specific measures that were being used at that time.

**POLICE, ALICE SPRINGS DEPLOYMENT**

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:49):** My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. Have South Australian police officer resources been committed to serving at Alice Springs and, if so, how many and for what length of time?

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services) (14:50):** I can advise that, yes, the police commissioner has, under section 6 of the Police Act, acknowledged a request that has been made by the Northern Territory police commissioner to support their operations in the Northern Territory. These operations are far from abnormal. There have been multiple deployments of our sworn police from South Australia to other jurisdictions in just the last two years. I am very well aware that under the former government that was a common practice as well.

I can note that a very significant international event on the eastern seaboard saw in 2023 resources, police and sworn police, deployed from South Australia. I can also note, whilst respecting the operational sensitivities, that there have been, subsequent to that, other instances in that period of time in 2023 when there have been deployments of South Australian police into other jurisdictions. The latest advice I have is that there are two deployments of 10 police—that is, 20 in total—for about nine or 10 days on each deployment.

**POLICE, ALICE SPRINGS DEPLOYMENT**

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:51):** Supplementary: what area of SAPOL are the officers being removed from to be deployed to Alice Springs?

**The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services) (14:51):** They are being deployed from SOSB.

**GATHER ROUND**

**Ms CLANCY (Elder) (14:51):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier please update the house on the recent Gather Round?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:51):** I thank the member for Elder for her question. I think the success of Gather Round has been well covered in various circles. I think there is no denying that it has been a really big, successful weekend for our state and, importantly, not just for our city but also for parts of our regions. As a government, we are keen to make sure that Gather Round remains an ongoing success and delivers the return on investment to our state in a really purposeful and meaningful way. We are looking to make sure we do that through sharing Gather Round with other places in our state.

We were very pleased yesterday to announce the next big step for Gather Round, one that I am sure the member for Schubert supports because I know she has been an advocate for it: we will see a Gather Round game in the Barossa Valley, specifically at Lyndoch. I want to put on the record my gratitude and thanks to Mayor Bim Lange for his support and the council's support. What we are seeing is a fifty-fifty investment between the state government and the Barossa Council to get that particular facility up and running in time for next year's Gather Round.

Without labouring the point around the economic success, which I think speaks for itself because it has absolutely shot the lights out, the one point that is worthy of emphasis is how much work has gone on behind the scenes to bring this to life. The Minister for Tourism will well know that her whole team in the SATC have worked so incredibly hard, an extraordinary group of South Australians who really take seriously their work, and they understand the opportunity that Gather Round presents to the state. I will come back to that in a moment.

The amount of pride that I was able to see in the eyes of people who had something to do with Gather Round was amazing. I am talking about people working at the event. Adelaide Oval staff, people at the boom gates of the car park, people pouring beers, the administration: these are good, hardworking South Australians who understood that they were making a contribution to something that lifted the state up a little bit.

I was so happy for them, let alone all the people working in the hospitality sector throughout the state. There were many overtime shifts. I chatted to a gentleman near Adelaide Oval who was dropping people off to the hotel there and I took the opportunity to say, 'Have you had a busy weekend?' and he said, 'The best ever.' He runs his own little business just doing chauffer work, running people to and from the airport. He said, 'I have been doing wineries and I've done a million airport runs.' He said, 'The whole thing is fantastic.'

From the grounds people at Adelaide Oval, the people from the Norwood council, the team of people working in Mount Barker, the vendors at Mount Barker—I read a beautiful Facebook post from the butcher who was supplying meat to the game—all these people took pride in contributing to Team South Australia and on the weekend it felt as though there was Team South Australia stepping up to the plate. These are good people who deserve much praise.

The final thing in the 15 seconds I have left: the misunderstanding, though, is just to focus on Gather Round in terms of the dollars through the till. It is so much more than that. It is actually about resetting and recasting the way the rest of the nation looks at South Australia. We are no longer the butt of jokes, we are the source of envy around the country and Gather Round puts that on display. I want to thank every South Australian who contributed to that effort. There was a great number of very good people who worked hard over the weekend. Gather Round belongs to them more than anyone.

#### RENMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:56):** My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. How does the minister respond to concern raised by members of my community after a presentation at Renmark High School on 22 March? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr WHETSTONE:** On 22 March, students at Renmark High School were subjected to a session that was supposed to be dealing with issues of respectful relationships and consent but which, instead, descended into an utterly inappropriate content, including bestiality and incest. A number of students felt so uncomfortable they left the room. At least one family has withdrawn their children from the school. Now I am advised that parental consent was not sought before the session and that no teacher remained in the room for the duty of care.

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:56):** I thank the member for Chaffey for what is a very important question. I am happy to have the opportunity to address the concerns that he rightfully raises in this place. I won't in any way seek to defend the presentation that was given to those Renmark High School students. It was inappropriate and I have said that publicly. The chief executive of the education department, Martin Westwell, has said that publicly. I will continue to say that and I am happy to be very frank in my comments here in addressing the points that the member for Chaffey has raised.

Mistakes were made, and policies and procedures that are in place for a very important reason were not followed. Chiefly to those were making sure that parents of those year 9 students who were going to be part of the respectful relationships session were advised beforehand so they had the opportunity of withdrawing their children from that session if they wished, and also, as the member for Chaffey alluded to in his explanation, making sure that there was always a teacher in the room when the presentation was taking place, which also did not occur.

The reference to bestiality and incest was inappropriate, of course, and does not have a place in that presentation. I might use this opportunity, however, to point out the context in which they were used. They were used in an attempt to explain some of the horrific vilification that the gay community has received historically where acts of bestiality and incest were likened to sex between same-sex couples. As I understand it, and as has been explained to me, that was the effort that that presenter was making, but it was not done appropriately and it had no place in a presentation to high school students.

There are a number of things we are seeking to do to make sure this can't happen again. The presentation in this case was conducted by a group called Focus One Health, the regional

provider of respectful relationships sessions. They are subcontracted by Headspace who do a lot of this work nationally. I understand that it was Focus One who sought the services of the person who gave this inappropriate presentation. Focus One Health have been suspended at this stage.

We have done a lot of investigation around whether or not the person that they approached to actually give the presentation to students has done so in any other of our schools. The advice that I have at this stage, although investigations continue, is that that has not occurred which is a good thing. And we have put out communications which have already made their way out to schools reminding them about the obligations that they have to follow the very important policies and procedures that are in place around making sure parents are notified when these sessions are going to occur, to give them the ability to withdraw their child if that is what they want, and making sure that staff are present in the room at all times.

They are some of the steps that we have taken at this stage, but I want to reassure the member for Chaffey and all other members of this place that I am not in any way seeking to defend what happened, but what we are doing is making sure we take the strongest available course of action that is available to me and the chief executive of the education department to make sure that in the future policies and procedures are followed and this kind of thing cannot actually happen again.

#### **REMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:00):** My question is again to the Minister for Education Training and Skills. Minister, will the government provide counselling and support for students and families impacted by the Renmark presentation and, if so, have parents been notified directly for this opportunity?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:00):** I thank the member for Chaffey for the question. Yes we will. I understand those offers of counselling to students have already been made. I understand that in particular some parents of those students and the students themselves have made it very clear that they felt traumatised by what they were exposed to in that presentation, and I think for that reason the offer of counselling is a very important one. I have been told that that has been made on numerous occasions.

I do not have any information at this stage for the Member for Chaffey about what the uptake of that has been like, but we will make sure that those offers are continually made. They are normally made directly through the school to parents, and I know that the principal in this case, who I might also add has made no excuses for what took place, has said upfront that it was a mistake, that the wrong thing was done and that he will seek to make sure it doesn't happen again. But he has met, I understand, with both the students who were part of the session and also their parents as well in an attempt to not only apologise, which he has done, for what took place but to try to make sure that the supports they need now by way of counselling and anything else are actually offered.

#### **REMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:02):** Noting the minister's earlier answers, why weren't parental notification procedures followed and how will that matter be addressed?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:02):** I thank the member for Morialta for his question and that is indeed a good question. As I said, investigation continues into exactly what took place and how we got to a stage where someone who should not have been giving a presentation like this was not only giving the presentation but was giving it with an absence of any staff members there, and in the absence of parental approval being given as well.

I am happy to update both the member for Morialta and this house once I have a clearer picture of why that wasn't done, but I have already been alerted and seen the communications that have gone out from 31 Flinders Street to all our schools and leaders reminding them very clearly of all the obligations they have in relation to providing respectful relationships sessions to students both in terms of making sure that parents are given the opportunity to withdraw their kids from it in advance if they wish, and also making sure that there are staff there present at all times.

**RENMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:03):** Again, noting the minister's earlier responses, was the school in breach of its duty of care obligations to its students by leaving them unsupervised during this session of a third-party provider and, if so, what action is the department taking to respond to this aspect of the incident?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:03):** Again, I thank the member for Morialta for what is a very fair question, and, without delving into the legalities of the matter around duty of care, I think the school itself and the principal have acknowledged that they did fail in their duty of care there, because although I understand they had staff outside the classroom where the presentation was being offered and there were, I think it was glass windows and they had line of sight, that is not good enough and they should have been in the room at all times. The school has acknowledged that, the chief executive has acknowledged that, and as minister I am acknowledging that as well.

I completely accept that very important policies and procedures that are in place for a reason, to prevent things like this from happening, didn't happen, and that we need to do better. Given the very important and clear duty of care that our schools and their staff have to the young people who are in their care, I think it is fair to say that we failed in that regard. But the investigation that I have already spoken about in answering the earlier questions from the member for Chaffey is also looking at where responsibility lay for making sure those policies and procedures were followed, why they weren't and what repercussions there might be for a failure to do so.

**STATE ECONOMY**

**Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (15:05):** My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer update the house on the performance of the South Australian economy?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (15:05):** I thank the member for Playford for his question, because I think all South Australians should be very proud of the state's economic performance that has been recorded in recent weeks. Mr Speaker, you would remember that in the last sitting week the Premier advised the house that on the Thursday of that week South Australia had not only recorded the lowest unemployment rate on record at 3.2 per cent but also it was the first time since ABS records began that we recorded the lowest unemployment rate in the nation, which is an absolutely extraordinary result. Our unemployment rate of 3.2 per cent is well below the national rate of 3.7 per cent, of course.

That news was quickly followed by the release of job vacancy data. Despite recording the lowest unemployment rate in the state's history and the lowest unemployment rate in the nation, according to the ABS and the latest figures there are still 25,900 job vacancies across the South Australian economy—absolutely extraordinary. South Australia was the only jurisdiction to record growth through the year in job vacancies, with an increase over the year of 13 per cent. Nationally, of course, job vacancies fell by 18 per cent, so that is a remarkable disparity between the positive performance of the South Australian economy and the rest of the nation.

Since the 2022 state election, there are now just under 50,000 more South Australians in work than there were in March 2022. Really pleasingly, 52 per cent of these, or 25,000 of those jobs, are full-time jobs. The unemployment rate is 1.7 percentage points lower than what it was at the last election, and there are 15,000 fewer people unemployed than there were only two years ago.

Really pleasingly, out of those 50,000 additional jobs across the South Australian economy, just under 20,000 are spread across the professional, scientific and technical services; manufacturing; agriculture, forestry and fishing; and transport, postal and warehousing industry sectors. So, increasingly, the jobs that are being created across our economy are in more highly skilled, higher-wage areas, which is really positive news.

Shortly after those job vacancy statistics were released, we also had the export figures released, where South Australia's exports through the year are at a near record of \$17.9 billion. Exports to China are up \$987 million, or 38 per cent. Exports to Thailand are up \$365 million—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hartley is warned. The Treasurer has the call.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Exports to Indonesia are up by a quarter of a billion dollars and exports to the United States of America are up by a quarter of a billion dollars. That is really positive. A big contributor was barley exports: \$401 million, or 69 per cent up. Petroleum and petroleum products were up a quarter of a billion dollars and iron ore and concentrates were up \$143 million. These are the reasons why the ANZ Stateometer reports that South Australia is the only economy consistently outperforming the rest of the nation since the pandemic.

#### **RENMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:09):** My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. Was the individual who made the presentation at Renmark school known to the department, and were the materials reviewed by anyone to check if they were appropriate for use with students?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:09):** I thank the member for Morialta for this question, and two fair questions. The short answer is, from what I have been told so far my understanding is, no, they were not known to the department. I have also been told that, no, my understanding is that those materials weren't reviewed, which is obviously another failure in following the policies and procedures, and another reason why it's very important that we have staff at all times in the classroom with those students who are receiving the respectful relationships session, which is what we are going to make sure happens in the future. As I said in my answer to you before, that work has already commenced around reminding sites of their obligations.

I might add also that we have already put in place in response to this a much stricter policy around having an approved provider list, which is something that I have asked for as minister, to make sure that schools don't have latitude beyond the approved provider list of selecting which organisations might get the job of coming and presenting, for instance to year 9 students about respectful relationships.

#### **NORTHERN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RECOVERY HUB**

**Mrs PEARCE (King) (15:10):** My question is to the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the minister update the house on the establishment of a northern domestic violence prevention and recovery hub?

**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) (15:11):** Thank you very much to the member for both her question and for her enduring commitment to helping to prevent and eradicate violence against women in all of its forms. The establishment of a northern domestic violence prevention and recovery hub is a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to help address domestic violence in every corner of our community.

The northern Multi-Agency Hub, led by Women's Safety Services South Australia and South Australia Police, marks a pivotal moment in our collective journey toward creating safer communities free from violence. By providing a collaborative response to domestic violence through prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing, the northern hub will serve as an aligned and specialist service for both individuals and families. The hub is made possible through the commitment of our government to establish both a southern and northern domestic violence prevention and recovery hub.

The southern safety hub, The Yellow Gate, was launched in December 2023. Located strategically in the heart of the northern suburbs is this northern domestic violence hub, which will become operational this month. It will extend its reach to encompass the communities around Playford, Salisbury, Gawler, Barossa, Light and Mallala. Operated on a referral or appointment basis, the northern hub will service as a centralised point of access for a wide range of services. Most referrals are expected to flow through channels such as the DV crisis lines, SAPOL, the DV Disclosure Scheme and Women's Safety Services outreach programs, ensuring that those who need assistance can promptly and effectively access that assistance.



The services offered at the northern hub are diverse and comprehensive, reflecting our strong commitment to addressing the multifaceted challenges of domestic violence in a coordinated way. From immediate safety responses and safety management strategies to accommodation intake, the northern hub is equipped to provide tailored support to meet the unique needs of each individual person.

The inclusion of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme within the hub's offerings underscores our dedication to empowering individuals with the information that they need to make informed decisions about their safety, and also to take the steps forward that they choose to take. Additionally, the commitment to this hub from South Australia Police in the presence of onsite police officers will facilitate the reporting process, ensuring that survivors have access to justice and protection alongside support services that empower them to take those important steps forward.

At the core of our commitment to these hubs lies the principle of collaboration. By bringing together key stakeholders from various sectors, including legal, health and financial services, we aim to provide a holistic and streamlined response to the complex needs of survivors and their families. As we embark on this new chapter in our journey to address domestic violence, I expect that these hubs will grow and evolve to ensure that they respond directly to the needs of their particular community.

I extend my gratitude to all who have contributed to the realisation of this vision, including the excellent Women's Safety Services' leadership and staff, SAPOL, and the Minister for Police. Together, we will continue to strive towards a future free from domestic violence where every individual can live a life of dignity, respect and safety.

#### **MILLICENT HOSPITAL**

**Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (15:15):** My question is to the Minister for Health. Will the government fund an upgrade of the sterilisation unit at the Millicent hospital? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and the leave of the house I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr McBRIDE:** I am told that the new nationwide standards will mean that the Millicent hospital sterilisation unit will no longer meet the quality requirements. This will impact the hospital's ability to offer surgical procedures.

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurana—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:15):** I thank the member for MacKillop for his question and his significant passion for his local health services, including those at the Millicent hospital. As the member outlined in his question explanation, the standards that have been put in place for healthcare services, public and private, in relation to sterilisation units have changed in recent years and that has meant that upgrades have been required in both public and private settings to meet those standards. This is something that we are not only addressing and working through in relation to the issues in Millicent but also in other public hospitals across, particularly, regional South Australia.

This is an area where there are a number of upgrades that have happened already. There are still a number of upgrades that we need to work through, of which Millicent is one. There has been some work that has been undertaken already. I am advised that some \$40,000 has been spent so far in relation to the design works through Studio Nine Architects to make sure that we have the plans in place for when funds become available for this project. This is obviously something on which we will undertake further consideration through appropriate government and budgetary processes in relation to future funding.

In relation to the standards themselves, similar to many other hospitals around the country that are facing this situation, we have been seeking extensions for those arrangements to be put in place, working with the Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, that have been constructive in terms of working with public and private hospitals around the country in terms of those extensions for those arrangements being put in place.

This is something that is actively being considered. There is some work that is being undertaken already, but obviously we know that having access to those local surgery services in

somewhere like Millicent, where I understand the current theatre is being used some three days a week at the moment, will need further consideration in terms of through the budgetary processes and any further upgrades required to meet the standards in the long term.

#### **RENMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:18):** My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. Can the minister confirm that the person who gave the presentation possessed all the necessary working with children checks required to engage directly with minors in schools?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:18):** I thank the member for Morialta for the question. I have sought advice on that. I don't have that advice yet, but I am happy to share it with the member for Morialta in this place as soon as I have it. As I explained in an answer I gave previously, it was Focus One Health that had been subcontracted by Headspace that are one of the very regular providers in this area, and they found the presenter. I am very happy to provide an answer to the member for Morialta on what, I must say, is a very fair question about whether or not those things were in place and come back to him personally, and the house, at the earliest opportunity.

#### **RENMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:18):** Can the minister guarantee that this presenter will not be allowed to conduct any further presentations in South Australian schools? Also, will the minister release a copy of the presentation that was given to the schools?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:19):** I thank the member for Morialta again for that question. Yes, we have already put measures in place to make sure that the person who gave this presentation is not able to do that in any other school. I think that is a very reasonable measure. As I said, I think, in my answer to the member for Chaffey's first question, investigations so far have not shown that this person has provided a presentation or given a presentation in any other school, which I think we can all agree is a good thing.

In terms of the presentation itself, I understand the member for Morialta has sought to get access to that through freedom of information. I won't be involving myself in that, but if it is able to be released to you under freedom of information, then of course that would be supported by me, and I certainly would in no way stand in the way of that taking place.

#### **RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES**

**Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (15:19):** My question is to the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs. Can the minister update the house on progress of changes to the Residential Tenancies Act?

**The Hon. A. MICHAELS (Enfield—Minister for Small and Family Business, Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs, Minister for Arts) (15:20):** I want to thank the member for Davenport for her question and for her ongoing advocacy for her constituents in the residential tenancies space. Landlords play a vital role in the South Australian housing sector. What we have been doing in the residential tenancies policy space is ensuring we get the balance right between protecting the interests of landlords and tenants. It is a delicate balance, and I believe we do have that balance right with our reforms of the Residential Tenancies Act.

Thanks to the advocacy of members on this side of the chamber, we have ensured that tenants' housing security is improved through these changes, all the while ensuring that landlords' property rights are protected. The Malinauskas government has introduced and passed two bills in this place amending the Residential Tenancies Act. We had an immediate priorities bill in early 2023 that addressed some immediate concerns we had in the sector and, of course, a more comprehensive residential tenancies amendment bill that addressed a wider variety of issues. That passed the parliament late last year.

As you know, Mr Speaker, these bills were the most comprehensive reforms to South Australia's rental laws in a generation. They ensure that tenants are protected in prescribed

grounds being required to terminate or not renew a tenancy; the notice period to end a tenancy is extended from 28 days to 60 days; tenants are allowed to have pets in rental homes with reasonable conditions; rental properties comply with minimum housing standards; and there are additional supports in the amendment act for victims of domestic violence.

Importantly, we also lifted the bond threshold from \$250 to \$800, meaning that for most properties now a four-week bond would be allowed to be requested from landlords. Previously, for any property where the rent exceeded \$250 per week, landlords were able to request six-week bonds. That has now increased to \$800. That has had a massive impact on South Australian renters. We have saved renters up to a whopping \$40 million since that bond threshold change was regulated in April last year. That's a step in the right direction to address rental affordability for South Australians. That bond threshold had not changed for 20 years and was completely out of step with today's rental prices.

The Malinauskas government stepped up to ensure that we could make renting more affordable for families out there who are struggling to find the money to pay bonds and secure their rental properties. We have put that money back in their pockets—as I said, \$40 million in a year. It is money that can be used to cool or heat their homes, provide meals for their families, schooling and education and other expenses.

We also took steps to stamp out rent bidding. Our changes require landlords or agents to advertise rental premises under a residential tenancy agreement for a fixed amount now. I think anyone in this place who has searched for properties online can understand the frustration when you are seeing properties advertised with a price range. Particularly frustrating is the 'contact the agent' quote. We have abolished that. The same section also prevents landlords and agents from inviting offers of rents for amounts that are higher than the advertised amount.

Since these provisions commenced on 1 January last year, I am told that Consumer and Business Services has received 46 complaints relating to these new offences. Forty of those complaints relate to advertising properties for a range rather than a fixed price; six complaints related to inviting higher offers than the advertised rent amount. Of that, we have had 15 written warnings issued for expiation notices and a number of others are still under investigation.

#### **REMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:24):** My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. Can the minister confirm that the relevant details of the presenter from the Renmark school incident have been provided to relevant officers in the non-government education sector to ensure that they are able to prevent this presentation from going to their students as well?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:24):** I thank the member for Morialta for his question. Yes, I can confirm I have received confirmation from the chief executive of the education department that that has been done.

#### **REMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:24):** Again, noting the minister's previous answers, will the government conduct a review or audit of those third-party providers that offer respectful relationship and consent education within our schools and the procedures used to engage such providers? With your leave, sir, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Earlier in question time the minister advised that there would be a commitment to develop an approved provider list. This question seeks to ensure that such organisations that would be on the list have the content and nature of the presentations reviewed both for content and appropriateness.

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:25):** I thank the member for Morialta for his question. Yes, he is correct. What I said in answer to a question earlier was that one of the responses we have already started to put in place here is to create an approved provider list as a means of making sure that something like this can't happen again.

I think it is fair to say that as part of compiling that list it will necessitate obviously the department going through current providers and having a look at which ones are used and where they are used. There are some complexities around that, as the member would know as a former minister, particularly in regional areas where the choice that is available to schools around providers can be limited, but we will make sure that this approved provider list is put in place and done in a way that, as has been explained to me by the chief executive, will also furnish principals with some basic fundamental questions that they can ask before choosing who the provider will be for their school as a way of making sure that it is appropriate and as a way of making sure that a presentation like this can't happen again.

There are a couple of reasons why that is important, if I could just explain. Obviously one is to put something in place and do everything within my power as minister and within the power of the education department to make sure this doesn't happen again. However, preserving the credibility and importance of having respectful relationships sessions in schools is also important.

I just want to make mention of what I thought was a very interesting article that appeared in the *Sunday Mail* just a couple of days ago, which was a pretty forensic examination of Andrew Tate—which I'm sure is a name that would be known to people in this place—and the incredibly damaging influence that Andrew Tate is having on generations of young people, particularly young men and boys. This was an excellent and forensic analysis of what this person has done. It didn't pull any punches. I read it with concern, of course, as the education minister but also as a father of three primary aged children.

Also, given that I had already been dealing with issues around this inappropriate presentation that took place in Renmark, it did bring into sharp focus for me the fact that what we are offering in schools in terms of combating some of these outrageous misogynistic views of people like Andrew Tate is making sure that we have some kind of respectful relationships program. It can't be what it was in Renmark—that is inappropriate; I am accepting that and doing everything I can to make sure it is not the case, but let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater here.

We need to make sure that we offer things in our schools to do the work that often parents aren't doing or can't do to make sure that young people have an understanding around how to treat people with respect and also understanding the very damaging views of people like Andrew Tate, the effect it is having on them and that it is having on not just other young students and female students but, as the *Sunday Mail* article pointed out, the influence and effect it is having on teachers, who are receiving some of this incredibly humiliating sexualised behaviour from young people who are following Andrew Tate online. He is telling them that these things are okay.

One of the few things we have between Andrew Tate and a generation of young people is respectful relationships programs—call it what you will—sex education that we run in our schools. We need to keep doing it. It needs to be preserved, but we need to put strict controls around it to make sure that the kind of thing that happened in Renmark doesn't happen elsewhere, and I am committed to doing that.

#### **SCHOOL PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SAFETY**

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley) (15:29):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Has the minister requested a department response to my letter dated 9 November 2023? With your leave, sir, I will explain the question.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** In my letter, I asked the minister to consider a number of suggestions to improve driver awareness and safety at pedestrian crossings adjacent schools on Unley and Goodwood Roads.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:29):** I start by apologising to the member for not responding to his letter sooner. I pride myself on trying to get back to members of parliament as quickly as possible. I prioritise their letters and I know that my office has a protocol in place that when the shadow minister or any member of this house writes to me, I attempt to prioritise their letters quickly. So first and foremost, I am sorry that you haven't received a response. I will chase that up

immediately. It seems like a very sensible suggestion. I don't know why you haven't received a response.

### MULTICULTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORY

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (15:30):** My question is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. How is the Malinauskas government assisting newly arrived South Australians to connect with local services?

**The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (15:30):** I thank the member for Torrens for her passion and her commitment to our migrant community. It has been happening for many years, her dedication to their sports facilities and attending events, and I thank her very much.

The Malinauskas Labor government is committed to making South Australia a more inclusive place to live, work and thrive. More than 25 per cent of South Australians were born overseas. We come from more than 200 different countries, speaking 180 languages. We know that the settlement journey can be challenging and there are varying needs for networks and support. That is why, upon coming to government, we committed to delivering a multicultural services directory. It allows migrants and refugees to tap into culturally and linguistically appropriate resources which will help them in their settlement journeys.

I particularly want to thank the Australian Refugee Association for coming on board to develop the web app. ARA, as it is well known, is one of the first ports of call for settlement here and has been here for many decades, reaching out to many newly arrived people here in South Australia. I was quite saddened to hear the recent announcement that Deb Stringer, their current CEO, is retiring. Since 2018, when she became head of ARA, Deb has seen the strengthening of their capacity to deliver thousands of settlement programs and services, and her involvement in the multicultural directory is a key example of this.

Users can search for information in more than 20 service categories, including health and wellbeing, women's services, employment, education and training, housing and youth. Dozens of organisations have already listed themselves on the directory, and we encourage more services to get on board over the coming months. For those of us in this house who know of services that have people who speak a multitude of languages, we encourage them to put themselves on the services. There is a great QR code which is easy to work through. If you have a pharmacy and a pharmacist who speaks a different language, that is something that is very helpful for new arrivals or more settled migrant communities. If you have a doctor in your region, that is similarly helpful advice.

We sometimes think that people will understand how to help themselves as easily as possible even if they have been here for a long time, but speaking a language and talking to someone who understands the challenge directly makes it so much easier. This directory will become a one-stop shop for essential services, training and community and social networks, which are crucial to the settlement journey.

We are very proud of strengthening networks and fostering services and organisations. A very detailed multicultural policy is one of the key things we came to government with. We put a multicultural lens on community language schools. It has been really exciting. We have more than 99 active schools here. We have developed hubs which have been going in a fantastic way. I was so thrilled to bring back the Multicultural Women's Leadership program, which was cut under the former government. We have a waiting list for people to do this leadership program at TAFE.

We also have the multicultural women's microbusiness campaign, which is done with Good Shepherd. Once again, there is a waiting list to do it in year 2 and year 3. We are walking alongside people who have different activities that they want to offer. They just need a little bit of support on the way. We have increased our multicultural grants, the Celebrate Together and Expand Together grants, as well.

### PARADISE WATER MAIN

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley) (15:34):** My question is to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. Will the government provide financial or other assistance to residents of

Hamilton Terrace, Paradise who have been affected by a burst water main on 16 March? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA:** When SA Water customers in Hallett Cove, Sheidow Park and Trott Park experienced a burst water main in October 2023 that left them without water for several days, the minister asked that SA Water waive the supply charge for the quarterly bill as compensation.

**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) (15:34):** That particular incident was quite a remarkable one given that so many people were affected, which meant that you could not just go around to the neighbour's place or even to a nearby shopping centre, therefore there was a view that we should do something more than would usually be done. But the member is absolutely right to point out that the incident for Paradise, although confined to affecting only three properties, was nonetheless particularly annoying for those people, having had that experience previously.

I believe the member is aware, but just to bring the chamber up to date, SA Water has made a decision to replace that section of main on the grounds that it has clearly been unreliable in its capacity to deal with supply without causing a challenge. SA Water is working with each of those properties on how they can be supported during the period of disruption that has been caused. I believe there is one in particular that has some challenges in terms of how long it will be out. My office has also been speaking to the people in those properties. Both SA Water and my office will continue to be working closely with them to make sure they are getting all the support they need and deserve.

#### *Grievance Debate*

#### **REMARK HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:36):** In recent days, in fact over the last week, many South Australian families, indeed people around Australia and more broadly, have learned of the situation that happened at Renmark High School on 22 March.

They have been appalled, concerned and made very anxious about what would be the circumstances if they as parents were confronted to hear, as unfortunately a number of parents at Renmark High School did, their children come home and describe to them a presentation ostensibly on respectful relationships and consent where instead the presenter apparently, allegedly, raised concepts of incest and bestiality, concepts which, as the Minister for Education rightly said in question time just past, were utterly inappropriate for the session, as indeed was this presentation.

The member for Chaffey, Tim Whetstone, during question time set out the scene very clearly with a range of concerns about failures that have led to this situation, the first being that when the session that was to be held was prepared, parents were not notified. Again, the minister has confirmed that this is not in accordance with departmental procedure. This departmental procedure is very important. It is set in place so that when parents have views about the content of curriculum, in particular in relation to sensitive topics such as sexual education and respectful relationships and consent education, they have the opportunity to deny their consent.

I would suggest that the vast majority of parents in South Australia do not necessarily want their children to be denied the opportunity to have professionally delivered sex education, consent education and respectful relationships education, but it is absolutely right that parents be given the opportunity to make it their decision whether their child takes part in that. The school has apologised for its failure to follow procedure and protocol on this occasion, and that is also right, but it is important that we get to the bottom of how this happened so that we can ensure it does not happen again.

A second key issue here, again as acknowledged by the minister and the chief executive of the department, is that the department's processes and procedures in relation to duty of care do not appear to have been followed. Whatever the legal status, certainly the department's procedures would expect that when a third-party provider is presenting a session of this or any other nature, the

school retains a duty of care to its students. There should have been an adult in the room, a teacher in the room, somebody responsible for the wellbeing of those students who could have put a stop to the session as it was going on once it was very clear that the content was inappropriate. That did not happen.

We look forward to the conclusion of the investigation that the minister has indicated the department is putting forward so that we can understand why this happened, how this happened and how we can ensure it does not happen again.

There were a number of questions answered during question time. There are several that we look forward to the answer to. We look forward to the process that will hopefully see a copy of this presentation released so that we can assess more clearly what was included in it. However, from what has been provided and indeed acknowledged by the government, it was utterly inappropriate. There are many more questions in relation to how this was able to happen and what the department's response will be.

I am grateful to the minister for his indication of early and quick responses as soon as that happens and he understands, I am certain, that the community and the South Australian public will hold him to those assurances, as they will the government.

In question time the minister also raised that the government is proposing to have an approved provider list, and there are a couple of questions relating to the detail about that. It is important and it is certainly the Liberal Party's strong view that following the Renmark High School incident it is necessary to conduct this review, this audit, if you like, of the programs that are available so that principals and school leaders around South Australia if they are engaging with third party providers can do so with confidence that the content and the material being provided is fit for purpose and suitable, and suitable for engagement with minors in a school context.

We understand the critical importance of issues raised by Chanel Contos, for example, and the thousands of young Australian women who gave their testimony as to the importance of consent and sex education, given the sexual assault experiences that they had received and their accusations of the department some three or four years ago—not just our department in South Australia but around Australia—that insufficient information had been provided. That is why the Morrison government responded with an urgency to ensure that the national curriculum did have an appropriate level of resource in it.

The provision of that consent education must be by people who are delivering content that is appropriate, that is age appropriate and that does not transcend the boundaries of what is reasonable for South Australian and Australian students. I look forward to seeing further work on this approved provider list and hopefully this work will be important in reassuring parents that their concerns have been taken seriously.

#### **SURVIVORS OF TORTURE AND TRAUMA ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION SERVICE**

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:41):** I rise today to highlight the work of two Mount Gambier community members, Sophie Coote and Rhett McDonald, who are torture and trauma counsellors for the Limestone Coast branch of Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service (STTARS).

STTARS is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation with no political or religious affiliations that has been operating in South Australia since 1991. Sophie Coote was an integral part of opening the local branch of STTARS and was joined a few years later by Rhett McDonald. They travel throughout the Limestone Coast, from Mount Gambier to Bordertown, providing support for new arrivals and refugees. Recently, Sophie and Rhett's work was recognised when they were awarded joint winners of the 2023 Community Sector Award at the Governor's Multicultural Awards in Adelaide. When listening to Sophie and Rhett speak about their work, the passion they have for what they do is clear.

Many of the new arrivals they connect with have not had a choice in where they have been placed and face many obstacles when they arrive, including, most importantly, the language barrier. Sophie and Rhett work tirelessly to establish relationships and trust to begin the process of connecting new arrivals with their new communities. They are strong advocates for celebrating the

strength of those who have been displaced from their home country through war, violence or human rights violations and recognising the skills that they bring with them. They see this award as a celebration of the larger networks that all work together to help create a smoother network for the refugees placed in Mount Gambier, Naracoorte and Bordertown.

It is vital that we continue to highlight and support the work of organisations such as STTARS. Every refugee arrives in this country with a story to tell and valuable skills to offer. By providing them with the support they need to aid in the recovery of their trauma and connect with our local communities, we can begin to see the important role that migrants play in our communities.

Congratulations to Sophie and Rhett on the Governor's award for their work in the community, and I thank them for their advocacy in empowering local migrants to become integral and valuable members of our society.

### FROME ELECTORATE

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:44):** My electorate covers nearly 13,000 square kilometres with a strong representation of primary producers and farming families and every town's local economy is intrinsically tied to the supply chain of farming, viticulture and horticulture. Our town businesses are strong, particularly when the agricultural sector is performing well. Of course, we are all familiar with the well-known phrase that Australia rode on the sheep's back, so when it comes to the sheep industry in this state, the pedigree of breeders in the Mid North is unparalleled.

In fact, just a few weeks ago, the Elders SA Stud Merino Expo returned to Burra with some of the state's best stud stock on show. The successful two-day event kicked off with a range of on-property displays from across the Mid North with studs including Collinsville, East Bungaree, Glenowie, Greenfields, Gum Hill, Nyowie, Old Ashrose, Pindari, Springvale and White Hill all exhibited.

Of course, it is no surprise to anyone that Hallett-based Collinsville Stud Merinos took out first place of the ram of the year, with general manager, Tim Dalla, and director and owner, George Millington, proud of the recognition of their breeding program by leading peers in the industry. George's own story of revitalising the Collinsville brand is extraordinary, and he and his wife, Sophie, work very hard to build a sustainable farming business that can support their family for generations to come.

To learn more of George's pathway to Collinsville, I highly recommend all those listeners out there to tune into a fabulous podcast called *Voice It* as hosted by Annabelle Homer to learn more of his remarkable story into the Collinsville brand. George's recent appointment as a board member with Australian Wool Innovation is yet another opportunity locally for him and AWI to promote our state's contribution to the wool export market. George's reflections, I think, are worthy of sharing here to paint the picture of this significant natural fibre. He says:

Wool really is a fibre for the modern age with a great story to tell being a renewable, organic, bio degradable fibre with fantastic thermal properties.

As I will explain shortly.

Especially when you consider it competes with nylon in the market place which is a by product of the crude oil industry.

I think he makes a really strong point. So, enter stage left, based in Burra, the fabulous Emily Riggs and her husband, Tom, with 15,000 merinos on 30,000 hectares of pastoral country. I am sure that Tom will not mind me focusing on the success story of Emily's approach to establishing her business, Iris and Wool—

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**Ms PRATT:** Indeed, member for Chaffey, contributes—which has risen to prominence as a modern, sustainable, fashionable line of clothing for women of all ages and, dare I say, all sizes. Startups by women are common in my region and Emily's concept has become a bricks and mortar establishment in the heart of Burra and, of course, online. Chatting with her over the weekend as I drooled over the racks of candy-striped winter skirts, we spoke about family business, the local



shopping strip of Burra and how important it is to invest as she has done in country towns maintaining their vibrancy and viability.

There are so many champions of the food and fibre industry across my region. I will endeavour to recognise as many as I can today. Natalie Sommerville from Spalding is a celebrated leader in agriculture. She is recognised by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on International Women's Day as a leader who has made an incredible contribution to agriculture.

Andrew Morphett and Peter Hayward are modern pioneers who both understand diversity in farming and tourism as they manage Anlaby Station. Greg and Jane Kellock of Farrel Flat are industry leaders for the implementation of the Sheep Sustainability Framework, along with the Honan family based at North Benalla in Hallett, John and Pam Mitchell of Mintaro, and John and Helen Williams of Greenwood Park at Auburn.

A lot of farmers locally sell their hay and straw to companies throughout my electorate such as Johnson's, Gilmac, Balco and Hay Australia, which is over at Paskeville, making stock feed pellets and processed hay that are transported and exported. A special mention to Juliet Tripodi, based at Lewiston, of Rainbow Fresh fame, our salad bowl of the Northern Adelaide Plains.

So whether it is advocacy bodies and peak bodies like Brad Perry, the CEO of Grain Producers SA, who brings to the state's attention the freight route and safety of roads, or whether it is people like Sue Pratt and Karen Bromley in the education space, the talent pool in the Mid North and the electorate of Frome is deep.

#### WRIGHT ELECTORATE

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:49):** I am pleased to have an opportunity to update the house on how election commitments in the seat of Wright are progressing. There have been some exciting developments in the last few weeks and I thought it gave me a—

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

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** No, we are not sandbagging in Wright, but thank you, member for Hartley. There are some very important election commitments on which progress has been made recently, and I thought the moment was opportune to provide an update not just to the house, of course, but to the fine residents of the seat of Wright about how those election commitments are progressing.

The first I would like to speak about, because it is most fresh in my mind, is the new ambulance station at Golden Grove. Just last week I joined the members for King and Newland, as well as the health minister, at the site of where the new ambulance station will be. It is a fantastic location, I have to say. It is really exciting that the government and SAAS were able to find a location right in the heart of the Golden Grove development, in what is one of the very few remaining pieces of undeveloped land there.

It is coming in addition to the ambulance station that already exists at Redwood Park and, of course, in addition to the one at Parafield Airport. This is good because it is about adding additional paramedics and additional ambulances, which will improve response times in the area. I think it is safe to say that in the north-eastern suburbs and around the Golden Grove development we probably have more than our fair share of retirement villages. We have an ageing population, so making sure that we can have the health care they need and fast response times from ambulances is a wonderful thing. It was exciting to see the sod being turned on that site last week.

There will be a technical college at The Heights School. Obviously, the state government is delivering or building five of these, and the first at Findon is now open. There will be four more that will open before the state election in 2026 and one of them will be at The Heights School.

I have been quite open and honest in accepting and acknowledging that part of the inspiration for the government building these technical colleges was the incredible success of St Patrick's Technical College in Edinburgh and Cardijn College in the south as well. It is a model that was gratefully, I think, adopted and supported by local families, including in the north and north-eastern suburbs, but I think there was a gap, particularly in the north-east suburbs, where we could have

something closer to home. I am pleased to see that we have now selected a site there on a parcel of land co-located with The Heights School, owned by the education department, where we are going to build one of those five technical colleges.

On the subject of health care and providing more services closer to home, we have the very substantial upgrade of Modbury Hospital which is due to be completed in December 2025. I have had a number of visits there with the Premier, the health minister, the member for Newland, the member for King and the member for Torrens, as well as the federal member, Tony Zappia. We are all very aware that what is raised with us whenever we are out and about in our communities, whenever we are on the doors or at shopping centres, is quite often around how we can provide more healthcare services closer to home.

Indeed, I think it is safe to say that, particularly in the north-eastern suburbs, many people moved there when those suburbs were first created because we had Modbury Hospital being built. People saw it as a great location that was close to the city and close to work but was also going to have its own hospital.

I am really pleased to see that amongst a number of things that will be built at Modbury Hospital and offered is a new cancer centre. I think that is something that we can be proud of. The number of times I have spoken to residents, in particular to elderly residents, who might have a partner who is receiving cancer treatment or chemotherapy, they find it very hard to travel back and forward from the city to be there. They just want them closer to home, and we are going to make sure that that can now be done.

Wynn Vale Dam: for those who have been out—and there are some members of this place who have been out—to do the parkrun at Wynn Vale Dam on a Saturday morning, it is the way my wife and I normally start our weekends. It routinely draws a crowd close to 300. I am very much at the back end of that 300 when I cross the finish line, but it is something that I have got into the habit of doing. I know the member for Adelaide does it as well, and many other members of this place. It is not just a great thing for your fitness and for your wellbeing but is a fantastic social and community thing to do as well. There are people who you have conversations with there and you get to meet.

We are going to provide an update of Wynn Vale Dam, better pathways, better lighting and a better play space as well. Of particular importance is the lighting, because it is such a popular course. It is used in the early morning and late at night. Now we are heading into the winter months, we need to make sure it is safe as well. On top of that is Wynn Vale Drive, one of the worst intersections there with Bridge Road. We promised traffic lights. Early works have started there and I am looking forward to updating this place on how all those election commitments are progressing as soon as I have some more information.

## WINE INDUSTRY

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:54):** I would like to make a contribution today and talk about the wine industry here in South Australia. Sadly, currently the wine industry's economic woes continue. We have just finished a vintage and the writing on the wall has not been good. To put it into perspective, all of the 18 wine regions in South Australia are currently facing headwinds but no more so than the Riverland. The Riverland is the engine room of the wine industry. It produces an E and D-grade product. That is, it makes up the majority of exports out of Australia to our global partners.

The majority of the regions are growing fruit, making wine for a domestic product, and it has become very clear that those domesticated products have had in some way, shape or form a little bit of protection. They have not seen, as I said, the headwinds of the export markets. But the exporters—those regions that are export focused—have been hit very hard, particularly the red wine grape growers.

Over the short term, we have seen a lot of uncertainty and, when it comes to putting the product onto international shelves, we are now facing significant headwinds with other countries that have entered a lot of our major export markets, no more so than China. China has been very well documented and, since 2 March 2021, we saw a 218 per cent tariff imposed on container wine products. At that point in time, South Australia was exporting about \$1.2 billion of wine just to China.

As of March 2024, sadly we are down to \$2.8 million and that is having a significant impact not only on South Australia's wine economy but is having a significant impact on the hardship of those wine grape growing families.

We must remember that back in 2015, the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement was one of the great boons for the wine industry, and where we saw the trade relations continue to grow. As the shadow trade minister, I was very sceptical about putting all of our eggs, all of our opportunities, into the China basket. The then trade minister—well, I will not talk about the former trader, but he was a trader, he was a trade minister—came out very hard and fast at me about putting our reputation with China at risk.

Now, as to the opportunity, myself as a former trader, myself as a former grapegrower, exporter, I saw that the writing was on the wall that we were becoming more and more vulnerable as every vintage went past. What I have seen since then has come very, very true. I would like to thank a number of my political colleagues not only on this side of the chamber, on this side of politics, but along the way. Back in July 2022, I met with the now federal Minister for Agriculture, Murray Watt. I took delegations to both him and Senator Don Farrell, and over that time I have met with Minister Champion and Minister Scriven.

I will touch on Minister Scriven quickly. It is funny that she continues to visit my region, and secretly. Not once have I been notified, not once have I received an invitation and not once have I been included in any of the public consultation. Not once. So, over that time I have met with many shadows—David Littleproud and Kevin Hogan—and I have met with all of the larger wine producing companies to get a better perspective on how we are going to tackle this.

We have just recently seen the current state government put a \$1.85 million bucket of money into the equation to deal with technical, testing, labelling and customs issues, but what I want to just put on the record here is short-term relief for our grapegrowers: rate relief and ESL remission. We have to look at how the primary producer diesel fuel rebate can work as does an electricity rebate.

In the longer term, we have to have more inbound and outbound trade missions and we have to look at structural adjustment. That structural adjustment is about looking at opportunities outside of being a grapegrower. It is looking at keeping our world-class farmers on their farms but growing not just winegrapes but a more diverse crop. My final call to industry is they need to come together as one. Currently, we have 11 representative bodies all pushing in different directions. I am calling on the wine industry representative bodies to come together, because we know the China market will never be what it was—never again will it be what we have seen.

### EID CELEBRATIONS

**Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (16:00):** In the lead-up to Eid celebrations, I rise today to wish the many Muslims in my community my sincerest Eid Mubarak. The communities I represent are proudly diverse, with 40 per cent of us, including myself, born overseas. This includes a large Muslim population, who have been exemplary in breaking glass ceilings, dispelling myths and proving we all want similar things out of life.

With the holy month of Ramadan ending, a lot can be said at this time of fasting, prayer, reflection and, of course, community. I had the privilege of first getting to know the local Muslim community via a local school, Garden College. As a candidate in the last election, I was invited to attend the year 12's graduation ceremony and admit having no idea what to expect. But I was deeply impressed the moment I arrived. The community was warm, kind and made me feel welcome from the get go.

I sat and listened to the speeches, and as the night progressed, the words of the principal, Dr Edries, were profound. While I cannot recall them verbatim, she said to her graduates, 'If you can't remember what we taught you in maths, or science or some other area of academia, remember to hold on to your sincerity, for this will serve you well on your pathway towards adulthood.' Several months later, I approached Dr Edries and told her how these words could not escape me. She turned around to me and said, 'John, we are in the business of creating decent human beings.' There are moments like these that floor you for their brilliance and this was certainly one of them.

My office devotes a significant effort working with all our multicultural communities, reinforcing their significance to the fantastic tapestry that we call South Australia. This could not be done without the services of Munhumel Khan. He is not only a friend but also a fantastic representative of both the local Bangladeshi and Muslim communities. I am grateful for all his hard work and advice, but, more importantly, my whole team has gained so much insight into his culture and values. We love his company and over time we have realised that he has a wicked sense of humour.

Beyond Playford, I would imagine there would be just a handful of electorates to boast two mosques, both within a few kilometres of each other. This includes the Fatima Zahra Mosque, with a large congregation of Afghani members, and the Islamic Community Milli Gorus (ICMG) mosque, drawing its members across many different ethnic backgrounds.

Both are always welcoming and I was recently honoured to attend my first iftar at the ICMG mosque two weeks ago. This was a special occasion and I enjoyed how we shared the meal together in a communal environment. While my arthritis medication restricts me from taking water out of my life, I made the point of fasting in the hope of gaining a greater appreciation of the moment. It made me a bit tired towards the end of the day, but as I ate a date with those around me, it gave me a moment to reflect on several attributes I adhere to personally—some not dissimilar to those I was sharing the experience with.

With Eid upon us, I am looking forward to tonight attending the Bangladesh Club of Australia's Chand Raat Festival in Mawson Lakes, followed by an Eid Festival Dinner, held by my friend Abdul Mannan, tomorrow evening. Both are very happy occasions, where the community comes together to enjoy the moment. Regarding the latter, Abdul is the proud owner of Priyo Bangla Catering and prides himself on his exquisite Bangladeshi cuisine. Given he fasts during Ramadan, it is a testament not just to his skills as a great cook but also to his faith that his food always comes up perfectly, despite him being unable to taste what he has been preparing.

Our Islamic community enriched us almost immediately after South Australia was established as a colony. We only have to look at the history of the *Ghan* to reflect on their profound impact. Eid is a special time when friends greet one another, presents are given, new clothes are worn and the graves of relatives are visited. Following a month of fasting, this is a time for celebration with family and loved ones. I thank the local Islamic community for sharing this with the broader community and wish them all the best for the very special occasion ahead.

#### *Private Members' Statements*

### **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley) (16:05):** For the second time this year I have raised in this place reference to a letter that I wrote to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport about suggestions that came from school communities to improve awareness of two traffic crossings—one on Unley Road in front of Walford school, and one on Goodwood Road in front of Goodwood Primary School.

I was pleased to hear the minister say that he would attend to a response to the letter that I sent on 9 November after I asked him a question today about its progress. In my letter, I passed on the suggestions that were made by those communities—for example, the declaration of designated school zones adjacent to those schools on Goodwood Road and Unley Road.

This is unique to South Australia. I understand that main roads that have schools on them do not have school zones on those main roads. If you go around the corner on Commercial Road in Hyde Park adjacent to Walford school, you are alerted that you are in a school zone, but not on Unley Road. Also suggested was the introduction of prominent road-based alerts—physical road-based alerts and also car audio alerts. In later model vehicles that have GPS, a signal is sent from those school zones to advise drivers that they are in a school zone.

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (16:07):** One of the things I loved most about growing up in a country town was that it often took two hours to go and grab a carton of milk or a loaf of bread down the main street, because you literally run into every second person that you know and have a chat about your day or what was happening in the town. Even though I am now the member of the capital city seat,

I still want to create that same sense of connection and community that you would find in any country town.

One of the key ways of doing that is investing in our main streets. I am really excited to update the house on two of my election commitments to do just that—that is, an investment in Hutt Street and also in Melbourne Street. In Hutt Street, I have a \$3 million commitment to improve the entry statement to this main street. We are going to have new paths, new planted trees and public artwork leading into the heart of Hutt Street. It is really about creating a gateway and a better entry statement to this beloved main street.

I am also investing \$1 million in Melbourne Street, with works to get underway this month. We will be planting new planter boxes to add colour and vibrancy to the street. We will be relocating, organising, decluttering and installing new street furniture. We will also be installing signage to Dunn Street car park to better direct people to parking that is available. This is all part of creating stronger and more connected communities, and so I am very pleased to see these works get underway.

**Mr TELFER:** This government is seemingly bulldozing on with works to change key intersections along Liverpool Street in Port Lincoln, the main thoroughfare through town. The government is removing the left-turn slipways on these intersections despite continued opposition from the community, including during the formal consultation process. This will have a massive impact on daily movements of freight, school drop-offs, business access and peak-hour traffic through Port Lincoln.

I wrote to the minister months ago. I know many community members have as well through the proper consultation process and subsequent to it. Minister Brock was in Port Lincoln just last week. Surely, he would have seen the traffic chaos. Surely, he would have seen that it is only going to make the traffic worse, not better, not safer.

Seemingly, my community's concerns have been ignored by both the minister and the department. They need to listen to my community and put a halt to these works. There is an opportunity to make things better in order to make these intersections work for our modern daily traffic movement in Port Lincoln but, unfortunately, what the department have put forward in their blind push for pedestrian safety has ended up making it worse. They are not making it better, they are making it worse. I am calling on the minister to put a halt on these works so we can actually get a design that works for the future of Port Lincoln.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (16:10):** In times of conflict often people get polarised in their views, and the current Israel-Palestine conflict is no different. Often it is very challenging to have a diversity of views expressed by a particular conflict. It takes very brave people to actually talk about a conflict and not toe the party line.

Today I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate a group of people in Australia who have formed the new Jewish Council of Australia, which is a diverse coalition of Jewish academics, lawyers, writers and teachers. They are experts on antisemitism and racism and were formed in response to the rise in racism and antisemitism in Australia. They, like the rest of us, are particularly concerned about the rise in Neo-Nazi activities, fascism and far right extremism. They are all proud Jewish people made up of graduates of Jewish high schools, lifelong members of synagogues, etc.

This group, though, provides an alternative view about the current Israel-Palestine conflict. Louise Adler, who is well known to South Australians, said:

The Jewish Council is an important initiative. The next generation of Australian Jews is resisting the pressure applied by the Jewish establishment to defend Israel and the Occupation. Refusing to toe the line comes at a real personal cost so I commend the individuals involved for their moral courage and commitment to peace and justice.

I fully endorse those comments and I congratulate these people.

*Bills***DISABILITY INCLUSION (REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL***Committee Stage*

In committee (resumed on motion).

Clause 5.

**The CHAIR:** The opposition have one question to go, if they wish to exercise that right.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I am grateful to the Chair about the guidance on where we have got to. We are at clause 5 and I might say I recall having asked only one question, but if I have asked more than one then I stand corrected.

**The CHAIR:** On that, I have marked two and the parliamentary officer has two marked down as well. If it was just me, you could doubt it but not the parliamentary officer.

**Mr TEAGUE:** No, far from it, Chair.

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** Members on my right, please, you are being disorderly. The member for Heysen has the floor at some point in time.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I am considering my final question on clause 5. We have spent some time considering article 3. I think at least the minister and I have recited parts of article 3, and I have drawn particular attention to article 9, which is the part of the convention that I have found, anyway, that refers specifically to the removal of, in the convention's case, both obstacles and barriers; this bill is using a new definition of barriers. I have cited two examples of circumstances where there are barriers that have been placed in the way and I have given the example of my constituent Tom Carr and the result of his having an acquired disability.

I guess I am looking for, as much as possible, an indication of what barriers are understood by the government to mean and what obligation the subject of the provision—the new object—is going to amount to, in terms of the fact that it will now be an object of the act, among other things. So the government has been on notice of this point in circumstances where we debated clause 3 some weeks ago, and we have unpacked the various elements that are constituent to the new (f).

I appreciate that there is some response from the government in terms of how the department conducts itself and the sorts of values that are applied and so on, and it might be that it is beyond the minister's remit to go to what other departments might do in response to this new provision. If so, so be it, but I guess I am looking for any indication that can be provided about how this new provision is going to change the process of consideration for government regulation across the board, and that might extend to matters within the responsibility of local government as well.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** This is a very important discussion. I think, in brief, we have gone from a point where 'barrier' was not defined, to a point where we are now being more prescriptive in terms of providing the articulate direction to the subjects of the legislation and those people who then need to work with us and Inclusive SA to deliver those directions and plans.

It is probably a good time to draw our minds back to the definition of 'barrier'. I think you have very eloquently described a situation experienced by your constituent. You used the discussion around virtual fencing to be something which changes the context of that person's mobility and their access within properties, because they no longer have physical obstruction to movement and moving freely, which is very important—or, potentially, they can.

I think physical is quite easy to define when we talk about barriers, and that is obviously part (a) of that definition where we talk about 'physical, architectural, technological...' We then sway into 'attitudinal', which is about defining and describing where we need a community that understands and is inclusive, and wants and strives and demands equity and access, particularly for people who are, for whatever reason—otherwise very resilient, strong people—susceptible to vulnerabilities created due to policy or lack of care.

Then we move on to part (b), which talks about barriers based on information or communications. We are saying it is not good enough just to think everybody gets the message: we are obligated to ensure people get the message, for example through the provision of capacity for Auslan interpreters or use of alternate forms of language or descriptors within the delivery of our policy, practice and other information.

I think for a long time we have discussed and worked across government to ensure better access, particularly for emergency communications using Auslan on television. Once we have got into the swing of that, suddenly when it does not happen for whatever reason, we are heightened to that knowledge and we want to do better. It gets pointed out very quickly when there has been a failure. Sometimes that is due to poor health or a new person not understanding the procedure for organising that. I think that is really important.

The last section is policy and practice, which I think for me is exactly what we are doing now. It is being agile, it is community engagement and it is about making sure we construct the legislative framework, the regulations that sit with that, the supports and the education for community that are led through Inclusive SA and the plans that are put in place, again, with support.

I know the member for Flinders, who has a deep connection with the LGA, would understand how particularly smaller local government organisations deeply appreciate the ability to pick up the phone, send an email or get on a webpage and look up, ask or inquire for support to produce an inclusion plan with very limited resources available to do so. I think this is all part of that. I hope I have got there for you in terms of providing some reassurance about the underlying intent around defining 'barrier' and making sure we are absolutely aware of it.

**Mr TEAGUE:** That is all very helpful. It boils down to a question of the new level of proactivity that might be required by these provisions insofar as we now have an object that is specifically set out to remove barriers. I might say we have seen now the insertion at all the other existing objects of a specific reference to 'regardless of age'. We see that then replicated in the new one. Maybe I have exhausted what the minister is able to say more particularly, but if we are going out of our way to say that these are all to apply regardless of age, it might be implied that that might include life stage, area of endeavour, industry and so on, so it is regardless of the circumstances someone finds themselves in.

There is an endeavour to be inclusive about the kind of person who is living with disability, and then there is this overarching object to do significant things, making significant gains and removing barriers. It is mandatory in terms of a form of injunction. It is an unusual provision in that it is requiring positive action and particularly in circumstances where someone has been able to access life and its various endeavours, regardless of their age and activity, that is disrupted and there is a pathway to restore them to what they were previously able to do. Is that going to trump other considerations and, if so, to what degree?

I will illustrate it perhaps by the other example. Tom Carr is perhaps most celebrated in recent times for his work on inventing a wheel-on wheel-off mode of transport. There has been some significant public media coverage of his inventiveness and in the course of then looking to utilise that device, which will in turn remove a barrier on my approach to the point, he has then encountered the engineering rules that are applied, the road safety rules that are applied to vehicles, and the various hoops that need to be jumped through bureaucratically in order to achieve an outcome of having his invention, which removes the barrier, able to be deployed.

If he is finding himself perhaps well supported by NDIS and perhaps given some funding support for what he is doing and so on, but being thwarted by an existing intransigence in terms of getting it to registrability, getting it to a practical point where it can actually be used, to what extent will Tom Carr be able to point to this object and say, 'Hang on, I've got this new object (f) that I would like to draw upon' in compelling a bit more proactivity in terms of getting that invention on the road, being deployed and so on.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think the description around Mr Carr and the secondary nature of the barrier is helpful. Objects and principles really provide the broad aims of the legislation and some guiding thoughts as to how to achieve them. The rest of the bill and act lay out the specifics. There

are a number of other clauses in the particular bill that refer to improvements in the disability access and inclusion plans, including the introduction of measurable targets.

We might have to have some conversation post this particular debate here but, honestly, if I use your example, it will not be the case—certainly Mr Carr, if we continue on that line, will be able to point to this act and say, 'This act intends to remove barriers to my ability to properly engage,' at whatever level that is, and interact. However, it will not allow an individual to influence the constitutional authority of the federal government, for example, in terms of their binding pieces of legislation.

Also, it would not allow Mr Carr to usurp any legislation that ensures safety and wellbeing in the community generally, whatever way that might happen. So there are certainly good pieces of work being done between us and federal arms of government around the interaction of the Australia's Disability Strategy, the NDIS legislation, the Equal Opportunity Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and all of these things to engage and make sure that we can ensure as best we possibly can freedom of access, equity and equality.

But, at the end of the day, there will be some interactions that prove to be very challenging and almost impossible to overcome, and I do not know if that is the situation in Mr Carr's case. I am interested in it. I think we could further interrogate that beyond this, but there may be something else at play. It is an innovation. He has clearly made an invention or created a piece of work that he wants to use and he sees a way of using it. I do not know what the barriers are. I am sure it is not a patent thing but there are patent guidelines and laws, international and national. We would like to say that this act will patch up a lot of that sort of stuff but it is not a fix-all to every relationship between legislative mechanisms. But I think we should keep in touch about what is going on with Mr Carr and his fence and access.

Clause passed.

Clause 6.

**Mr TELFER:** Minister, you started to touch a little bit on the potential impacts on local government. I just point out, not just as shadow local government minister but as someone who has had over a decade in local government and who understands that when state governments make rules, it is often local governments' responsibility and thus they have to bear costs. It is increasingly more challenging for smaller, regional councils in particular who have limited budgets and limited staff capacity to be able to instigate and operate a lot of the obligations which are put on them by state government.

Minister, I am interested in getting a perspective on when you met with the Local Government Association as the chief organisation speaking on behalf of local government. Were any changes made in regard to the direction of this bill subsequent to meeting with the LGA?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** There are two points at which the Local Government Association have engaged in terms of getting to this particular point. They provided submissions, as well as met with the reviewer. Basically, the summary of that is they are broadly supportive of what has been proposed, with the caveat that there are sometimes cost-prohibitive barriers, for want of a better word, to local governments being able to deliver additional strategy in connection with the disability access and inclusion plans. That is the broad brush of it, but there has been engagement both in the review and at the point of the draft legislation.

**Mr TELFER:** Just to go on a little bit from that, you talked about the challenges, as I did, about the potential additional financial impost and the ability or otherwise for local government—and I think probably smaller local government areas, in particular—to be able to put in place additional strategy. I think those were the words that you used.

Has there been any work done as far as the actual quantum of that financial burden on local government, and obviously the additional paperwork and structure that needs to be put in place by local government, to adhere with all the recommendations being sought in the bill? Is there any idea within the department or your office as to what that additional work is going to end up costing ratepayers around the state?



**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Again, just in addition to the previous question as well, the chief policy officer from the LGA met with some members from the department and my staff to discuss the bill. One of the key changes from the recommendation of the reviewer through to where we are now is that we are not proposing that councils are burdened with an extra layer of having to have committees that they stand up. But of course, I understand some do—

*Mr Fulbrook interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Yes, it is an option, and I think it is a good one. But also, similarly to what I am going to say, while they have not raised major concerns, it is a resourcing issue. Really, it is entirely contingent on local government authorities preparing their DAIPs according to their capability. It is contingent on us to support them to prepare their ambition according to their capacity to deliver. For us, as far as can be, we support them in leveraging from whatever pool they can. If I think of an example—

*Mr Telfer interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Yes. If I think of a quick example I might say there is a national program where there is a match-to-match-to-match funding of changing places facilities. So feds equals state equals council commitment to fund are changing places, wherever it might be needed. We are offering additional funding if a council is able to contribute to be able to provide a really great piece of infrastructure, and they are only having to pay a third of the cost. But a council is not going to be able to commit to doing that without having the budget to do it. Similarly, they cannot commit to maybe widening every footpath in Kadina or making footpaths so they all have vision assist. It is: what can you do or what do you need help to achieve?

**Mr TELFER:** Going on in clause 6, obviously this is talking about principles. When you are talking about principles, they often can be reasonably broad in some of the terminology because it is providing the basis for what you can build on. Within subclause (2) are a couple of aspects that I would appreciate the clarification of the minister on because there is enough ambiguity within that that I think it needs some clarification. There are two aspects in particular that I am talking about. Paragraph (p) states:

(p) people with disability, and their families and representatives—

and it uses the words 'as appropriate'—

...have a right to participate in the design and delivery of inclusive policies and programs;

There are two aspects to that: who makes the judgement as to what is deemed as appropriate, and also the process for them to be able to participate in the design and delivery of inclusive policies and programs. This is something that gets set out in council DAIPs, as we talked about. The other part, just a bit further on from there in (q), states:

(q) insofar as people with disability may not be able to find out about their rights, or may not be able to understand their rights, because of their disability, State and local government should take reasonable steps—

and once again that ambiguity comes within that terminology about 'reasonable steps'—

...to assist them to learn about their rights and to develop ways in which they can, or their families or representatives can, report violations of those rights.

For the benefit of the committee and for the benefit of the record, as the minister putting this in place, can you give me some clarification around what is envisioned within these principles of being considered as appropriate, as well as the process for the participation, design and delivery as well as what you see as the minister would be reasonable steps to assist people with a disability to learn about their rights and to develop ways in which they can report violations of those rights?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** That is a big question with lots of layers.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think it is good to point out at the moment as well that, when I was seeking briefings about this and seeking to understand more deeply where we were going, in terms of the principles in this particular section I was advised as well that there were precedents around

the use of some of this terminology or wording already embedded in the Correctional Services Act, the Equal Opportunity Act and also within the United Nations' goals. The way we have gone about this has been pretty rigorous and not without precedence as well in terms of trying to ensure that everybody is getting an opportunity to participate in the way this is being done, but also to achieve outcomes through it.

Broadly, subclause (p) is talking about co-design, if we want to chuck that into a little thing. The co-design does rely on the lived experience of diverse community members, and their availability and willingness to engage in the process. Not everyone has equal capacity to be able to engage at this level and to enact co-design. Within legislation it might limit the effectiveness of new policies and programs being delivered, but the current bill wording does allow for appropriate flexibility to meet with—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** A co-design engagement process between community members, lived experience, allies, government departments, agencies at all levels, NGOs, visitors to communities. There is a whole range of people who may wish to, but also there is a whole range of people who are currently unable to. I think, in a nutshell, it is contingent on us to ensure that we offer the support and assistance needed to get those people to effectively and actively participate in the co-design process.

**Mr Telfer:** With the department?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** With all of us, yes. With the department, with everyone—authorities. It is a cross-agency approach. Human services is the custodian of the legislative mechanism to strive for equity and that has been pre the term 'human services'. The Chair was an excellent minister in this area and knows only too well the challenges of people and understanding the impact of a lack of accessibility or the lack of people feeling safe and secure. He will correct me if I am wrong, but I believe the community visitor and principal community visitor may have commenced under his watch for disability services, or maybe it was the previous principal community visitor Maurice Corcoran who started work when he was the minister because I recall that terrific day when everyone came in.

**The CHAIR:** We took a photo.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Yes, indeed. I could not hand on heart—and I challenge anyone in this place to stand hand on heart and guarantee that everybody has equal opportunity to co-design and participate. We strive as much as we can to achieve that, but, for whatever reason, sometimes people are unable to articulate their wishes or their feelings. But we are doing what we can through a whole range, as talked about in earlier clauses, of round tables, committees, consultation, and engagement with the federal government on different levels. Of course, the federal government as well, through international obligations, engage also. It is a very complicated series of events that need to be just right in order to strive and get to that level. I have forgotten the last bit that you asked. What was it about? We will call it part of the original question.

**Mr TELFER:** The second part of it was in paragraph (q): 'State and local government should take reasonable steps to assist'. What is reasonable? What does that process look like from the minister who is putting this?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** That's right, and I remember where I was going now. There are two words within both of those clauses: 'appropriate' and 'reasonable', and who judges, who is the arbiter of that terminology? Well, the people in the community, and they will absolutely be advising us as to their capacity or the capacity of this to truly reflect that the steps are appropriate and optimised. They can make submissions directly to us if they believe that the local area or the local government or the local government department has not provided optimal steps in order to be able to find out what is happening—so Easy Read has not been provided or there was no Auslan at this public presentation that was important where information was vital, or something has changed and the website has not been updated. So there has not been an active attempt to provide information that can be reported directly to the agency, which is obligated to provide that information. Alternatively, people can make a complaint through the equal opportunity commissioner, and they do.

I understand—someone will tell me if I am wildly inaccurate—about 25 per cent of complaints to the equal opportunity commissioner come from the disability community, give or take, as it varies year on year. A large chunk of those are around education, employment and what have you. I could not give you the stats on how much is about provision of information, but I would imagine there would be people who would do that.

Of course, the local members of all electorates and those in the upper house, who slave tirelessly day and night to do their work and represent the entire state, are also available to have commentary provided to them via email or phone to not necessarily complain but to air a grievance or point out a failing in terms of provision of access to information.

**Mr TELFER:** With your leave, Chair, I just seek a clarification. Paragraph (q) refers to local government needing to take reasonable steps. I understand the state government and the resources that come with that. Naturally, state government has the capacity because we are the ones who put this legislation in place. Is there a process that your department is going through to make sure that local government know not just their obligations but also what they need to communicate to their constituents?

You are putting an obligation here on local government to assist people to know their rights. Local government may not know the basis for that to be able to communicate it in the first place. Is that a responsibility or process that the department is going through at the moment—communication with each individual local government area to make sure that they have the capacity to be able to let people know their rights?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I do not have a history in local government. However, I have had a lot to do with people in local government, and my observation is that they have a deep understanding of their obligation and what should be done in terms of provision of accessibility, resourcing, communication, understanding of rights and what have you. But it is to say that Human Services as a portal is providing support and a lens on the production of disability plans, and the state plan also provides some guidance in respect to that.

I would expect local governments would be aware of disability strategies per se. I am not sure that they are specifically pointed towards those, but I would imagine that policy officers working in local government areas or managers would certainly have the capacity to be able to investigate those kinds of things. Local councils will certainly participate in the new state plan evolution, so that is a point of contact.

I think this is an interesting line of questioning that potentially we could then take on board to add to the package to make sure—I am sure Rhys will be doing that—and check what level of guidance is given. Certainly, if it is not already there clearly, we can add to that, but it is well worth pursuing.

**Mr TEAGUE:** We are now in the realms of principles. We are adding a principle. In fact, in subclause (1) we are adding three to the existing 15. If I deal first with the first of those at paragraph (ja), there has been a drafting consideration to insert this new one as a (ja) as opposed to those two additional principles that are at the end of the existing principles. To my observation we are now continuing this theme of increased proactivity that we see in the application of the recommendations. So here we have a more particular principle that sits alongside (j) but also (k). Perhaps I can see why it has been put where it has. I would be interested to know what the threshold is for it to go in where it has as opposed to adding it at the end of the list, but I can see how it fits between (j) and (k). It provides:

(ja) people with disability have the right to be safe, and to feel safe—

but here comes the proactivity—

through the provision of appropriate safeguards, information, services and support, and through appropriate and accessible reporting mechanisms in cases of neglect, abuse or exploitation;

So there is that more proactive principle, the provision of these appropriate safeguards, so if there is a bundled-up question, it is first of all that technical point about how it qualifies for a (ja), why it finds itself sitting where it does. Is there a description in principle or in practice? Indeed, is there anything

already implemented that might illustrate what that increased level of proactivity looks like in terms of the provision of those appropriate safeguards, information, services and support, and so on?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** With respect to the (ja) qualification, I have consulted on that and we are happy to get you technical advice between the chambers regarding that, if that is something that you feel is very important or even if it is just a point of interest. We will take that on notice for you and get you an answer from the drafters in regard to that.

In regard to your other commentary around the principles, it basically is essential for that to be in there and it would be extraordinary for us to not spell that out. We feel it is very important for it to be there. I do not think that you are suggesting we should move it out. I think you are just qualifying or seeking clarification about the importance of it. It really does add to the robustness of this. As I said earlier, there are precedents in relation to those other acts and spelling this out within those.

**Mr TEAGUE:** My next question is in relation to those additional principles that are added as (p) and (q). I might just mention in passing a curiosity as to how (p) does not quite qualify as an (ma) perhaps. We have (m) talking about the principle that people with disability are free to associate with families, carers and other persons as they see fit, and should be supported where necessary to engage in family, social and friendship activities. It seems to me, on the face of it, that (p) goes more particularly to characterising the nature of that, but it covers new territory.

The question in substance is really about (p), and that is that as distinct from (m)—and maybe there are others, but perhaps as distinct from (m) for a start—(p) is now providing that:

- (p) people with disability, and their families and representatives as appropriate, have a right to participate in the design and delivery of inclusive policies and programs;

So it raises a question in relation to authority and to the provision of the means by which that participation may occur. If we are talking about principles, we are already saying in the act that at (m)—and I might say, in the balance of principles that are dealing with the rights of people with disabilities to live and participate and so on, we are now saying in (p), as I understand the purpose of it, that a person with a disability, their family members and representatives have a right to participate in the design and delivery of inclusive policies and programs.

I do not read that as to somehow introduce some right, that those associated with people with disabilities somehow have a right to pile in contrary to the wishes of the person with a disability. It is not creating some unusual right of people in those categories; you would assume authority, as might be required, but you are basically adding—again, on this theme of proactivity—a right to participate in a practical way that looks more in the nature of providing for a right to access a particular activity, as opposed to a right in the broad that might be evidenced by the way in which we conduct ourselves generally. So it is descending into a level of detail and proactivity that we have not seen before. Is there a way in which the government is able to explain the purpose that it is envisaged that will serve? The minister might take the chance to confirm whether those aspects of my reading of the new clause are on track or not.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think where we have gone is that (m) is about the doing, the participation, the person and their access to relationships, engagements and equal participation; and (p)—this would be the reason it is not like, and I have to be careful of my letters here, an (mj) or (ma) or whatever it was—has been inserted to really spell out co-design, the rationale and who is to be involved, and not to give permission, but almost to compel people to think about how people with disability want engagement on policy and practice.

It is the 'nothing for us without us' mantra that we are very accustomed to hearing now. Great; shout it from the rooftops. That is about the co-design. That is about the policy side of it. This over here in paragraph (m) is about the participation, the activity and the connection with community on whatever level: this is the design of the policy and how that happens with others.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I will get onto my third question and resist the urge to seek clarification about that, although I note in passing that, if that is the case, my curiosity goes to the necessity for those additional words 'and their families and representatives as appropriate'. I understand what the minister is getting at in terms of the core principle. Perhaps I will leave it there for the moment.

My question then goes to the insertion of another body of subsections to add to those categories that are provided for in subsections (2), (3), (4) and (5) already, that is, respectively, women, children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. To that, we add an additional set of principles that are applicable for those people living with a disability with significant intellectual disability. Here we find another reference to barriers, curiously, that is not replicated, as I see it, in those other existing subcategories; I stand to be corrected.

Again, it is not an occasion to catalogue endlessly constituents and case study examples, but I have referred at some length to my constituent Andrew Sands in this sense in particular, so I have him in mind in terms of how this might apply, bundled up, if you like. The question is how we come in to land on this additional special subcategory. Why do we then make particular reference to the major barriers that are encountered by this group? Why, as a matter in passing, do we not then expand those other subcategories that are specifically provided for in subsections (2), (3), (4) and (5)?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think the response to that is pretty quick. The previous government, on the drafting of the bill, identified specific cohorts: women, children, CALD, Aboriginal people, etc. When the Dennis review went out to consult about this, an additional layer of complexity was identified within a cohort of people with intellectual disability, who often need others to express their needs, wants and feelings for them in a way that often is not easy to interpret.

I do not want to say it could be misconstrued, but it is difficult, and it takes quite a level of skill to be able to communicate on behalf of and with someone who has a significant intellectual disability. The same could be said for individuals as well of complex communication barriers. But if you combine that with someone with an intellectual disability, that is quite complex. So this has been designed in order to add a layer of safety and support for that particular group of people.

Clause passed.

Clause 7.

**Mr TELFER:** Clause 7 is only a relatively small amendment but it is an interesting one, though, advising the minister on systemic or emerging accessibility and inclusion issues. I am curious: is this something that has arisen due to a particular circumstance? It is quite prescriptive.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I am happy to respond. No is the answer to: did it arise because of a particular circumstance? Actually, this happens all the time anyway. There are many layers and critical incident reporting, a whole range of obligations under various acts where the chief executive is obligated to report certain things to the minister. This is already something that has been occurring but it is now formalised within the act.

**Mr TELFER:** Indeed, I would have thought that it probably would be a core function of the CEO, a core responsibility, that would not necessarily need to be specified within a piece of legislation. Is something like this so explicit in other similar acts, do you know, minister, such as in child protection matters, or the like? Is it something we see an example of in other places?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** There are already areas within this act where the chief executive is involved and prescribed. I am pretty happy for it to be in the act now. I do not think it creates any controversy. I think it formalises that process. It raises that awareness to the community that we are being accountable and that all layers of the department are answering through to the person who the act is committed to.

**Mr TELFER:** Continuing on from that, what is the obligation on the minister after receiving such information? What action must or could the minister take when presented with this information advising the minister on systemic or emerging accessibility and inclusion issues? What is the responsibility on the minister when we are very specific about this aspect? I am interested in what the obligation is for the minister.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Any advice that is offered to me in respect of anything from my department I take on board and then we engage with the department and/or stakeholders in terms of what improvements, changes or obligations we might have. If I can give you a quick example, we

had quite a series of people providing us with feedback and this came from the general public via the electorate office, public via the ministerial office, other members of parliament to various sources through to me, to the department directly, through social media and also via my committee, that there were barriers to people attending paid entertainment functions with or without their support worker or carer or companion.

There were a range of barriers that were in place for that. So, as a consequence, we have started a process of consultation through a staged approach and we have held our first of what we are calling a ticketing round table, where we met with venue and ticket providers and a range of lived experience participants, but that will now roll into another round table of pretty much sole target lived experience people. So a barrier to attending, a barrier to buying a ticket, suddenly not being able to get a companion ticket in the right area, buying a ticket and ending up somewhere you cannot see or hear, being isolated, not having equal opportunity. People are quite reasonable about this. They do not want a front-row seat at a venue. They understand they are paying X dollars for a ticket but by the time you get through that laborious process—and we all know what the wheel of death was like with Tay Tay—

**Mr Teague:** No, we don't.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I will bet you do. Come on fellas. Once you get through that—

**Mr Teague:** I would have been there in a shot.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Let me know next time—then you have to buy a companion ticket or let them know that you are trying for a companion ticket. It is inadequate—that is a nice way of putting it—so we have responded like that. That is quite a simple one but it means a lot for quality of life. So the issue via various sources, engagement with lived experience and the department—how should we deal with this? We would like to get around and highlight the issue, talk with people and then effect change as possible.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I might say that my daughter and I contented ourselves with going along to the cinema at Mount Barker and watching the film. I am full of admiration for Taylor Swift, the capacity to launch a film right in the thick of the global tour. It is extraordinary. I would be very interested to go one better if ever the opportunity presents itself.

In terms of slotting in this additional obligation on the chief executive, I am reminded of what the minister had to say in just stepping through those provisions of article 3 of the convention. Given that this is an act that is in lockstep with the convention and is now made more particularly so by the addition of the additional object, by reference to the principles of the convention, to what extent is there any form of two-way street, and it is not all at the feet of the chief executive of course.

While we are here talking about obligations on the chief executive to advise the minister, it sort of imports an obligation on the minister and the government to keep their eye on the ball in terms of emerging accessibility and inclusion issues as well, aided now by a chief executive who is specifically tasked with finding them out.

If there is something that is coming along that in the view of the government requires the convention to be revisited, as I think the minister made the observation earlier, to what extent is there a capacity for the government, aided or not by the freshly motivated chief executive, to take representations back up the line and to not only articulate objects and principles in our act but go and make representations for reform of the convention itself?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I just point out that any contribution or representation that would be regarding the convention or contributing to the convention would be made through the federal government agencies. But we certainly meet regularly with said federal government agencies anyway, so if there was something that we felt—and we did read out some areas of that—potentially, at some point, there might be something we could make a submission about, that is certainly the way.

If we look at section 7, that was drafted under the previous government, that actually is totally about linking the principles and objects of this with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is consistent with that.

**Mr TEAGUE:** That is right; there is no doubt about that. If we are now introducing provisions that deal with taking responsibility for what might be emerging, we are not leaving that work to the convention itself but we are now including obligations in these circumstances on the chief executive to do that work. It rather begs the question: what is the minister going to do with that information?

The minister would be guided otherwise by the principles and objects. The minister might presumably come back to the parliament and say, 'We need some more principles and objects because I've been advised by the chief executive.' But the core point, as the minister points out in section 7 and now in 8(f), is that it is the convention that we are seeking to remain in lockstep about. I do not think there is any particular departure.

In taking a really optimistic view of things locally, we are now on the second iteration of this bill. It is founded on a direct connection with the convention and we are now introducing proactive measures to remain ahead of emerging issues. At what point is it conceivable that we in South Australia get significantly enough ahead of the game that we are actually content to rest on our own principles and objects and the convention might start to lag, in other words, if we are doing what we are doing effectively here? It is really just to explore further: what is the necessary-forever connection between the core point in section 7 and now in 8(f) and what we are otherwise going to go on with, the subject of the objects and principles of the act?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** The Australian Disability Strategy is also intrinsically connected with the convention, and the state plan and other plans are also connected. I do not think we could ever be accused of sitting and resting on our laurels, and I point members to the deep and rigorous policy suite that is now assisting people with autism and the autistic community.

The work that has gone into reforming our view and building knowledge around this community and ensuring understanding, acceptance, voice and connection has been something which is lauded nationally. The conversations that are being had nationally around the work are exciting, and I think that is a way to demonstrate that we are actually putting into practice what the intent of these conversations, the legislation, the plans and the frameworks are intended to do.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I suppose it is clear that where there is a convention and there is a certain degree of global reference point, that can be to advantage because we have made significant progress over recent years, and we have taken significant strides of leadership. There is a point in principle I suppose: at what stage does the rest of the world say, 'Well, the purpose of our Disability Inclusion Act is to emulate the principles and objects of the South Australian act as opposed to this point of reference'?

At what point does it become a useful signal that we are in some form of global communication as opposed to being kind of dragged forward by that convention? The minister might give an indication, leaving aside niceties or aspects of language, as to where are we at really vis-a-vis other jurisdictions—and not so much other jurisdictions in Australia necessarily, but other jurisdictions globally that might make similar reference in their legislation to the UN convention?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I am happy to provide more information between the houses if it is so required. Again, I feel, having talked to colleagues, that we are doing well with this. I could not hand on heart say I know absolutely where other states or jurisdictions or, in fact, other countries are in this regard. Having travelled, I see really good things in other areas, but then also I can point myself back to what we are doing and say, 'Yes, we are doing well in that regard.'

I think it is one of those things where you kind of make advances, then other people overtake you, and what have you. But again, if we point back to section 7 where there is this interplay in many of the other pieces of legislation and the frameworks that are provided, I think we are doing reasonably well but we can always strive to do more. I will get a piece of work done just to check where others are and we can provide that information for you.

Clause passed.

Clause 8.

**Mr TELFER:** Obviously, clause 8 is amending section 13, which is the framework for the State Disability Inclusion Plan, so it already has quite a comprehensive description of the obligation

that this legislation puts for the minister, for the government, for the department, the scope of which is specified within this. I am interested in the amendment at subclause (2). Minister, you sort of touched on it a bit earlier in answer to another one of the questions. The amendment at subclause (2), section 13(4)—after paragraph (b), it says 'insert', and (ba) provides:

- (ba) must ensure that any documents prepared for the purposes of paragraph (a) are in a form that is accessible to people with disability;

My mind automatically goes to people who, through their disability, have challenges with communication and capacity to be able to understand, and not just in those with a severe disability who need that work done for them through their carers. Is this part in particular also targeted at trying to enshrine the need for Easy Read, for an Auslan translator, for instance, for all communications? Is that what this aspect in particular is trying to achieve?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Just to point out as well—if you so have an appetite; it is up to you—that the wording of this clause is almost identical to clause 11. This one refers specifically to the State Disability Inclusion Plan and 11 refers specifically to the—

*Mr Telfer interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Yes, that is right, the dates. Essentially, this has brought some stuff from regulation into the bill itself. Essentially, the answer is yes. The answer to your question about ensuring the information is understood and provided in a way that is understood is yes. This is about making sure that that happens.

*Mr Telfer interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Yes, all of that stuff.

**Mr TEAGUE:** So we are here talking about the contents of the State Disability Inclusion Plan. Without traversing over the subject matter of a bill that is before the house that happens to be in my name, the topic generally of access to voting in electoral matters and the provisions that will facilitate voting for people with disability is a matter of live concern. As I say, it is not so as to traverse the particular subject matter of a bill that is before the house but just as to illustrate that it is one topic of current public policy interest.

The provisions that are now to be added require that the whole-of-government policies and strategies will give effect to the convention. We have seen that expressed in a number of places, but they go now to require the setting out of strategies to ensure more particularly that those particular persons in those five subcategories of persons living with disability are the subject of strategies that are addressed particularly to their needs. That is one that comes to mind perhaps across the board.

Given we are now seeing this specific reference to strategies directed to those particular needs, an example that comes to mind is that of the particular electoral needs of those in particular categories of disability that are provided for not so much in terms of women and children but in respect of the others. Is that likely to present as a good example of something that would now need to be all the more particularly considered the subject of a disability inclusion plan going forward?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** While the question is insightful, the state plan already directs people toward ensuring that we are mindful of our priority groups, which have been in operation since the inception of the previous act. The clause does not do anything to change plans or dates: it just moves the current regs into here. It has been working pretty well to this point, and I see that continuing.

**Mr TELFER:** I seek a clarification on that. Obviously, within this amendment, proposed section 13(3)(ba)(ii) refers back to the principles description and mentions the needs of persons referred to in section 9(2), (3), (4), (5) and (5a). Once again, it is interesting to be specifying that within the legislation, because it feels like we have an existing piece of legislation from 2018 that puts in place the obligation on the state to have a state disability inclusion plan.

One would have thought that through that process the needs of the persons referred to in the principal document in section 9(2), (3), (4), (5) and (5a) would be part of the core function of what a state disability inclusion plan would be and would cover.



Has there been a gap in the existing plan that needs to be fixed by enshrining this within the legislation as opposed to within the current structures which we already have? Talking about specifying priority areas for improvement in relation to inclusion, once again it is interesting. If you are saying that it is moving it from within existing regulation to within legislation, it is interesting that there is a need to be specifying priority areas for improvement.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think you are answering the question with your question. It is shining a light and highlighting the importance of the focus on priority groups. As I have said before, it is exactly that: just picking up those regulations. The regulations and the legislation are equally as enforceable. It picks them up, it shines a light on their importance, and it highlights the priority cohorts within the act rather than sitting under the regs. It was obviously recommended by Richard Dennis and it is a way of reinforcing our focus on the importance of priority cohorts. The only thing that is different is actually then adding that extra layer of certainty that we are obligated to provide: information and clarity in a way that can be accessed by all people.

**Mr TELFER:** The other aspects which I did not cover under (ba)(iv), it is interesting that once again we are talking about specifying measurable outcomes for each priority area identified in the State Disability Inclusion Plan. It is creating a bit of a circular reporting structure within the legislation, the obligation on the State Disability Inclusion Plan.

It is not only talking about priority areas that you then can adapt and develop regulations that suit as you go along. We know the process for changing the regulations is a lot less complicated in this process that we are going through as far as the legislative process. It talks about having to specify measurable outcomes within the Disability Inclusion Plan as well. Can you give me a bit of an explanation as to the reasoning behind having to put that specificity again about the specification of the measurable outcomes within the legislation itself?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think I might go to thinking about building a case. If we want to build a case for the community to get on board with change or a policy, we would seek to obtain evidence. People in different parts of the community view evidence differently. It might surprise you that I am a very science-based person. I come from a science background. I like: the sky is blue and one plus one is two, up is up and down is down, and factual, measurable outcomes.

I also, in the course of my work over many years, have used sliding scales of smiley faces, from crying faces through to happy smiles. I have used thumbs up to around the clock to thumbs down to assess pain and allow for people to provide qualitative feedback. This is saying that we need to be able to provide something tangible to the community to build the case for change or the case for delivery and, through the state plan, we are insisting that that is the way that actions need to be proven or measured.

Clause passed.

Clause 9.

**Mr TELFER:** This is a relatively simple change. Can you give a reasoning for the change from financial to calendar?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** It is really just to meet the expectations of community in terms of provision of reporting. It streamlines it for us. It takes the report to calendar year from financial year.

**Mr TEAGUE:** This might be expressing some interest in the answer. If there are community expectations, and if that is a driver—and it might be a subject of the review, and if so, I would be grateful to be directed in that way—is there any indication that the act as it was originally drafted reflected circumstances that were applicable at the time and that that has changed, or was there always a good reason why it ought to be that way around? Is it a response to changing circumstances or is it something that was wrong in the first place, as far as the government is concerned?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** There is no financial imperative in regard to these reports. If we call it the 2023 report it will, in fact, report for 2023 to the people in the community. This reporting is more about the people. If we are doing it at the end of the year, it also takes into account the annual reports that have occurred in other situations that come in in the third quarter, or sometimes the fourth, of the year. I think it streamlines that. There is no imperative for the financial year, and at the four-year

cycle of the plan we would have to do a six-month interim report. This is a report for people. I have probably done as much as I can do to tell you that I think it makes life a lot simpler. It gets rid of the little six-month interim report, it makes it clear what year we are reporting for, and I think it engages the community much better in the process.

Clause passed.

Clause 10.

**Mr TELFER:** I am taking this addition in conjunction with the existing reporting structure that is in place for section 15. Section 15 talks about the need for the minister to cause a review and cause a copy of the report to be laid before the houses of parliament. This new subsection to follow states:

- (3) A report submitted to the Minister for the purposes of subsection (1) must include, or be accompanied by, information about any changes recommended to be made to the State Disability Inclusion Plan as a result of the review.

Within the existing act, there is not a specificity around the reporting mechanism; it just talks about the CEO having to report. This additional aspect talks about recommendations for changes to the plan. Is this saying that it is now an obligation on the CEO, as part of the annual reporting process, not only to report on the operation of the State Disability Inclusion Plan but every year to now develop recommendations to the minister about changes to be made to the State Disability Inclusion Plan?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Just to clarify, this is not about the CEO doing an annual report: this is about the review that happens every four years. Is there a Latin term for 'four yearly'? You can tell me later, Josh; I bet you know.

**Mr Teague:** I don't know where I get that reputation from.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** You are a wordsmith, my friend. Critically, just the report on the plan has to include the recommendations for change.

**Mr TELFER:** As I said, there are no specifics within the existing act. Are you saying it is not going to be the CEO who is doing this review? Now that there are these extra aspects to the review that this change puts in place, is this a comprehensive, thorough review? The minister must cause the review, in subsection (1), and provide a copy of that report to parliament.

Now we are saying that not only does it need to be reviewed but there needs to be recommendations made on any changes to be made to the State Disability Inclusion Plan as a result of that review. Who does the minister envision doing that review? This extra aspect obviously creates a greater reporting obligation. Does the minister believe that is going to cause additional reporting complications?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** This is a review of the plan every four years. The department will undertake that review of the plan.

*Mr Telfer interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** The CEO probably will not. There are excellent roosters like Reece who will do that, along with others. They will engage with community, and we will use all of those excellent groups that we have put in place with lived experience as well to give us feedback. That report will be provided, and it will have listed recommendations that are being made on that consultation. There was an interim one done in 2022.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

## CONSTITUTION (COUNTERSIGNING) AMENDMENT BILL

### *Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

**AYERS HOUSE BILL**

*Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

At 17:56 the house adjourned until Wednesday 10 April 2024 at 10:30.

*Answers to Questions***EYRE PENINSULA DESALINATION PLANT**

In reply to **Mr TELFER (Flinders)** (6 March 2024).

**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):** I have been advised:

For a total of three to four hours during the period 20-22 February 2024, SA Water undertook a non-intrusive seismic survey of a small area (0.04 km<sup>2</sup>) of coastal seabed from the high-water mark to approximately 100 metres offshore from the Billy Lights Point Wastewater Treatment Plant.

These activities took place outside the aquaculture zoning area and navigation channels using a standard technique widely used around Australia and elsewhere for informing local geological conditions. All marine operations were under the authority of the vessel captain as per maritime law and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) requirements. Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) were prepared to identify, risk assess and manage specific risks associated with the works.

Prior to testing, SA Water obtained all required approvals, and the work was completed in accordance with the environmental management plans submitted and approved by the Department for Environment and Water and the Environment Protection Authority.