

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 6 June 2024

The SPEAKER (Hon. L.W.K. Bignell) took the chair at 11:01.

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

The SPEAKER read prayers.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: SA AQUATIC AND LEISURE CENTRE RENEWAL WORKS

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:03): I move:

That the 71st report of the committee, entitled SA Aquatic and Leisure Centre Renewal Works, be noted.

The Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing proposes to undertake maintenance renewal works at the South Australia Aquatic and Leisure Centre facility located at Marion. These project works include the replacing of pool liners, retiling of the concourse, change room upgrades and other general facility works.

The South Australia Aquatic and Leisure Centre is the state's premier competition and training aquatic centre, hosting major sporting events and providing a cutting-edge training environment. The facility is the only pool in South Australia that is compliant with FINA swimming regulations for swimming, diving and water polo. It is also Australia's only facility that has two 50-metre pools in the same arena with the spectator capacity required for national and select international FINA-sanctioned events.

Since it opened in 2011, the facility has serviced 1.3 million people annually, which is an additional 600,000 people per year than it was originally designed to accommodate. The increased patronage has meant that the facility has aged quicker than anticipated with these renewal works addressing this issue.

As one of South Australia's major stadia, the government recognises the need for future investment at the facility to ensure a continuity of operation. As part of the state government's 2023-24 budget, \$23.5 million was allocated for these upgrades.

The proposed renewal works include critical maintenance of the pools and building facilities. The critical pool maintenance will include pool liner replacement for the diving, competition, learn to swim and warm water pools, as well as the replacement of the aqua playground, the repair and reinstatement of the water slides, and upgrades to the resistance training pool. The pool gas water heaters will also be replaced with electric water heat pumps.

Building works include the replacement of the reception turnstiles with increased automation for improved accessibility, full change room renovations, full retiling of the pool concourse, refurbishment of the dive tower, new LED lighting, solar panels installed on the car park roof, and provisions for new starting blocks for swimming.

These renewal works will ensure service continuity with limited disruptions to the centre users. The works are also needed to maintain the centre to FINA's international standards, as well as meeting broader regulatory compliance. Furthermore, the works are being conducted to ensure that the pool liner replacement occurs within the warranty period to prevent pool lining failure.

The works will enable the South Australia Aquatic and Leisure Centre to continue to provide world-class facilities and futureproof the facility for the next 10 years. The facility has provided a cutting-edge training environment for some of Australia's best and most successful Olympic

swimmers and these works will allow it to continue to attract the best talent to South Australia by offering high-performance programs.

The project is expected to be delivered in a series of nine stages. Construction is estimated to begin in October this year, with completion by October 2025. The facility will remain operational during the renewal program, with the aim to work on one pool at a time. The works are being coordinated by the same team handling the arrangements for both the Adelaide and Thebarton aquatic centres. This provides an excellent understanding of community priorities and emphasises the importance of maintaining access during the project.

Due to the critical nature of the works, as well as the value of the proposed works and interrelationship between the works packages, the project will be overseen by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport's Building Projects section.

The office has highlighted some project risks to be mitigated during the construction phase. With the centre remaining operational, where possible works will be conducted to minimise the impact upon events, patrons and the wider community. Early contractor involvement is occurring to ensure realistic industry construction time frames. Some materials will need to be ordered from overseas and to avoid delays materials will be ordered early in the process.

Additionally, further measures have been put in place to allow the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing, in conjunction with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, to develop a procurement strategy that would obtain the best long-term return for government, whilst maintaining continuity of service in the interim.

The project will incorporate several sustainable development elements in its design. These include:

- the installation of a solar system on the car park roof, which will offset some power requirements;
- the installation of LED lighting that will be dimmable and use light sensors to ensure only the number of lights required will be utilised;
- the replacement of the gas boilers with electric heat pumps, which removes the carbon footprint associated with gas use and allows the energy to be offset with renewable energy;
- the upgrade of the building management system to provide advanced monitoring across the facility, allowing the operator to sculpt energy usage, use more solar and off-peak energy, and reduce load to the grid and overall cost; and
- the use of digital meters to track water usage and detect leaks earlier.

Advice from the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation team states that the Register of Aboriginal Sites and Objects has no entries for Aboriginal sites within the project area. A search of the South Australian Property and Planning Atlas confirms there are no state or local heritage places or contributory heritage items in the project area. The South Australia Aquatic and Leisure Centre building sits adjacent to the state heritage listed Marion Cultural Centre and any external works will need to be sensitive to this connection.

The office has conducted community and stakeholder consultation in relation to these works. This has included government agencies such as the Department for Infrastructure and Transport and the Department for Education, the Marion council, sporting bodies such as the South Australian Sports Institute, Diving SA and Swimming SA, and other stakeholders including the YMCA and Marion Physiotherapy.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the renewal works of the South Australian Aquatic and Leisure Centre. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Adam Trottman, the Director, Infrastructure and Planning, Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing; Tom Etherton, Manager, Recreation and Sport Planning, Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing; and Anthea Shem, Manager, Venues and Capital Projects, Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing. I thank the witnesses for their time.

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

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: FLINDERS MEDICAL CENTRE UPGRADE AND EXPANSION

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:10): I move:

That the 75th report of the committee, titled Flinders Medical Centre Upgrade and Expansion, be noted.

The Department for Health and Wellbeing, or SA Health, propose to build a new seven-level acute services building, referred to colloquially as 'the tower' at the Flinders Medical Centre. This tower will house an additional 98 points of care of both overnight and day places, provide new surgical and intensive-care functions and consolidate the centre's ophthalmology service into a single tenancy, alongside the upgrading of several back of house and support functions.

At approximately 700 overnight beds the Flinders Medical Centre is the largest hospital providing services to the southern metropolitan area, with its emergency department being one of the two major trauma centres in our state. The Flinders Medical Centre offers an extensive range of acute inpatient, outpatient and allied health services. It is uniquely a whole-of-life hospital providing for specialist neonatal services through to palliative care. It lies within the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network and in partnership with higher education licensed training providers is a leading provider of research and teaching, offering a clinical environment for training in medical, nursing and allied health academic research.

Originally constructed in the mid-1970s the Flinders Medical Centre has undergone a series of expansions, redevelopments and upgrades over the years to reflect significant population growth and demand for clinical services in southern Adelaide. Capital developments in the last decade include: a new 70-bed rehabilitation aged and palliative care building; a new 30-bed older persons' mental health unit; a redeveloped neonatal unit; a new mental health short stay unit; expansion of the emergency department and of medical imaging services; and a new 20-bed adult inpatient ward.

Most infrastructure at the Flinders Medical Centre reflects older models of care and requires redevelopment and expansion to meet the needs of caring for a growing ageing population. Over the next 20 years within the catchment population of the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network, there is a projected 11 per cent increase in population, which includes a 75 per cent growth in the 75-plus age group. Older demographics are the highest consumers of healthcare services and this local health network will have one of the oldest demographics in the nation.

The Southern Redevelopment scheme has been created to address the issues with rising demand for health care in South Australia, with the primary intent to increase hospital bed capacity for the communities of southern Adelaide and improve emergency department patient flows. Stage 1 of this redevelopment has an immediate focus on responding to an ageing asset base at Flinders to cater for this consumer growth.

Flinders Medical Centre is currently experiencing challenges for inpatient bed capacity and due to its age has the lowest number of single rooms amongst South Australia's major public hospitals for both medical and surgical specialties. It also requires additional operating theatre capacity due to a high utilisation of surgical functions for emergency surgery and to support elective surgery activity. Furthermore, the Flinders Medical Centre's ophthalmology service is decentralised across leased tenancies in the Flinders Private Hospital and the Mark Oliphant Building across South Road, which leads to workforce inefficiencies and disconnected services for consumers.

The Flinders Medical Centre upgrade and expansion project has been prepared to deal with these strategic drivers. The total investing budget is \$405 million, with the main works expected to commence in September this year and expected completion in early 2028. The Flinders Medical Centre upgrade and expansion will include:

- a new acute services building comprising seven levels, with horizontal transit between the new building and the existing hospital;

- a new 18-treatment space medical day unit for patients undergoing day treatment, inclusive of two enclosed day beds and 16 open-bay recliners for a flexible range of treatments;
- an expansion of the hospital's surgical and perioperative functions, with four new operating theatres and recovery bays;
- a new dedicated location for ophthalmology services, with two dedicated ophthalmology operating theatres, paediatric and adult recovery bays, consult rooms, an imaging and photography room, laser and procedure rooms and three vision lanes;
- a new satellite intensive and critical care unit;
- two new adult inpatient units, each containing 20 single bedrooms, six double bedrooms, an allied health therapy space, patient lounges and a quiet area for consumers; and
- upgrades for back-of-house and support services, including the mortuary, main kitchen, central sterile services department and allied health services.

This project will provide additional physical bed capacity at the Flinders Medical Centre across several acute services and improve access to health care in southern Adelaide, reflective of increasing demand for hospital services. It will further support the hospital's ability to manage bed and patient flows, and futureproof for pandemic resilience, as well as other health crises and critical care cases. Additionally, this project will increase the hospital's ability to accommodate the highest acuity trauma patients, alongside expanding surgical and perioperative functions, to support elective and emergency surgeries.

Project management will follow the best practice principles as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities. Risk management will form an integral part of this process, identifying and assessing risk, and ensuring that appropriate management or mitigation measures are incorporated into the delivery of the project.

The Flinders Medical Centre is an operational hospital, and construction work will need to be coordinated carefully to minimise disruption to scheduled activities with critical works planning agreed well in advance, and temporary recovery spaces utilised to reduce disruption to routine surgical lists. To minimise any potential risks of COVID implications to the construction project, locally available materials will be sourced to minimise supply chain risks, and appropriate protective equipment may be required to reduce potential spread of infection.

Controlled conditions will be in place for the removal of hazardous materials from the FMC's aged assets, such as asbestos and lead-based paints. As the construction of the new tower will see major changes to the building's footprint, the hospital's northern entry will be used as an interim main entrance during this period, with adequate wayfinding and notification to consumers about accessing the hospital.

The project team have established formal processes to ensure that sustainable development principles have been incorporated and integrated into the design, construction and operation of the new tower. The design of the building's engineering services has been planned to allow for increased adaptability, with the latest equipment installed to reduce reliance on older technology with lower efficiency.

Other sustainable initiatives include increased access to natural light and external views for patients while mitigating solar glare, an increase in outdoor air provision in the air-conditioning system to improve indoor air quality, no use of natural gas in the building to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and a high-efficiency facade designed, to reduce heating, cooling and air-conditioning requirements. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Unit, has no record of Aboriginal sites within the proposed works' location. The site has no registered or identified non-Aboriginal heritage value.

Engagement and clinical consultation have been key themes of the broader Southern Redevelopment initiatives. Project reference groups have been purposefully designed and

established across the initiatives, with a range of relevant clinical, corporate and consumer representatives.

The Southern Adelaide Local Health Network have established an Aboriginal stakeholder reference group to support the entirety of the Southern Redevelopment and provide advice and feedback on a range of matters. Industrial bodies have been engaged through the network's stakeholder engagement framework, with a monthly industrial liaison forum held with the relevant unions. The department states that consultation will continue throughout the final stages of design, with key stakeholders to remain informed of the works as they progress through construction and interservice readiness.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Flinders Medical Centre upgrade and expansion project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Tim Packer, Executive Director, Infrastructure, Department for Health and Wellbeing; John Harrison, Director, Building Projects, Department for Infrastructure and Transport; Dr Nadia Wise, Acting Clinical Director, Surgery and Perioperative Medicine, Southern Adelaide Local Health Network; and Jeremy Kelly, Principal Architect at Silver Thomas Hanley. I thank the witnesses for their time.

I also thank the member for Davenport for the written statement supporting this project in her electorate. Based upon the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public work.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: TAPLAN ELEVATED WATER TANK PROJECT

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:20): I move:

That the 72nd report of the committee, entitled Taplan Elevated Water Tank Project, be noted.

The South Australian Water Corporation, or SA Water, proposed to replace an existing aged elevated water tank at Taplan with a larger 700-kilolitre tank to ensure a reliable water supply to existing customers and support growth in the Taplan township and surrounding region. The township of Taplan is approximately 280 kilometres east of Adelaide near the border with Victoria in the Murray Mallee region. It is currently supported by a 40-year-old elevated water tank, with a capacity of 136 kilolitres. As it is a critical asset for the water supply network to the Taplan township, which services around 700 regional customers, the tank has surpassed its design life and needs replacement.

The ageing tank has experienced excessive leakage from its floor joints, causing significant ground disturbance, posing an increased water security and safety risk. In the past the system has experienced several periods of high demand during the summer months, which has resulted in low water pressure to customers and heightened the risk of the tank being completely drained, with the potential for customers unable to be supplied with mains water.

This further reinforces that reliance on this aged infrastructure increases the likelihood of service disruptions, which can severely impact customers. Projected growth in the Taplan area and corresponding demand on the system is constrained by the current tank and requires the capacity to be increased.

The key aims of the project are to sustain services and enable growth in the Taplan area to ensure the long-term viability and delivery of reliable baseline services to existing customers. It also seeks to support an expanded network to meet increasing demand in the area. These aims will be achieved by replacing the existing 136-kilolitre elevated tank and support structure with a new 700-kilolitre water storage facility, comprising a 140-kilolitre elevated water tank structure and a 560-kilolitre ground tank, alongside associated equipment.

This will involve the demolition of the existing tank and support structure, followed by construction of the new elevated tank, with connections to the new ground tank and associated infrastructure upgrades to support both tanks. SA Water states that this is a resilient solution that fortifies water security within the network. The elevated water tank provides water supply to customers at a constant pressure due to the gravity feed solution, while the ground tank provides the

additional water storage required by the high-demand summer periods while providing additional capacity for the expected future growth in the Taplan area.

The current site of the water tank is on land owned by SA Water. For the construction of the new tank, SA Water will investigate and acquire adjacent land in accordance with the Land Acquisition Act. Where possible, impacts will be minimised and the exact size of the land to be acquired will be determined as part of the project's detailed design phase.

The cost of the project is \$11.35 million. Construction works have commenced, with completion anticipated by the first quarter of 2026. The project will be managed by a project manager from SA Water's Capital Planning and Delivery Group. SA Water also has a business risk management policy, used to identify risks and determine the related impacts and their likelihood as well as develop mitigation strategies to remedy problems. This policy and framework will be applied over the course of the project.

Key risk management strategies for the project include:

- a recirculation system designed to manage water quality by recirculating water between the ground and elevated tanks;
- a detailed construction execution plan to mitigate the risks posed by undertaking construction tasks at an elevated height, including a combination of landing and aerial work platforms, the inclusion of guardrails, appropriate personal protective equipment and administrative controls put in place to support construction activities;
- the set-up of a temporary bypass to take the existing tank offline and provide continuous water supply to the region during construction, lessening the risk of the current tank failing before the completion of the new tank; and
- the increase of the height of the elevated structure by 1.5 metres to mitigate against the inability to adjust pressure in the network.

SA Water has a commitment to operating sustainably to support viability now and into the future. An environmental control plan has been prepared to ensure the project is delivered in compliance with relevant legislative frameworks. In compliance with the Native Vegetation Act, approval has been granted for the clearance of native vegetation in a predefined area, ensuring that surrounding roadside vegetation is protected from construction and operational impacts. Regarding water, sediment and drainage management, all reasonable and practical measures will be implemented to prevent pollution and environmental harm.

Construction and laydown zones will be appropriately established to minimise the potential for surface run-off to enter the site, alongside controls used to minimise potential for run-off to leave the site. Stockpile and laydown areas will be designated away from drainage lines or low-lying areas, while disturbed or unsealed areas will be compacted, backfilled and resurfaced as soon as possible. Discharges associated with the commissioning of the tank will be undertaken in line with SA Water's best practice operating procedure for water-affecting activities.

The project has been assessed by an Aboriginal heritage adviser and has been given a medium risk of impacting or encountering heritage, as SA Water recognises any ground-disturbing activity presents a risk of encountering Aboriginal objects or remains. In the unlikely event of heritage being uncovered, the project will follow SA Water's standard operating procedures for the discovery of Aboriginal heritage, with work ceasing immediately and an Aboriginal heritage and engagement adviser being contacted.

Native title implications have been reviewed and been determined to be extinguished, provided the infrastructure and construction work remain within the gazetted road reserves and within previously disturbed corridors through SA Water-owned land parcels, including the land to be acquired. If the project works were to impact land that may be subject to native title, native title holders and registered native title claimants will be notified. Communication with relevant stakeholders is ongoing and will continue throughout the project. Consultation will also occur with the local council of Loxton Waikerie and the landscape board.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Taplan Elevated Water Tank project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Peter Seltsikas, Senior Manager Capital Delivery, SA Water and Maria Nordberg, Senior Project Manager, SA Water. I thank the witnesses for their time.

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

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL 24-BED MENTAL HEALTH REHABILITATION UNIT

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:27): I move:

That the 74th report of the committee, entitled The Queen Elizabeth Hospital 24-Bed Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit, be noted.

The Department for Health and Wellbeing (SA Health) proposes to construct a new 24-bed mental health rehabilitation unit at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woodville South. This is part of a \$124 million capital works program to deliver an additional 72 mental health beds across the Adelaide metro area at The Queen Elizabeth, Modbury and Noarlunga hospitals to provide a significant expansion of service and capabilities within the health system.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is part of the Central Adelaide Local Health Network, which manages the delivery of public health services to approximately 470,000 people living across the eastern, central and western metropolitan areas. This is approximately 27 per cent of South Australia's population, and it is expected that the number of residents in this catchment will grow by 16 per cent by 2038. As the largest local health network by catchment population, number of employees and budget, the Central Adelaide Local Health Network employs over 15,000 staff.

Within this network, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a 303-bed acute-care teaching hospital that provides inpatient, outpatient, emergency and mental health services to approximately 250,000 people living primarily in the western suburbs. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is currently undergoing a major redevelopment through the construction of the new clinical services building. This will enhance the capability and capacity of the services available at the hospital, including surgical, procedural, cardiac, emergency, intensive care and diagnostic imaging services.

The new infrastructure investment will also accommodate the relocation of general rehabilitation services at the hospital. This redevelopment will deliver a 24-bed mental health rehabilitation service in a new purpose-designed facility that will enable therapeutic, rehab-focused, adult mental health services to be established in Adelaide's western suburbs. The rehabilitation unit will be an integral part of a continuous and supportive pathway across the consumer journey.

The capital cost of the project is \$44 million. Construction has commenced with expected completion by late 2025. The new mental health rehabilitation unit will be adjacent to The Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Woodville Road. This facility will be organised into four main zones over two storeys: entry, staff and support, consumer, and staff administration.

While the preferred configuration of the 24 beds will be two wings of 12 beds, the space will be flexible and could be operated as one 24-bed unit or two 12-bed units, with one wing able to be further divided into sub-pods of eight or four beds. This configuration supports the preferred staffing ratios of the unit, and allows an additional level of management of vulnerable or infectious consumers.

The design of the mental health rehabilitation unit is open plan and, with the safety of staff, consumers and visitors in mind, it maximises sightlines through the space. Observation of the entirety of consumer and entry zones will be largely facilitated by rotating the central staff support zone to consumer accessible entry zones. This rotation provides two staff stations, one for each wing, that have fields of view to the consumer space, as well as to the entry, foyer and main circulation corridors.

In lieu of seclusion zones, the preferred operational model will be to provide spaces for self or staff-managed withdrawal, with these spaces offering varying levels of enclosure, lights, views, size and acoustics to cater for a variety of requirements. The aims of this project are:

- to assist with the decrease in long length of stay for consumers in acute wards due to lack of discharge options;
- to deliver services that function as an integral part of the mental health system;
- to utilise peer workers as integral staff members; and
- to offer a best practice mental health rehabilitation model for consumers and carers that is trauma-informed from both a service delivery and infrastructure perspective, which works with the consumer to provide positive outcomes.

In broad terms, it is anticipated that the completion of the mental health rehabilitation unit will generate an increased focus on recovery and assist in reducing the length of stay for more complex consumers in acute mental health beds. It will also provide outcomes that go beyond the occasions of care and length of stay, plus increase the focus on outcomes from the consumer's perspective.

Project management will follow the best practice principles as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities. Risk management will form an integral part of this process, identifying and assessing risk and ensuring that appropriate management or mitigation measures are incorporated into the delivery of the project.

A key risk is ongoing cost pressures across all capital projects from inflation and supply shortages, which will be addressed through a focus on value management. Given this project forms part of a 72-bed mental health initiative across local health networks, workforce is a significant risk to commencing operations, especially as particular experience and qualifications are required for staff. High-level workforce principles are being developed by the department's Mental Health Strategy and Planning Unit to address this.

With regard to potential risks presented by the site location, the project teams have reviewed site geotechnical information and will verify the existing conditions and how these can be mitigated or removed. For further oversight, a specific risk framework, managed by a risk work group, has been established. This will be chaired by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport and include membership from key stakeholders.

SA Health recognises that the provision of a health facility with good environmental qualities is essential to achieving a good value for money solution, and one that will assist in improving user comfort and wellbeing, and reducing patient recovery time. To achieve this, SA Health has incorporated ecologically sustainable development principles into the scope of the project. The design of the building spaces and support systems have been planned to be highly flexible to increase the adaptability and futureproofing of the building.

This includes a bed layout that can be configured in numerous ways, backbone systems, and engineering spaces that can support changes in technology, and provision in mechanical system design for potential increases in adverse weather conditions. Other measures include provision for the installation of solar panels on the roof, the increase of outdoor air delivery into the air-conditioning system to improve air quality, internal planning and window shade controls to allow for a high level of daylight while mitigating solar glare, and full electrification of the building.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Unit has no record of Aboriginal sites within the proposed works location. The site has no registered or identified non-Aboriginal heritage value. SA Health states that significant trees within the development zone will be addressed in accordance with the significant trees legislation.

Engagement and consultation have been key themes throughout the various stages of the project. Consultation has occurred with clinical and non-clinical staff, consumer reference groups and industrial bodies. The project teams have undertaken specialist subject matter expert reviews within the department, the Central Adelaide Local Health Network and the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist. These include work health and safety, infection prevention and control advisers, the network's consumer and carer advisory group, as well as security and medical emergency response

advisers. The local community has been consulted through an ongoing two-way process of engagement, supplemented by targeted letter drops, regular online and social media updates, in-hospital displays, fact sheets and information sessions.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to The Queen Elizabeth Hospital 24-bed mental health rehabilitation unit. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were: Tim Packer, the Executive Director, Infrastructure, Department for Health and Wellbeing; John Harrison, the Director of Building Projects, Department for Infrastructure and Transport; Dr Paul Furst, the Executive Director of Mental Health and SA Prison Health Service, Central Adelaide Local Health Network; and James Sage, the Joint Managing Director of Cheesman Architects. I thank the witnesses for their time.

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

Ms PRATT (Frome) (11:36): I also rise to make comments on the Public Works Committee introducing or moving that the 74th report of said committee, entitled Queen Elizabeth Hospital Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit, was noted by the member. I take this one final opportunity on budget day to reflect on the government's priorities—or lack thereof—of investing in mental health and, indeed, to pass judgement on them through this report.

While the opposition welcomes every single dollar that is invested into mental health services in South Australia, there is clearly more work to be done. I note that the budget lock-up is underway and I imagine there are a number of key stakeholders in the mental health space who are pouring through the tomes of budget papers, searching perhaps in vain for any significant amount of investment going into not mental health beds, which the government is quick to promote, but in fact psychosocial services, investment in regional mental health services and any number of services that provide low-fee, no-fee, no-referral, walk-in, peer-led clinical support that extends beyond what is a short-term acute stay in a hospital.

This report for The Queen Elizabeth Hospital mental health rehabilitation unit is welcome. It is not all doom and gloom. I note that this report and this investment is part of a \$124 million program of capital works to build 72 mental health beds at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, but also the Modbury Hospital and Noarlunga Hospital across the metro area. People living in regional South Australia can only dream about that level of resourcing.

The report goes on to state that that investment of \$124 million 'will provide a significant expansion of service capabilities and capacity at TQEH', and we welcome that. I know that residents in the western suburbs would welcome, after years of neglect under Labor, a return of significant investment in The QEH, remembering this was one of the three hospitals downgraded by the Labor government when it was last in government through its disastrous Transforming Health escapades. We know how that worked out: they closed a hospital; it was called the Repat.

The report that I am reflecting on continues to state that this redevelopment at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital will deliver a 24-bed mental health rehabilitation service in a new purpose-designed facility that will enable therapeutic, rehab-focused, adult mental health services to be established in western Adelaide, and we welcome that.

The capital cost for the project is \$44 million, and construction, this report states, was expected to begin in April just past—April 2024—and it is set to be completed by late 2025, so some way off. The aims of this project are worthy, and I note them in full:

- to assist with the decrease in long length of stay for consumers in acute wards due to lack of discharge options;
- to deliver services that function as an integral part of the mental health system;
- to utilise peer workers as integral staff members; and
- to offer a best practice mental health rehabilitation model for consumers and carers that is trauma-informed from both a service delivery and infrastructure perspective, and works with the consumer to provide positive outcomes.

It is a bit jargonistic, but the aims of this project are worthy and, I repeat, we welcome this investment, and we welcome this project. I return to the first dot point in this report which states that the aim of this project is to assist with the decrease in long length of stay for consumers (let's call them patients) in acute wards (let's call them hospital beds) due to a lack of discharge options. That is code for bed block, and what this dot point really is saying is the aim of this project is to reduce ramping, and so it should.

It should be aim for this government, 2½ years after it was elected, 2½ years after it promised to fix ramping. We have seen 24 months of the worst ramping records in history and, in fact, when we reflect on the ramping hours lost for the month of May, it is a tragedy to report that the month of May is now the worst month on record, and the opposition predicts we will see worse months to come, heaven forbid. We have seen 4,773 hours lost by patients, consumers, being ramped in an ambulance at our metro hospitals, and here is a long overdue report showing some level of investment in a rehabilitation unit, which we welcome.

In trying to address and take pressure off the health system, and trying to reduce the ramping that in some way I am sure has been inflated by the number of ambulances that are now on the road making their way to a ramp near you, this project will not be delivered until the end of next year, if we are lucky. There are many more months of ramping to come before we see this aim met, which is to assist with the decrease in the long length of stay for our patients in acute wards due to a lack of discharge options. It just means that they have nowhere else to go.

On budget day, when I am anticipating millions of dollars appearing in the budget to be invested significantly in mental health and psychosocial services, I am getting a bit wary. Those of us who have read the front page of the local paper today have seen the government's proud announcement—and rightly so—of \$5 million invested in teen mental health. It is a very significant contribution thanks to the brave advocacy of a young teenager.

If the front page of the paper is signalling a \$5 million investment as the government's best effort for mental health, then I fear for those who are waiting to discover if there is a \$125 million investment in psychosocial services. We are going to have to wait for a Liberal government to be returned, because \$125 million a year is required for 19,000 South Australians who are currently living with an unmet need in mental health.

How do we know that? We know because the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist tasked with the job of investigating that very community has reported, through its own mechanism, that very fact—19,000 South Australians, that we know of, are living in South Australia with unmet need in psychosocial services. They are in our community, they have an assessed diagnosis, they are looking for access to services and, if they live in regional South Australia, there are fewer options.

I take as many opportunities as I can in this house to speak to the options that are available, but this minister is obviously intimidated by, or put off by, or unable to really pursue a relationship with the federal Minister for Health and Aged Care to negotiate what is required—that is, \$125 million co-funded, commonwealth and state, in psychosocial services to support 19,000 South Australians who are living with a vulnerability with their own health.

While we welcome this report and investment in mental health in the western suburbs, it does not go nearly far enough to meet the growing need in the mental health sector in South Australia. I know that stakeholders are very concerned that this government has not made investment in mental health a priority. I conclude my remarks.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:46): I would like to thank the member for Frome for her contribution to this debate. Also, it would be remiss of me not to point out the support of the local member, the minister and member for Cheltenham, for this particular project as well as draw attention to the fact that not only was he born at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital but also he was pleased to attend the ground breaking of this project yesterday.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: SA AMBULANCE NEW HEADQUARTERS AND ADELAIDE AMBULANCE STATION

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:47): I move:

That the 73rd report of the committee, entitled SA Ambulance Service New Headquarters and Adelaide Ambulance Station, be noted.

The Department for Health and Wellbeing, or SA Health, proposes to construct new headquarters for the South Australian Ambulance Service and an Adelaide ambulance station at Mile End South. This will serve as a new emergency operation centre and state health coordination centre, providing accommodation for 000 call takers, dispatchers, ambulance crews and other essential staff, and garaging for South Australian Ambulance Service vehicles.

The South Australian Ambulance Service, known as SAAS, is the state's provider of emergency ambulance transport, clinical care and patient transport services. It operates 119 ambulance stations across South Australia, and is one of three emergency operation centres that receive 000 calls and dispatch emergency services, alongside South Australia Police, the Metropolitan Fire Service, and the State Emergency Service.

The SAAS emergency operation centre is a critical part of ambulance operations, as it is the only facility that can provide effective call receipt and dispatch for medical emergencies across the state. This requires that the new centre must be designed as importance level 4, and built to deliver continuous, uninterrupted operation.

In 2023, the emergency operations centre received over 314,000 calls to 000 and processed over 62,000 non-emergency calls. This was an increase of 000 calls of approximately 8 per cent since 2018. The new emergency operations centre building is planned to accommodate this increasing call volume for the future.

At the 2022 state election the government pledged to improve the infrastructure of the South Australian Ambulance Service. An amount of \$120 million was committed to constructing a new headquarters for the service, as well as an Adelaide ambulance station. This commitment is to provide a significant expansion of service delivery capabilities and capacity for SAAS to manage emergency responses across metropolitan Adelaide area and surrounding regions.

This is in addition to a \$70 million commitment to build four new ambulance stations, alongside the rebuilding of four existing stations in high priority areas, including the purchase of 36 new vehicles and the recruitment of 350 additional staff across the state.

The new headquarters will accommodate SAAS's core emergency response functions, including 000 and non-urgent call-taking and primary triage; emergency and non-emergency dispatch; secondary triage; and clinical escalation. Additionally, it will be responsible for the coordination of the SAAS MedSTAR emergency medical retrieval service, which is based at Adelaide Airport.

The new facility will also accommodate core functions of the State Health Coordination Centre, such as overseeing patient flow across the system, 24/7 system observation and monitoring, and daily system learnings and insights. The State Health Coordination Centre acts as a central and integrated coordination hub for the state's entire health system, working with system partners to collate data and provide real-time visibility of patient needs from community, emergency departments, hospital wards and subacute facilities across most metropolitan and regional areas. A total of 107 workstations will be built in the new facility to service these functions.

Additionally, the site will feature a new central-based ambulance station, as previous reviews have highlighted the demand in and around the Adelaide CBD. This will include a main garage for seven ambulances and two light fleet vehicles, a training room for 25 persons, crew restrooms, and ancillary support accommodation for staff.

The new facility will be located at Mile End South between Richmond Road and Birmingham Street, approximately 10 minutes' drive from the Adelaide city centre. Ambulances, light vehicles and delivery trucks will enter via a crossover to the north-east of the site, and this will also serve as the

light vehicle and delivery truck exit. Ambulances will exit via a driveway to the south-west of the site, directly onto Richmond Road.

This project will provide modern fit-for-purpose facilities for an expanding workforce to meet operational needs and enable appropriate emergency services provision to the surrounding communities. This aligns with the intent of the state government's election commitment to improve infrastructure, increase staffing, and provide additional resources for SAAS. The capital cost is \$120 million. Site preparation has commenced and the project is expected to be completed in December 2025. Upon completion, the Ashford Ambulance Station currently located on Alexander Avenue will be decommissioned and the crews relocated to this new Adelaide ambulance station.

The expected outcomes of the project are support for the ability to respond to the annual increase in ambulance emergency calls; efficiencies in emergency operations centre workflows and the ability for teams to work together in a large fit-for-purpose open-plan operational floor; construction of the building to ensure delivery of critical uninterrupted 000 services; and support for an uplift in the state's ambulance service capability and delivery of benefits to the overall health system.

This takes pressure off the state's hospitals, through increased secondary triage and alternative care pathways to reduce presentations at emergency departments. This project aligns with the SA Health strategic plan's primary objective, which is for South Australians to experience the best health care in the country. This will be done by strengthening primary health care and enhancing hospital care by providing services close to where people live.

SA Health has incorporated sustainable development principles into the scope of the project. To help achieve these sustainable aspirations, several measures have been integrated into the facility design. These include provisions for future electric vehicle charging stations, highly accessible and flexible engineering spaces and backbone systems to cater for changes in technology, provision for a mechanical design system to deal with adverse weather conditions, the use of energy-efficient heating/cooling and lighting designs that allow for high levels of daylight while mitigating solar glare, and a fully electrified station.

The project will follow best practice principles as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities. Given the importance of the project, an executive steering committee will be established from across government agencies, including SA Health, the Department for Infrastructure and Transport and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, as well as SAAS and the State Health Coordination Centre. This executive steering committee will meet monthly to monitor all elements of the SAAS infrastructure program.

Risk management will form an integral part of this process, identifying and assessing risk and ensuring appropriate management or mitigation measures are incorporated into the project delivery. A key risk is ongoing capital pressures and supply chain delays, alongside the continued escalation of prices. Another risk is increases in the ICT/technology scope requirements for the facility.

Furthermore, there is a risk due to the site being newly procured and there is limited knowledge and information available about the possibility of hazardous materials. The project teams have reviewed the site, as well as geotechnical data, and will conduct destructive tests and ground boreholes to identify any potential risks.

Engagement and consultation will be a key theme throughout the project. Consultation has occurred with various subject matter experts within SA Health and SAAS, including Work Health and Safety, SAAS operational staff, the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, and industrial bodies.

Additionally, the City of West Torrens council has been consulted, and renders of the building were publicly released for consideration. As the site is currently used for industrial and commercial purposes there are no residences in the immediate surrounds. Businesses within the vicinity will be engaged on matters affecting them ahead of time to allow for any adjustments to be made.

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

Motion carried.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: FUNDING FOR CHILDREN AND STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PRESCHOOLS PETITION

Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (11:55): I move:

That the 47th report of the committee, entitled 'Petition No. 96 of 2021: funding for children and students with additional learning needs in public schools and preschools', be noted.

The committee received petition No. 96 on a motion of the member for Wright, Mr Blair Boyer, in September 2022. The petition requested the government increase funding to schools and preschools to provide immediate support and intervention for children and students with additional learning needs through the employment of more support staff, specialists, allied health and mental health professionals and teachers.

The Inclusive Education Support Program provides grant funding for the state's public school system to support children and students who have additional learning needs to achieve in mainstream and specialist schools. State schools and preschools receive proportional site grant funding based on several factors such as school location and student numbers. They also receive individualised funding for children and students identified as having greater learning needs.

The evidence to the inquiry identified there are concerns with the different grant funding streams and the issues the different funding streams raise in daily school routines. It should be noted that at the time the committee was undertaking its inquiry the government signed off on a new \$1.6 billion enterprise agreement that takes into account salary and workload teachers face along with reforms to the Inclusive Education Support Program. This agreement goes some way to resolving some of the concerns presented to the committee.

The committee's inquiry has identified in broad terms that there is a need to:

- ease the administrative burden placed on teachers to complete funding applications;
- ensure the department provides timely learning supports and adequate funding hours to all children and students where it is needed;
- ensure the Inclusive Education Support Program and individualised funding grants have flexibility and are adequately funded;
- invest more in early childhood education teachers;
- increase recruitment of specialists and school supports and ensure student support officers are appropriately trained to carry out their duties;
- expand the Autism Inclusion Teachers program to secondary schools;
- demonstrate inclusive whole-of-school evidence-based approaches to the provision of learning supports;
- review departmental policies to ensure proper supports are provided to children and students with undiagnosed disability or learning difficulties who do not meet the current definitions of disability; and
- continue to work to include trauma-informed practice for teachers and educators, along with broader mental health and wellbeing support.

The committee notes the initiatives that have been commenced by the department to improve the opportunities of children and students in government schools who have additional learning needs. The department's evidence shows that during the 2022 school year over 17,000 students were provided nearly 24,000 specialist services with funding allocated out of the department's annual

budget. More than 5,000 of these students were funded under the autism spectrum primary disability category.

The department advised that the government is investing \$50 million over four years to enable 100 full-time equivalent mental health and learning support specialists across 28 sites to provide more support to students across South Australia. It is also ensuring that autism inclusion teachers will be available in schools that offer reception to year 12, and the program will be allocated \$28.8 million over the forward budget estimates.

The evidence showed that waiting times for access to some department specialists for funding applications could be lengthy. The evidence further suggested that a multidisciplinary suite of support professionals is best practice. This was evidenced to be especially true for schools in lower socio-economic areas where children and their families face additional challenges. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Parliamentary Procedure

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (12:00): I move:

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

The SPEAKER: I have counted the house. There being present an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the house, I accept the motion.

Motion carried.

Bills

CRIMINAL ASSETS CONFISCATION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (12:01): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Criminal Assets Confiscation Act 2005. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (12:01): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I introduce today the Criminal Assets Confiscation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2024 amending the Criminal Assets Confiscation Act 2005, herein known as the CAC Act. A number of the amendments in this bill were recommended from the review of amendments to the Criminal Assets Confiscation Act 2005 enacted by the Criminal Assets Confiscation (Prescribed Drug Offenders) Amendment Act 2016. There are also additional amendments to the freezing order provisions of the CAC Act, and amendments relating to the use of the warrants under section 172. The amendments contained in the bill that arise from the recommendations of the review are as follows:

- an amendment that clarifies that the definition of 'government custody' includes a period of home detention;
- an amendment clarifying that property that is subject to a restraining order can still be under the effective control of a prescribed drug offender; and
- an amendment that clarifies that forfeited property can be dealt with in a manner that the administrator thinks fit, including the destruction of the property.

Further amendments relate to the freezing order provisions of the act. Freezing orders require financial institutions to freeze the specified accounts, not allowing deposits or withdrawals. A freezing

order prevents monetary assets from being transferred and hidden prior to a restraining order or forfeiture order being made in relation to that asset.

The amendments in the bill will make freezing orders more effective by extending the time that they can apply from 72 hours to seven days, allowing for a longer period for the South Australia Police and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to prepare an application for a restraining order or forfeiture order. Freezing orders will also be able to apply to classes of accounts, rather than having to specify an individual bank account.

An application for an extension to a freezing order will now be possible where a restraining order application will be made but has not yet been made. The amendments also provide that a magistrate, when considering an application for a freezing order, may have regard to a series of factors including the amount held in the account or whether the account is held in joint names, rather than those factors requiring mandatory consideration.

In addition, a catch-all factor of 'any other relevant consideration' has been added to expand the scope of what a magistrate may consider. A magistrate will still be required to consider whether any hardship is reasonably expected to be caused as a result of the order.

Recent legal proceedings under the CAC Act have also brought to light an issue related to warrants issued pursuant to section 172 of the act in respect to a type of property classified as a chose in action. The amendments will validate any past seizures of choses in action pursuant to CAC Act warrants, validate any subsequent actions and orders made in those matters, and provide that no liability attaches to the Crown or other person as a result of any seizures.

The amendments in this bill will improve the operation and effectiveness of the CAC Act, enabling the South Australia Police to ensure that offenders do not profit from their crimes. I commend the bill to members and seek leave to insert the explanation of clauses into *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

This clause is formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Criminal Assets Confiscation Act 2005*

2—Amendment of section 6A—Meaning of prescribed drug offender

This clause amends the definition of *government custody* to include custody under a home detention order under Part 3 Division 7 Subdivision 1 of the *Sentencing Act 2017*.

3—Amendment of section 17—Authorised police officer may apply for freezing order

This clause broadens the power to make freezing orders (in particular by allowing a freezing order to be made in relation to a class of accounts).

4—Amendment of section 21—Duration of freezing order

This clause increases the maximum duration of a freezing order from 72 hours to 7 days, allows extension of a freezing order in circumstances where an application for a restraining order is yet to be made and makes a consequential amendment.

5—Amendment of section 56A—Prescribed drug offenders

This clause makes a clarifying amendment.

6—Amendment of section 93—How forfeited property must be dealt with

This clause provides a clarifying amendment making it clear that property may be disposed of under the section by selling the property, arranging for the destruction of the property or in any other manner the Administrator thinks appropriate.

7—Amendment of section 172—Warrants authorising seizure of property

This clause validates certain warrants issued before the commencement of this subsection authorising (or purporting to authorise) the seizure of money in a bank account held by a financial institution or any other thing as a chose in action.

Schedule 1—Transitional provisions

1—Application of amendments to section 21 of Act

This clause provides a transitional provision.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (12:05): I am the lead speaker, and I indicate the opposition's support for the bill. I indicate that I have had the benefit of notice and a briefing, albeit in the course of the last day or two, and that has permitted the unusual convening of my party room for the purpose of considering the bill in light of the briefing and so on, but this has all sort of come to attention at that kind of notice.

I also recognise that I have been given the benefit of the observations of, in particular, the Chief Justice in the course of proceedings earlier this year. To frame this up, as I understand it and as I think sort of emerges from the bulk of the bill, the first six clauses of the bill are dealing with matters that are amending the arrangements for what is now well familiar in terms of freezing orders in particular. I might just spend a moment or two addressing clauses 3 and 4 in that regard. It would appear to me that nothing about clauses 1 to 6 is, as it were, unusual or attended by any particular urgency, but I regard those as changes that the government has sought advice about and are being brought along in the usual course.

The reason why we are here today and in the circumstances that we are, again, just to take some of the wind out of the sort of urgency sails, as it were, my understanding is that it was the government's intent to give notice about this yesterday. This would have been introduced in the normal course at least to that extent. That has not happened, and so it has been necessary to suspend standing orders to bring it on, but it is not that much of a surprise, if I put it that way.

The reason for the matter, in the government's view, being desirable to be debated and to move through all stages in the house today is so that it can then get to the other place in the next sitting week. That will in due course permit the bill to pass through the parliament ahead of what we anticipate, according to the sitting schedule, is a longer than usual break from sittings that will occur later in the winter.

It is permitting the orderly passage of the bill in terms that the government has been advised are desirable to deal with it expeditiously but not so as to be so precipitous as to avoid the opportunity for consultation. I appreciate that the government is undertaking the Attorney's indication that targeted consultation will indeed occur between the houses. It is good that that opportunity is taken because what is happening here is in large measure responsive to what has been on the one hand police practice over a period of time, as I understand it, and then matters that are coming before the courts. They are matters of interest to practitioners and, of course, to those who are subject to the orders.

So dealing first with clauses 3 and 4 that change the arrangements in terms of freezing orders, we see clause 3 amends section 17(2) to just shift the dial, I suppose, in terms of the mandatory consideration. The mandatory consideration is to be limited to hardship that might reasonably be expected as the result of the operation of the order. Presently, under that section there is a group of mandatory considerations, but the one that would remain after the amendment is a mandatory consideration to consider hardship that might 'reasonably be expected to be caused to any person by the operation of the order'.

That is of long standing and that is retained, and there are practical reasons for that to be a mandatory consideration of the court. There are readily examples in which hardship might be presented, particularly in circumstances where significant assets necessary for day-to-day living in family circumstances, as well as for the individual directly affected, will often be the subject of submissions.

But it renders then the remainder of the conditions that are presently the subject of section 17 as no longer mandatory but discretionary, so discretionary considerations now as to the quantum,

whether or not the relevant account is held in the name of more than one person and any other relevant matter, so there is a discretion that is introduced. That is the subject of clause 3 relevantly. Clause 4 then moves out the period of time that is required.

I might say before moving off clause 3 that if one just compares it to section 17 as it presently stands, there is also the matter of the timing of provision of evidence. As I read it, the balance of section 17 remains unamended, so existing subsection (3) requires that 'the applicant for a freezing order must submit evidence in support of the application in the form of an affidavit' subject to circumstances that are the subject of section 18 for urgency. There is the possibility provided, therefore, for the magistrate to make such an order in circumstances of urgency, having obtained appropriate undertakings. The substance of clause 3 goes to moving a number of those matters, then, from mandatory considerations to discretionary considerations.

Clause 4 then addresses itself to the duration of the freezing order. That has, as I understand it, come in response to matters of practicality. Section 21, as it presently stands, at subsection (1) provides that the freezing order that is made pursuant to section 17 ceases to be in force on the first occurring of either:

- (a) the making of a restraining order in respect of the money in the account; or
- (b) the expiration of 72 hours after the time at which the freezing order took effect...

The advice, as I understand it, is that that period of 72 hours is often for practical purposes insufficient and that, notwithstanding the possibility for an authorised officer to 'apply to a magistrate for an extension of the duration of a freezing order', it is either imposing an unnecessary burden in terms of what is a frequent application for necessary extension or otherwise is creating a circumstance that is just impractical in terms of taking that next step to the obtaining of a restraining order.

In circumstances where, as a practical matter, a section 21(2) application is being made to the magistrate and in circumstances where those criteria are readily met, then it becomes a time when the necessity to do that as a matter of course might be obviated with a view to creating greater certainty and also relieving the court's resources of having to deal with those extension applications. That is what I wanted to draw attention to in terms of clause 4. As I say, those amendments to what is otherwise the ordinary functioning of the act, as I understand it, have been the subject of consideration and have been on the way to be introduced as reforms in the ordinary course.

I turn then to clause 7, which is the reason, as I understand it, for the bill being prioritised. Clause 7 is dealing with an entirely different part of the act, on the face of it. Those clauses that deal with freezing orders and restraining orders are the subject of part 2 and part 3 of the act respectively. They interact with one another. The confiscation act is structured so as to provide for a short-time freezing order that is followed by restraining orders that are then in place for the relevant duration.

In an entirely different part of the act, there are provisions that apply to powers of seizure of materials and that is the subject of division 5, subdivision 2 of part 6 of the act and more particularly section 172.

In circumstances where we have been talking about a process that is followed under the act, provides for freezing orders to be in place for a short period of time, followed by the obtaining of restraining orders over that property that is frozen, we have then separate to all of that a regime for search and seizure, for search warrants and particularly the subject of section 172 for the issuing of warrants authorising the seizure of property.

It is my understanding that the practice for some time has been one adopted by police to go about the task in terms of matters the subject of the act, adopting or obtaining and acting upon warrants and, in the course of seizing a variety of materials then pursuant to the section 172 warrant, seizing property including the contents of a bank account. It is the process of doing so where one is then interacting with what is a chose in action, the contents of a bank account; police are purporting to act on a warrant for seizure of the contents of a bank account. That has involved then the transfer of funds from the relevant bank account and then a subsequent order restraining those funds.

The work that clause 7 is doing, by providing as it does for the regularisation of such warrants, is to leave in no doubt the validity on the one hand of the warrant in terms of the seizure of money in a bank account that is held by a financial institution, as a chose in action, taking the issuing

of the warrant for that purpose as valid, and rendering that seizure and any subsequent actions not liable to legal challenge and otherwise removing liability of the Crown in relation to the relevant seizure.

In what might be a neat point lost on many who might follow the debate, where the object of the act is to provide for the confiscation of assets, there is a freezing and restraining regime in one part of the act, there is a seizure regime and warrants for seizure regime in another part of the act and, where seizure followed by restraint might be called into question as an effective tool vis-a-vis a chose in action, then clause 7 is working to regularise that step.

It might be put that the proper way to go about things, in terms of preserving the chose in action, is to adopt the freezing followed by restraining steps. As I say, I am advised by the government that on occasions, I do not know how many, therefore effecting more than just a single example, it has been a practice of police to undertake that part 6 approach to the task, that section 172 approach, rather than to proceed on the part 2 freezing and part 3 restraining order path.

I set all of that out, that is my understanding as I have been advised by the government, and I again indicate that I appreciate having been given some opportunity to interrogate those circumstances and then to have an understanding of the meaning of where we are at. It is a further comfort that there is an opportunity now for the bill, having been the subject of debate in this place today, to then be the subject of consultation between the houses and that we will be in a position for the matter to be further considered in another place, in the light of that as well as the light of this debate, and in those circumstances the opposition supports the passage of the bill through the house today.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (12:27): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

LATE PAYMENT OF GOVERNMENT DEBTS (INTEREST) (REVIEW) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 15 May 2024.)

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (12:28): The Late Payment of Government Debts (Interest) (Review) Amendment Bill 2024 is the next step in delivering the Malinauskas Labor government's election commitment of making the public dollar work for South Australians. The bill delivers on our promise to support businesses by providing fair and timely payments for those that trade with the South Australian government. Businesses across the state understand the cashflow challenge that occurs when government departments are late paying invoices. The bill will help address this challenge by:

- reducing the standard payment timeline from 30 days to 15 days, seeing businesses paid for their work sooner. That is always a good thing. It is never a good look to use small businesses as a piggy bank. I only wish some elements of the private sector, especially some of our bigger companies, would take a leaf out of the book for this approach;
- formally extending the reduced payment timeline to not-for-profit entities that do business with the South Australian government, providing not-for-profits with the same level of protections;
- incentivising the prompt payment of invoices, and allow for greater flexibility and adaptability across the various government payment systems by moving the method for calculating interest from the act to regulations; and

- amending the time frame for the resolution of interest on late payments from 48 hours to two business days. This change will allow for weekends and public holidays, enabling those government departments without automated systems to meet their obligations under this act.

These changes build on the strong results that South Australian businesses are already seeing under the Malinauskas government.

In 2022-23, more than \$12.2 billion worth of economic benefit was delivered through state government contracts to South Australian companies and workers. That represented a 59 per cent increase on the previous year. It is interesting to reflect that it does build on the work that was commenced under the Weatherill government, where there was a real change in relation to assisting small businesses, medium businesses and even large businesses in this state when it came to procurement.

Sometimes, as a backbencher, it can be a little bit frustrating. I remember back to that first term as a backbencher, and there was one area of procurement in particular that did bother me. Prior to getting here, there were a number of major builds on the part of the state government, including the Greater Adelaide stadium, the Royal Adelaide Hospital and a number of other initiatives, which were good initiatives.

An issue with those initiatives is that they certainly did not maximise the use of Australian steel when it came to those particular developments. It was my view that that was a weakness, especially coming from Whyalla—the only integrated steelworks in the country that does long products, that does structural steel, that does rail. I put it to Jay that it was a priority of mine, when it came to the Australian steel industry in Australia, to see those procurement policies change.

Being a simple creature, I thought we could just do a straightforward mandate but there were some complications around a straightforward mandate. In a sense, we did get a mandate in all but name through the use of a combination of two elements: an accredited, standards-based approach for local fabricators and producers, and that was allied to an industry participation plan where companies were scored. It did result in a significant uptake of Australian steel in South Australian government projects, so that was a real plus.

At the time, the peak body of the steel industry—BlueScope (obviously it was Arrium back then), fabricators and others—the peak body representing those companies, indicated that of all the states South Australia now had the lead procurement policy when it came to using Australian steel. I do remember at the time advocating that the national government should follow a similar policy, given that the national government and the scale of their investments in infrastructure, often in combination with the states, could make a significant difference to the Australian steel industry.

The national government did not take that on board. There were various other things it would do, especially in the area of tariffs, when sometimes there was dumping from a number of companies, so some action was taken in that regard and that was a plus. I still believe, especially when we are now talking about 'made in Australia', that we need a stronger policy at a national level when it comes to the steel industry.

This bill continues the Malinauskas government's commitment to utilising South Australian government procurement money to support local businesses and jobs, and complements major changes the government has already made to give local businesses a competitive edge. The government has set a target to increase the amount spent with South Australian businesses by 5 per cent, injecting an extra \$425 million into the state's economy.

This government has already implemented commitments to support South Australian businesses, such as adopting principles for government procurement: elements such as value for money; creating South Australian jobs; increasing the number of apprentices and trainees in South Australia, an incredibly important initiative; stimulating innovation and new businesses; and achieving environmentally sensitive, low carbon, socially just outcomes.

It is incredibly reasonable, through our procurement policies, that we entail those particular elements, that it is not just a straightforward financial transaction. We want to see other positive outcomes that are good for the state and the nation. We also mandated that South Australian workers

deliver a minimum 90 per cent of labour hours on major infrastructure projects and imposed penalties on lead contractors for not achieving these targets.

Once again, I have had some direct experience when it comes to some projects that I happened to get involved in up in my part of the world. The first utility-scale solar plant built in South Australia was actually built in Whyalla. In some ways it is a reflection of how far we have come since then, given that was a five-megawatt project, which would be seen as a baby today. The Melbourne-based company, which was going to build in Mildura, I had some discussions with and managed to convince them to come over to Whyalla. One of the things I said to them—and I think this is an important element, especially for some country communities—was, 'Do not go out there tomorrow and promise this project; get all your ducks lined up, get the yellow gear there and, when you're ready to start the next day, we'll make the announcement then.' It was simpler to do that because of the nature of the zoning of the land.

The other thing I said was, 'Make sure you use Whyalla-based contractors'. So 90 per cent of the contractors on site at Whyalla, 90 per cent of the labour, were local contractors from the Whyalla community. I would have to say that they had to do some innovative stuff. The Melbourne-based company was more than impressed with the quality of the work they did get, and it saved them a significant amount of money by not having to draw upon contractors from elsewhere. Stuff like that is important when we look at procurement and maximising state and local advantage.

Another element is to require the use of South Australian manufactured products on public housing construction and maintenance programs where available; require departmental procurement staff to undertake regular training on the industry participation policies of government and education of local industry participants and providers; and require chief executives to sign off on procurements where the successful tender is not South Australian.

It is not always possible to have a South Australian company for a whole range of reasons. We will see, with the hydrogen project, that elements of that project we cannot fulfil from within South Australia; elements of that project, such as turbines, we will not be able to fulfil within Australia—we will have to go overseas to source some of the equipment that is needed. It is great to see a big company like General Electric taking a real interest in this project when it comes to turbines.

A broad market assessment has been undertaken to identify South Australian businesses that can deliver projects, goods or services to government and advise departmental procurement staff of industry capability. There is one project that came to light, and it is a bit complicated, with a dog fence. There were a number of contracts for the wiring. A number of companies claimed to use Australian wire, but the steel that came over, the semifinished steel that was turned into wire, actually came from overseas. There was only one company at the time, and that was Waratah, that actually used Australian semifinished steel to produce wire.

In the process that we introduced at the state level we did miss out on wire. That might change. There are some things going on when it comes to semifinished steel for wire in this country that might be a move in a bad direction, but we will have to see what happens. It is a bit of an evolving process.

There is a commitment for an independent complaints process for tenderers who feel they have unreasonably missed out on government work. Furthermore, there is a requirement that apprentices, trainees, Aboriginal workers and the long-term unemployed deliver 20 per cent of all labour hours on major projects. Some of us who have been involved in some of this stuff in the past know that it is not always possible to, in an immediate sense, employ some people. There often needs to be investment into getting people job ready. There have been some good programs around the state over the years where, if you like, that job hardening or that job preparation was done but done in a way that, unlike training for training's sake, guaranteed a job at the end of it.

Some of those programs even involved not getting rid of people who had positive drug or alcohol tests and also working on those particular issues to get them clean and employable. We actually need more of that approach because we still have some communities, despite the demand for labour and the incredibly low unemployment rate in South Australia, where the unemployment rate is two to three times higher than the state average—and indeed in some places it is significantly higher than that.

The government assists our local businesses to become tender ready, holding regular industry-specific workshops conducted by the Industry Participation Advocate, and helping more local businesses to win work. Especially for small businesses, and some of the medium businesses, there can be some complexity around tendering processes and what needs to be done, so any assistance in that area can be gratefully received.

Another commitment is that only local project managers, architects, designers, engineers, surveyors, planners and other professional service providers are used on government contracts and government projects. That can also be a challenge. We know we have a shortage in a number of areas when it comes to some of the professionals that we need on infrastructure projects and on construction projects. It can be challenging, and we do need to do more as a state and in the tertiary education sector here, and indeed in the education sector, especially around STEM, to prepare as many people as possible to go into both professional employment and trade employment.

A further commitment is that government procurement opportunities are broadly publicised three months in advance so people do have the opportunity to get their tenders together. Also, another commitment is to publish an annual project pipeline of coming infrastructure projects over \$10 million over the next three years to enable lead contractors to prepare thoroughly. I think it is important, when it comes to lead contractors, because there can be a tendency of lead contractors to use already established teams, and they go from one state to the other state. It is a case of asking: how do we address that in a way that does not disadvantage us, but does advantage that capacity to use local businesses?

A further commitment is to ensure that public projects above \$500 million are broken into smaller stages/components to allow multiple South Australian companies the opportunity to participate in projects, unless the nature of that project makes it unfeasible. Another point is that tenders for major projects will be released within 90 days of funding being available for the project.

There are a lot of initiatives there that, taken together, will enhance the capacity of South Australian businesses to maximise their opportunities, but it is something that always requires oversight. It is something that requires auditing to see if we are failing in any areas and to look at which areas we can improve in and things can evolve from there.

In addition, the government has commenced work to implement additional commitments, including to ensure the Auditor-General audits spending procurement and annually reports how much is spent on South Australian and non-South Australian goods and services. That is a worthwhile initiative. It is always good to get the data. Another commitment is to set aside 1 per cent of government funding into a subcontractor support fund to enable the state to directly pay subcontractors on government projects where lead contractors are unnecessarily delaying payment of invoices or are unable to pay invoices. I think that can be an important issue with subcontractors.

There have been some examples, and these are private sector examples. Despite changes at the federal level, there is a voluntary code of conduct that big companies—I am not sure if it is just publicly listed big companies—can sign up to. I know that in my neck of the woods that whole issue of timely payment is an incredibly big issue. A lot of companies, a lot of family businesses and subcontractors, were caught out when Arrium went into administration. Arrium often took 90 days or more to pay what was owed.

When it went into administration, suddenly you had all these companies at the time with major cash flow issues to the point where family businesses that had been built up over the years faced the prospect of going to the wall. As a result of the meeting we organised in Whyalla with the contractors, we put \$10 million on the table to assist a lot of those companies. From memory, 19 companies were assisted. A lot of those companies, without that assistance, would have gone to the wall. That was ultimately provided as a loan, and there were some soft conditions around the repayment of the loan, but nearly all of those loans were, in time, paid back.

But we need to be doing more not just at a government level. When it comes to the big companies that use small companies as their piggy bank we need to be doing a lot more, and that is essentially federal legislation. I did think they were going to mandate some practices for publicly listed companies. Someone can correct me if I am wrong, but it looks like it is a voluntary code of practice that you can sign up to, and there can be consequences if you do sign up, but we should

make it across the board. If big companies are not treating small companies right, that is not acceptable. I see that I am out of time.

The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley) (12:49): I rise to speak in support of the bill. There is a lot more below the surface, of course, than just the headline of the bill about invoices being paid within 15 days. We certainly saw an example of the devastating impact it has had on public housing tenants and on the tradespeople who have been contracted to maintain those public houses that are their homes.

It reminded me of my very early days when I started my business at the age of 21. I was lucky enough to get some free advice from a kitchen manufacturer. As a matter of fact, they are still in business today and doing a great job: Farquhar Kitchens. The key advice from the father who started that business was, 'David, make sure you get paid because if you don't get paid, you won't have a business.' It is the number one issue for any business but small business in particular, particularly fledgling businesses, and South Australia is a small business state.

I took that advice and was always paid on delivery. That was an agreement that I had with clients. In 22 years of business, I do not believe I had a single bad debt from a customer. I think there was even one story when I was doing some work for someone who had just moved into the 'Toaster' in Sydney Harbour who had a notorious reputation I was not aware of, of not paying people. He engaged interior designers and architects and painters and so forth. He ordered a wardrobe in a French armoire style that had to be able to come apart because they had no goods lift in this poorly designed building, and so the furniture had to be able to come apart to actually get up to his level.

It was a project that took several months to complete. When I completed it, I got paid. When I bumped into other contractors and interior designers on another job I was working on in Sydney a few months later, they asked me if I got paid for that job, and I said, 'I did, actually.' They said, 'Well, you are the only one. Everyone we have spoken to who worked for that particular client didn't get paid.' So it is very important and it is at front of mind of anyone who runs their own business, whether they are simply a contractor who does not have employees or whether they are a business that employs their own staff.

I remember how stressful every Christmas was because Christmas was also the time of annual leave in virtually every manufacturing industry—not so much in the retail industry, of course, because people are on holidays and they go out and spend. That is why we have the Boxing Day sales and New Year sales at that time. There is always plenty of work for extra casual staff in the retail area and the hospitality area, but, in traditional manufacturing areas, that was usually when people had two or three weeks, and, in some instances, all of their annual leave over that period.

As a small business, it is a very big outlay. It was all about timing of deliveries, payment on delivery, and furniture getting to people's homes undamaged because, of course, when you are making a high-end product and it has to travel 1,700 kilometres from Adelaide to Sydney, there is always a risk that there is going to be some damage. Of course, my clients at the time were very successful people themselves and if damage had occurred, there would be no payment until it was made good.

Fortunately, I had a trusty contractor in Sydney who was able to make sure the customer was happy so that those deliveries that happened before Christmas brought the cash in, and then they would need to pay those holiday salaries to my 20-odd staff at that time of the year. When I read that story, 'Tradies left high and dry', on the front page of *The Advertiser* on Monday, I was very outraged, and felt, 'How could that possibly happen? How can a government that is spruiking the benefits of job apprenticeships allow that to happen?'

It was a process that I started when I was a minister. People in this place would recall that TAFE was under two investigations. It had been barred by the national regulator from actually conducting some of its training because it did not meet the requirements, and it had had its staff reduced by about one-third over the previous six years.

At the same time, we saw the non-government sector pushed out of access to funding for training, which delivered a 66 per cent decline in commencements in apprenticeships and traineeships from 2012 to 2018. We vowed to turn that around and, indeed, we did turn it around.

Coming into office there were just 15,000 apprentices in training in South Australia. When leaving office there were 35,000 apprentices and trainees in training.

The government is doing a lot of talking about apprenticeships and traineeships now, but actually in their first full financial year in office there was a drop of 60 per cent of commencements of apprentices and trainees. Their shift in policy, moving away from supporting employers, and then putting complications in contracts by—and the member for Giles raised this in his contribution—compelling employers to have a certain percentage of apprentices from different socio-economic areas made it too hard for many small businesses in particular, who just found it easier not to employ any apprentices.

We had the highest growth in Indigenous commencements in apprenticeships and traineeships, Indigenous people in training, and Indigenous completions of apprenticeships and traineeships in our time in office. We did that by supporting employers, not by having quotas, not by making it more complicated for employers to engage in the apprenticeship system. Eleven-hundred employers employed apprentices for the very first time when we rolled out our Skilling South Australia program, supporting them with their off-the-job training.

I think one of the things that is often missed in some of the crucial manufacturing and construction facets of our economy is that employers are often responsible for training their staff, but I cannot think of a hospital, a medical clinic, a law firm, an accounting firm, a pharmacy or any other professional business that has to train their own staff. They employ trained staff, and yet there is an obligation on employers in those key economic drive types of industries—in construction and manufacturing—to actually fund the training themselves.

Government has always been in partnership with businesses but, in the end, it is the employer that must pay for the on-the-job training. In many awards, employers also pay for the off-the-job training in an apprenticeship or traineeship, and then there is no guarantee that, when that training is completed, that particular business that has made that investment will in actual fact benefit from having that additional skilled person in their workforce.

So you can see why the Skilling South Australia was so successful. A big lift of the burden was removed for employers by supporting their on-the-job training with cash payments, directed and tailored for their own needs, whether that be for the needs of the apprentice or whether that be for the needs of the employer, or the people who were working with those apprentices on the factory floor. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00.

Petitions

MURRAY BRIDGE HEATED POOL

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): Presented a petition signed by 230 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to take immediate action to ensure that the Murray Bridge heated pool will be maintained in a manner allowing it to remain open to ensure the health and wellbeing of its patrons.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Summary Offences Act 1953—

Dangerous Area Declarations return pursuant to section 83B—Report for Period—
1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024

Road Block Authorisations return pursuant to section 74B—Report for Period—
1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024

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

Budget 2024-25—Estimates Committee Schedule 2024

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

Education, Department for—Annual Report 2023

Parliamentary Committees

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (14:02): I bring up the fourth report of the committee, entitled Emergency Services Levy 2024-25.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Before we get to question time I would like to acknowledge the presence in the house today, and welcome to the South Australian parliament, the member for Nepean in the Victorian parliament, Mr Sam Groth, an Olympian and MP. As a former sports journo I always like a little bit of trivia, and it has been provided by the member for Hartley, as Mr Groth is his guest today. In 2012 Sam Groth hit the fastest serve at 263.4 km/h. Well done to you on that, and well done to you on being elected to the Victorian parliament at the last Victorian election. The member for Hartley tells us that you are his doubles partner in the annual parliamentary tennis tournament later in the year, so get your receiving of service skills up, I would say is probably the best thing for people in this chamber! We will now move to question time.

Question Time

UNIVERSAL THREE-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:04): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier guarantee that all services participating in his government's three-year-old preschool program from 2026 and beyond will have all the relevant qualified staff required and will not need to seek any waivers or exemptions from the Education Standards Board?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:04): I thank the member for Morialta for his question and his interest in our rollout of three-year-old preschool. As members of this place, I am sure, will know, and as the Premier and I have spoken about at great length again this week, we have just announced \$715 million over the next five years to actually have what we need to commence the rollout of three-year-old preschool in 2026. The model that was recommended by the royal commissioner, Julia Gillard, was a mixed model, which will have some of the three-year-old preschool provided in government settings and some provided in long day-care settings.

We therefore are very keen for those long day-care providers to partner with us. Kim Little, who is the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of the Office for Early Childhood Development, was in charge of putting together that rollout. Kim will be making sure that as we seek to partner with those long day-care providers, who express an interest—and we anticipate that many will—there will be some very stringent requirements which are put in place to make sure that they meet requirements that we are setting to make sure that what they provide by way of three-year-old preschool is teacher-led, play-based learning, which is at the heart of what good preschool is, and to make sure that the staff they have have the qualifications that are needed.

That was the recommendation by the royal commissioner, Julia Gillard, around how we could fast-track our rollout. The rollout that we are moving towards here in South Australia is a quick one. It will be much faster than the rollout across the border in Victoria.

One of the reasons we will be able to do that is because the mixed model lets us do that by leveraging the capacity of the long day-care sector, the staff it has and the facilities it has, but it will not be a case of just simply putting up your hand and therefore being able to be a part of it. There will be a number of things that will be put in place around the qualifications of staff, around the infrastructure, to make sure that there is consistency in terms of what is provided regardless of whether you are getting that dose of three-year-old preschool, regardless of whether it is 15 hours or, in some of our intensive hubs, 30 hours, to make sure there is consistency of what is provided between the government and the long day-care providers, who we know are keen and who we will welcome to come on board if they can meet the requirements that we put in place.

UNIVERSAL THREE-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:06): Supplementary: given the minister's answer, can he guarantee that none of the centres providing what is described as a three-year-old preschool program, when the government is commencing this program, will be operating with waivers or exemptions from the Education Standards Board for teachers in the classroom?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:07): I think I did actually just answer that question. We have very precise workforce targets which have been set down by Julia Gillard in the royal commission that she handed down last year. They have been updated and I think from memory currently sit at about 880 additional early childhood workers, 800 additional early childhood teachers, and there's some things that we are already doing and announcing to put in place changes to the qualifications so that we can have a birth to five, three-year early childhood teaching qualification, and also 120 extra staff as well.

So we know what the targets are, and those targets will enable us to offer three-year-old preschool starting in 2026 and full rollout by 2032, with consistency right across it. Of course, our aim is not to have waivers. That is every state's ambition. It is not an ideal situation to have waivers of the required qualifications or ratios. As I said, we are doing a number of things to be able to build that workforce. One is changing and creating the new birth to five early childhood teaching course, which will be an important thing, fee-free TAFE courses, which we've already rolled out, and technical colleges that will have that as a stream. There is a \$56 million workforce fund, which has already been announced, which will play a really important role in building that workforce as well.

There are some really exciting announcements which have been made at a federal level as well, including around pay for people in the early childhood sector, which will help to make it a career of choice and reward those currently in that so we can retain them as well. Our ambition, absolutely, is not to have those waivers. Our ambition now is not to have waivers, but it is, of course, a challenging environment at the moment, particularly in a state like South Australia where we are practically at full employment.

The work of a teacher, whether it is a primary teacher or a secondary teacher, as well as the work of those who work in a long day-care setting or a preschool, is challenging work, and many would observe that it has become more challenging over the years. We are in a jobs and labour market, I think the Treasurer said today, where there are more advertised job vacancies than there have ever been. There is a lot of choice out there for people, so there are things that we need to do in place as a government to make sure that we can retain the existing workforce and attract new people in there, so that we can meet the targets that were put in place by Julia Gillard of 880, 800 and 120 extra staff, so that when we commence that rollout in 2026, and have full rollout by 2032, we have all the staff we need in place and we will not need waivers. That is absolutely our ambition.

UNIVERSAL THREE-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:10): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise how many early childhood teachers will enter the system by 2032 as a result of the introduction of the three-year 0 to 5 teaching degree?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:10): Can I ask the deputy leader to repeat that question, if he will?

The SPEAKER: Would you mind repeating the question?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I am happy to, sir. I was asking whether the Premier or the minister can advise how many early childhood teachers will enter the system by 2032 as a result of the introduction of the three-year teaching degree for 0 to 5.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will take that on notice. It will depend, of course, largely on uptake as well. That will depend on how many people we can encourage to take up the course, and there is a lot of work that we are going to have to do to do that. What we have brought in place, or are in the process of bringing in place, is instead of the four-year degree that was birth to eight—which from memory I think only had about a 25 per cent focus on the birth to five years, or birth to four years—we are instead doing a birth to five degree, which will take three years.

So it is a shorter degree, which of course will help us in terms of getting people through that course. Of course, it will have a much bigger focus on those early years, which I think is really important, because one of the main reasons that we have announced the rollout of three-year-old preschool is that we know that if we are to get those levels of developmental vulnerability down—and we are at 23.8 per cent here in South Australia, which is above the national average—to 15 per cent by 2042, as was set out by the royal commissioner, three-year-old preschool will play a very important role in doing that, in our ability to make sure that we can build the workforce.

In terms of the specific question asked by the member for Morialta, how many we actually have on board by 2032 will in no small way depend on how successful we are in encouraging other people to take it up as a profession. As I said in my answer to the last question from the member for Morialta, it is a difficult environment in which to do that at the moment, when more so, I think, than ever before in our state's history there are job opportunities in a lot of areas.

A lot of that work is as well paid and a lot of it is better paid than it might be in the early years sector and probably doesn't come with some of the complexities and heartaches that that job does. But we know that people who work in the early years are incredibly committed people. They don't do it for money. They do it because they know they have an incredible ability in that job to influence the lives of young people.

We know that 90 per cent of the brain development of a young person is done by the age of five, and if we don't get that right it contributes significantly to those levels of developmental vulnerability, whether it be cognitive or language or social or emotional or physical. It means that when they sit down in their reception class on the first day they are already starting behind, and we are playing catch-up, essentially, for the rest of that child's time in their primary and secondary schooling.

That's why we are doing it. Part of the effectiveness of three-year-old preschool is that it is designed to be teacher-led play-based learning. That comes back to the member for Morialta's question around teachers, and of course attracting those early childhood teachers is a key thing. How many exactly we have by 2032 will be guided by how successful we are in putting things in place to encourage people to take it up, but the changes we have already made around changing from a four-year degree to a three-year degree will help that, and there will be more initiatives, I know, that Kim Little and her team are planning to announce around how we can attract that workforce and how we can retain it.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I would like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery today of Her Excellency Zin Mar Aung, the foreign minister to the National Unity Government of Myanmar. We welcome you to South Australia's parliament and we hope you enjoy Australia's quietest and calmest question time! Everyone is being very, very well behaved today. Her Excellency is the guest of the Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

Question Time

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:14): We welcome Her Excellency. All the journalists are in the budget lock-up, so that may affect things a little

bit. My question is to the Premier, or the minister if they prefer. What specific measures and practical actions will be delivered by the government's \$96 million funding announcement to grow the early childhood workforce? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The only measure announced in the press release within which the \$96 million announcement was contained was extra support for the Education Standards Board to increase the frequencies of assessments and ratings. Earlier in question time the minister referred also to the \$56 million fund that is in the department. The department's website identifies only that initiatives will support attraction, qualification pathways, retention and quality, but gives no detail at all about what measures or initiatives will be funded out of this large amount of money.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:15): I thank the member for Morialta for his question, and a fair question it is too. We will be announcing more things very soon around the specifics of what will come out of that bucket of money that the deputy leader just referred to, the \$96 million. There are going to be a lot of things, obviously, that we have to look at.

We are, of course, in an environment at the moment where other jurisdictions—Victoria is one that springs to mind, and others as well—have been offering some pretty significant incentives, financial incentives, to attract people across the border. I think, fortunately, we haven't been in a position where we have lost many of those from South Australia, but we will look at whether or not we need to do something like that as well to make sure that we can not just preserve our own workforce and grow the local workforce, which is what we have been focused on, but also potentially offer incentives for other early childhood teachers and workers who might want to actually come across to our state, to South Australia, and be part of what is a historic rollout—and in pretty quick time as well.

There has been some discussion in this place, and certainly nationally, about scholarships. We are trying to encourage people to potentially change career or take up a new career not long out of high school in an environment where cost of living is really front of mind for people. We still have systems in place, including in education and the early years, where the people who have sought to take up a course there have to undertake placements, often for quite considerable periods of time throughout the year. They are unpaid placements as well.

In addition to that, we are seeking people to potentially pay their way through their course, whether it is HECS or whatever it might be. In terms of early childhood workers, the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care has been and remains on the fee-free TAFE list, which of course helps with that, but I think we will need to consider what we do also around potentially looking at scholarships to cover course costs.

I don't think it is reasonable for us to expect that someone might be a more mature-aged worker—possibly with a family, with a mortgage—and we are asking them to go and get the qualifications they need to move career and work in an early childhood setting on three-year-old preschool but potentially take a pay cut, potentially do unpaid placements and potentially find the money to pay for a course up-front or pay the HECS debt later on.

So out of that \$96 million dollar fund—and, as I said, we will be making more specific announcements very soon around where that goes—there will be things like that that I think we have to consider to try to offer incentives for staff to stay, potentially offer incentives for those from outside of South Australia who might like to come to our state and be a part of it, but also offer what essentially is cost-of-living relief in some ways to bridge that gap in terms of what they need to spend to get the qualification they need to change career, and trying to assist those, too, who are trying to meet mortgage payments and all the usual family expenses while being asked to potentially go out and do unpaid placements.

It won't be long before I am able to give this place and the member for Morialta more specifics. The instructions that Kim Little, the chief executive, was given by cabinet were to make sure that a broad range of potential initiatives are considered, to do whatever we can to make sure

we keep our existing workforce and build it, and that we meet those targets put in place by Julia Gillard in her report.

HOPE VALLEY RESERVOIR TREE REPLANTING

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:19): My question is to the Minister for Housing, with responsibility for SA Water. Will the government invest in replanting trees at the Hope Valley Reservoir, replacing the nearly 1,000 trees that have been destroyed by giant pine scale, and will the government consider further improvements to make more of the site available for active and passive recreation?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (14:19): I thank the member for their question. It is obviously an issue of some contention in the community because of the trees dying off, and that has given the government some pause for thought to re-examine the walking trails, and so I will take that on notice and give the member an update.

But I have to say it is not walking trails that the government is most interested in when we look at water infrastructure: it is water infrastructure for housing. That is what occupies this government's thinking, not roaming around some reservoir somewhere in a pair of tight jeans and a puffer jacket, desperately trying to make yourself popular. Those sorts of projects don't obsess us. What obsesses us is providing funding for water and sewer pipes that might give the next generation a hope of the chance to buy their own house. I was only out at Angle Vale a couple of Sundays ago—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: You're auditioning for your next job as comedian, are you? So \$59 million for water and sewer infrastructure, but I was really stunned because one of the things we are upgrading there—you will like this and so you should listen to this—is a sewer pump that was put in in 2021. The previous government put in a sewer pump for 500 houses, even though they knew another 1,500 houses on top of that were going to be put in, and we now have to go back and upgrade a sewer pump that was put in in 2021. It is absolutely incredible.

The SPEAKER: The deputy leader on a point of order.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Standing order 98: the question related to trees, in addition to recreational facilities at the Hope Valley Reservoir, and my constituents are certainly interested to know whether the government will be replanting trees.

The SPEAKER: The minister, maybe if you could return to the question.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: As I said to the honourable member, you asked me about infrastructure on SA Water sites and I am just giving you a bit of an understanding that our priority is water infrastructure, water and sewer pipes for new housing. Your constituents would appreciate that because they are probably concerned about housing affordability and I am just giving them a bit of the window into the pressures that are on the system at the moment.

What we had—the previous government ignored infrastructure for housing, both water and sewer requirements. You released no land, you put no infrastructure in, you spent all your time doing these sorts of boutique projects which may be nice—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: —for people, but they are not essential to the challenges that this government faces in terms of housing.

The SPEAKER: Gee, the people from Myanmar have been gone three minutes and the place has gone to rack and ruin, it's noisy. Let's just go back to the nice quiet way we had it before.

MACKILLOP ELECTORATE ROAD SURVEY

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:23): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister advise if the iPAVe3 road survey across the MacKillop electorate was completed successfully and, if so, will the results be made public? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and the leave of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: The intelligent iPAVe assessment vehicle was supposed to spend three weeks assessing the quality of major roads in the South-East. It is my understanding that the vehicle broke down and was taken back to Queensland prior to it finishing its survey.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:23): I thank the member for his question. To clear something up, the vehicle was not relocated to Queensland because it broke down. So I think we can just clear that part up first.

We have contracted the National Transport Research Organisation to undertake sealed road network surveys of approximately 13,000 kilometres, to test pavement deflection with this state-of-the-art preventative assessment vehicle, iPAVe, for an approximate cost of \$2.2 million. It is an excellent investment, and I congratulate the previous minister on this initiative. He is someone who cares just as passionately as the rest of the crossbench about regional roads, and it is a great legacy that he has left regional communities with this work.

This vehicle enables the department to collect networkwide deflection data for the first time in our state's history. This data will enable our department to access pavement strength and improve the prioritisation of maintenance activities. As the member for Giles knows, nothing is more important than maintaining regional roads, especially in our industrial cities. In our industrial cities the arteries of those industrial cities are our road network. It is important that we keep these operational.

I can report that the majority of the road network in MacKillop was complete prior to the redeployment of this vehicle back to Queensland. The raw data from the full network survey will be completed in early 2025. It is a large network, with a lot of network to cover. The department undertakes robust data validation and quality checking to give confidence in the data accuracy before it is utilised in asset management and, importantly, decision-making. The advocacy of regional members here is going to be very, very vital because now we will be able to allocate funds on a needs basis, backed up with data, backed up with road assessment and backed up with the impact it is having on local communities, which is what members of parliament will provide.

I am very, very confident that the iPAVe program is working well. I do want to dispel the myth that it was returned because the vehicle broke down. That is simply not the case. I understand that there are some members who have mocked iPAVe. I think this is a good initiative, and I think it is an initiative that the state should be proud of. I want to thank the member for Stuart for the work that he did in making sure that iPAVe was deployed here in South Australia as part of the Malinauskas Labor government's commitment to regional roads.

JETTIES

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (14:27): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. How is the Malinauskas government working to protect South Australia's recreational jetties?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:27): This question is coming from a member who's got probably the best regional jetty in South Australia courtesy of the previous Weatherill government. Jetties are the lifeblood of local regional economies. I have to say they bring tourists, they bring joy, they connect communities, they connect neighbours, they help people get together, they create experiences that last a lifetime. I remember as a young boy catching my first ever fish off the Ceduna jetty. Jetties are something that are beloved in South Australia, indeed across all of Australia, but in South Australia there is a special connection between our jetties and local communities.

It is also equally clear that some councils have failed to keep up their end of the bargain on maintaining these jetties, and they have let their local communities down. These assets were divested to local communities in a state that was fit and proper, and it was expected that those local communities would maintain those jetties to a fit and proper standard and maintain them for their local communities. Alas, a lot of those councils have not done so and have let their local communities down, especially some councils that receive commonwealth funding to upgrade jetties and then move

that funding to other jetties within their community, which I found to be extraordinary. Because of this lack of investment—

Mr Telfer: Get the facts right.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Get the facts right?

Mr Telfer: Yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Stand up any time you like and move a privileges motion, if you like. Everything I am saying here is accurate.

Mr Telfer: No, it's not.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Then if you are going to accuse me of it not being accurate, get up and say something, or just sit quietly. Because of the lack of investment, the assets councils have been entrusted to maintain have been allowed to deteriorate and in some cases close. The people who suffer from this are their local communities. In the last budget, last year, this government was the first government to step up and put in regular money for maintenance and upgrade of jetties, jetties that we don't maintain and operate, jetties that are maintained and operated by councils. We put in \$20 million.

That funding was designed to address the immediate and critical concerns regarding the condition and sustainability of jetties to get them open and keep them open, and we are moving swiftly. In recent months, we have allocated more than \$10 million from our initial budget commitment to fast-track urgent repairs to help get closed facilities open again for the benefit of regional communities.

This week, the Treasurer has announced that the Jetties Renewal Program will be extended indefinitely. With the 2024-25 state budget providing an additional \$5 million boost from 2027-28, the commitment effectively locks in the initial \$20 million four-year SA Jetties Renewal Program in perpetuity to \$5 million each and every year going forward to keep our jetties open. This is in stark contrast to the previous government's policy on jetties, which was to keep their assessment and report on jetties secret and hidden. I say to members opposite: zero dollars were budgeted by those opposite to fix divested regional jetties—zero dollars. I think it is an indictment on them.

The good news is that the government wants to make sure that regional communities get to continue to enjoy their jetties. I also remind councils that have divested jetties that they have a legal obligation to maintain those jetties, and if they don't want to keep and maintain them, they have to return them to the state government in the condition in which they were received.

SA HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:31): My question is to the Premier. When did the Premier receive advice about the overdue maintenance backlog on South Australia's Housing Trust properties?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:31): The question was specifically to me. I thank the shadow minister for his question. The government has had a determined policy to address public housing maintenance backlog since we came to office. We made a number of commitments before we came to government around this policy, and we have been working as expeditiously as possible to be able to do that.

The former government established a program to have a new head contractor in terms of the arrangements of maintenance. That process was well and truly in train at the time of the state election and ultimately resulted in Spotless being appointed to do that work. Recent revelations in the media from *The Advertiser* have resulted in a degree of surprise in some quarters within the government.

Certainly, I think it's fair to say that when we learned of the size of the challenge that is currently being endured by some tradies—not all tradies, of course—in the system, that has invited a response from the government, and the shadow treasurer spoke to some of that yesterday. I am sure the minister can provide more detail about that if it is required.

SA HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:33): Supplementary: did the Premier receive a copy of the Auditor-General's annual report last year in which this issue was highlighted?

The SPEAKER: Have you got another question?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:33): Naturally, as the member would know, all reports from the Auditor-General are made available to all MPs and I am certainly no different.

SA HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:34): My question is to the Minister for Small and Family Business. Can the minister advise whether South Australian Housing Trust contractors have contacted the Small Business Commissioner about non-payment of invoices and, if so, when did the minister become aware?

The Hon. A. MICHAELS (Enfield—Minister for Small and Family Business, Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs, Minister for Arts) (14:34): I can't answer if the Small Business Commissioner has been contacted directly by those businesses. I know there was a media report, I think, on Monday which had some comments provided by the Small Business Commissioner that invited people to contact her if there were concerns in terms of payment issues with the head contractor. If there are any more details I am able to provide, I will happily do that.

SA HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:34): My question is to the Minister for Housing. Has the minister retained the prioritisation system for works associated with maintenance on South Australian Housing Trust properties? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr TELFER: It has been reported this week that ministerial requests for maintenance are deemed a higher priority than emergency work.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (14:35): The maintenance issue is a very important one. It was one of the first issues that I asked for a briefing on when I became the minister with the new department, and I am very keen to make sure that the performance of this maintenance contract improves. We all understand that the performance as outlined in *The Advertiser* is not acceptable. The government has made that very clear to both the South Australian Housing Authority and, indeed, to the contractors concerned.

As I understand it, the South Australian Housing Authority has applied abatements to that contract to make sure that the performance improves. In terms of the priorities, they remain exactly the same as they always have been. From time to time, there are inquiries from members of parliament on both sides of the house, and they are relayed to the South Australian Housing Authority. It doesn't change their priorities.

Members would know from their correspondence that sometimes they will write back outlining what has occurred. Sometimes that's a good letter for their constituent inquiry, other times it outlines that the South Australian Housing Authority has made the appropriate decision. So I don't intervene in these cases; I let the South Australian Housing Authority do its job, I let the contractors do their job. That's the only way the system can work. That's the way the government has always approached this issue, and that's what we will continue to do.

UPPER YORKE ROAD

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (14:36): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister confirm with the budget upcoming this afternoon that road funding announced in March by the former minister, the member for Stuart, for sections of the Upper Yorke Road will be sufficient to do a proper and long-lasting job?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:37): That is a good question, and I would like to thank the member for Narungga for his question and for his advocacy and, again, the former Minister for Regional Roads.

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sorry?

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia: I just asked a rhetorical question, minister.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Rhetorical? You're speaking to yourself—right. I am pleased to inform the member that early works have started on a \$42.5 million upgrade, which will improve safety along the Upper Yorke Road and improve safety for all road users, including local residents and the trucks that regularly use this road, especially during harvest. This is a community that has been in a safe Liberal seat for most of its time. They have an Independent member of parliament, who advocates for them independently of the Liberal Party, and they are receiving a large chunk of a \$162 million fund to improve road safety on the basis of need.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Those opposite can squeal all they like, but what we are seeing for the first time—what they are seeing for the first time—is regional roads being funded on the basis of need, not on the basis of how people vote, and this is a great win for the member for Narungga. This includes upgrading 35 kilometres—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The tears are like champagne. This roadwork includes upgrading the 35-kilometre stretch of the Upper Yorke Road from Kulpara to Arthurton through lane widening, shoulder sealing, audio tactile line markings, hazard removal and safety barriers. Congratulations to the member for Narungga. It is an exceptional win for him and his community.

This section of road has previously been identified as the worst grain road in 2022 and was in the RAA's Risky Roads survey as being a narrow road, with some sections of road being as narrow as 5.2 metres, and having poor quality road surface. The advocacy of the former regional roads minister and the advocacy of the member for Narungga has seen this regional road identified by a commonwealth Labor government and a state Labor government as being in need of repair and their local member of parliament putting the interests of his community first and going out and arguing for it.

In addition to this section, the government will also be upgrading the 25 kilometres of the Upper Yorke Road between Bute and Port Broughton. Both roads will be upgraded from a one-star rating to a three-star rating, which improves safety and productivity along the key north-south arterial road, which I am informed can see up to 200 heavy vehicles using it a day currently—a great win for the member for Narungga.

These works are being delivered as part of a \$168 million package to improve road safety, in particular in partnership with the Australian government, and to build up the previous \$9 million investment to upgrade the Upper Yorke Road from Maitland to Arthurton, which was delivered in 2022 under the leadership of the former Minister for Regional Roads, the member for Stuart.

This Labor government is improving our regional road network. We are working with the crossbench to improve regional communities and make sure they finally get the funding that they deserve in their regional communities, and it is because of the advocacy of Independent members of parliament that they are seeing real money going into their communities to upgrade their regional roads.

VAPING

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (14:40): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Can the minister update the house on state government initiatives to address the number of children and young South Australians who are vaping?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:41): Thank you to the member for Adelaide for her interest in this important matter and for my first question on health this week in the parliament. This is a very important issue for South Australians in terms of the increased use of vapes, otherwise known as e-cigarettes, in our community and the impact that is having on our community, on our children and particularly on our schools, which I know is something that the Minister for Education is particularly concerned about. This is something that we are particularly concerned about tackling as a government, which is why we are taking a range of initiatives to take this on headfirst.

The percentage of children in South Australia who have used vapes has significantly increased in the past few years. It has gone from 1 per cent to 8 per cent for those young people 15 to 29 using vapes in South Australia. Even more concerning, the Australian Secondary Students' Alcohol and Drug survey showed that more than a quarter of students in South Australia had used vapes, an increase of almost 9 per cent since 2017.

When these first came onto the market, we were told that they were not going to be attractive to kids and that they were just going to be used as smoking cessation devices, but the opposite has proven true: they are attractive to kids and kids are taking them up. Of course, they contain a bucketload of nicotine, which addicts children very quickly. There is much more nicotine in these vapes than what you would get through cigarettes. They also contain a whole range of other chemicals as well, from formaldehyde, which you would find in disinfectant, to mercury, arsenic, benzene, chlorine and so many other chemicals that will be part of these. Of course, there is nothing safe about having those chemicals inhaled into your lungs. The only thing safe that you should be putting into your lungs is air.

Of course, nicotine is incredibly addictive and the harm that it is having in terms of the addiction sweeping young people is having a big impact on families, teachers and schools. Just last week, we announced a new hard-hitting education and advocacy campaign that we are launching here in South Australia to take this issue on and to communicate directly with young people the harms of vapes, really targeting this at social media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube and Instagram where young people are, as well as outdoor and digital and radio communication.

The campaign showcases the voices of young people who have had firsthand experience with the harmful effects of vaping. It is targeted specifically at those 15 to 25 year olds who currently vape or who might be at risk of vaping in the future. It includes powerful testimonials from ex-vapers who share their real stories about vaping and also importantly quitting. A few of the quotes include:

Before I started vaping, I was a typically healthy young guy.

For me to suddenly have lung pain in my 20s, I really did think I was going to die.

I'd wake up with a super sore, scratchy throat.

I started getting chest pains.

I'm coughing black stuff into a tissue.

My lungs just felt like they were on fire.

These are testimonies from young people directly. Of course, this campaign has been launched alongside the work that we are doing with the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs about a new enforcement, which will be in part of today's state budget, to make sure that we can tackle the illegal trade of vapes but also of cigarettes, which is sadly making the availability a significant problem. As we support federal changes that will make vapes even harder to obtain, that enforcement is going to be absolutely necessary so that we can restrict those numbers getting worse and the impact on our kids getting worse in South Australia.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:45): My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. What is being done to improve staff and volunteer retention within the State Emergency Service? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr PEDERICK: Documents released under freedom of information show that 25 paid staff and 597 volunteers have left the organisation since early 2022.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (14:45): I thank the shadow minister for the question. We deeply appreciate and value our emergency services workers and volunteers in South Australia. They are essential to our community safety, most particularly over winter in terms of our flood, road crash rescue, fallen tree and other obstacle responses, and of course these are all hazards agencies so they are just some of the matters to which they will have to respond. Those of us who have regional communities are particularly grateful for the year-round service of our CFS volunteers but also over the bushfire season when we depend on their longstanding expertise.

In terms of volunteers over particular measuring periods—I am sure these are matters that the shadow minister will pursue with me in the course of the estimates process—in 2023-24 that financial year staff separations for the emergency services sector stand at 21 for SAFECOM, 28 for CFS, 15 for the SES, 62 for the MFS, for a total across the sector of 128. In terms of volunteers for the same period, the CFS recruited 1,220 volunteers and 824 separated for a net gain of 396, and for the SES there were 412 joining with 182 separations for a net gain of 230.

As I say, we are particularly grateful for the expertise, the deep expertise, of our paid and volunteer emergency service sector workers. We depend on their expertise. It is deep expertise. For example, with respect to the SES, there have been already 2,500 call-outs this year. There have been 43,000 volunteer hours put in in preparation for the coming winter and of course all hazards ahead. We look forward to exploring these matters with the shadow minister in the course of the estimates process.

FREELING CFS STATION

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:48): My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. Can the minister update the house on the status of the Freeling CFS Station upgrade? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: On 5 May last year the previous minister wrote to me saying, and I quote:

I have approved the acquisition of the land at 12 Clarke Street, Freeling for a new station.

Twelve months on, the volunteer brigade continues to train in a hay shed and without appropriate toilet facilities.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (14:48): I appreciate the question from the member for Frome. I know that she is raising a concern which of course is not only hers but exists in her community. We are committed to further investment at that particular site and examining those issues, but equally we are a government that is committed to examining the state of legacy assets right across the Country Fire Service.

You will know, member for Frome, that there are 425 South Australian Country Fire Service stations. Some of them have private spaces that can be accessed by members and others are adjacent to community facilities that can also be used. However, in many cases these are legacy assets; they are now operated by the CFS, but they were built by councils before being transferred to the state government through the 1990s. I understand in some cases there were conversations well before that time.

The pre-budget announcement that has been made by the Treasurer is to commit \$800,000 to look at the state of the facilities right across South Australia. In terms of Freeling, I anticipate this will be a matter that the member will also want to raise with me in estimates, and I look forward to that conversation. I also acknowledge your genuine and heartfelt interest in the subject. We will, of course, respond with the same faithfulness and ensure that you have all the information that you need in the estimates process.

DIGITAL POLICE STATION

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:50): My question is to the Minister for Police. Will the minister rule out the closure or reduction in opening hours of any physical police stations with the opening of the digital police station?

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (14:50): I appreciate the question from the shadow minister, the member for Flinders. There have been a number of pre-budget announcements in terms of law and order, and they are very important announcements. One, of course, is \$19 million to facilitate the ICT project leading to what has been described as a digital police station.

I note that Mark Carroll, the President of PASA, has indicated that this is a welcome project. He has also indicated that this is a project that might have been advanced some time ago, but wasn't. In any case, this is an investment that is now being brought forward. It is an investment that is intended to ensure that police officers are released for other duties. It is intended to ensure, for example, that reports to police in relation to collisions, that members of the public seeking assistance from police officers to complete, for example, freedom of information forms, insurance-related matters and other additional matters can be dealt with more efficiently.

It is certainly a very welcome development, and it is one I anticipate the shadow minister will want to explore with me as well in the estimates process. I am not advised that the digital police station is intended to replace or result in the shutdown of a physical police station. That is not its intention. The intention of this particular commitment is to ensure that up to 100 police and staff can be diverted to frontline services.

LIMESTONE COAST LOCAL HEALTH NETWORK

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (14:52): My question is to the Minister for Health. Has the recruitment process started for the replacement of Grant King, chair of our regional health board, who steps down in three weeks' time.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurana—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:52): Thank you very much to the member for Mount Gambier for his question and his significant interest in health on the Limestone Coast.

First, can I pay tribute to Grant King for his incredible service not only in terms of being the Limestone Coast Local Health Network inaugural chair but also more broadly across the Limestone Coast for the many, many facets in which he has provided exceptional leadership and hard work for the community. I was successful a year ago in convincing Mr King to extend his service as chair, but I was unsuccessful in convincing him to continue further. He has particular family commitments that mean the time required to be the chair, which is a really significant amount of time each week, was becoming too difficult, but he goes with our significant thanks for the work he has done.

Obviously, there is a process underway in terms of not just that board but also other boards across the state. We had a public call for nominations, for which a number of people put up their hands. These have been analysed and considered, and I have been taking advice, in particular from Grant King himself, in terms of the make-up we should have of the Limestone Coast Local Health Network board following his departure. Once we go through the appropriate cabinet processes, etc., I am expecting to have an announcement very shortly.

DOMESTIC, FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Ms CLANCY (Elder) (14:54): My question is to the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence. How is the government working to address the behaviour of those who perpetrate family, domestic and sexual violence?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:54): Thank you very much to the member for this really important question and for her ongoing enduring commitment to helping to prevent and end the horrific prevalence of domestic, family and sexual violence. Our government is absolutely committed to doing all that we can to help tackle the horror of domestic, family and sexual violence. A critical part of effectively intervening and

preventing violence is to provide support to perpetrators to recognise and change their attitudes and behaviour. Put simply, we need men to stop using violence in their relationships.

I am really proud that our state government is collaboratively working with the commonwealth government to invest in innovative perpetrator programs that help men to do so. Through the commonwealth Innovative Perpetrator Response program, South Australia is undertaking another three projects, utilising funding of up to \$3.4 million. We know that this work is urgent because, for every respectful relationship education program that we run, there are individuals and groups online promoting harmful attitudes towards women, individuals and groups that seek to undo our work towards change and that inflame misogyny.

I am proud to inform the house that this funding will be directed towards those three programs that will improve women's safety through helping boys and men to stop using abhorrent violence in their relationships. These projects include an additional mentoring component to complement the ongoing KIND program, which provides therapeutic intervention for adolescents who use violence in their relationships. Implementing a male mentor through the KIND program is intended to extend learning beyond the therapeutic sessions and integrate it into the community and home.

The two other funded projects include one led by OARS Community Transitions to research and inform the development of new technology to complement existing perpetrator services and allow for additional reinforcement of behaviour change and/or safety planning. The aim of this technology is to establish ongoing accountability for perpetrators. The other, led by KWY, is examining existing evidence-based practices for perpetrator response programs and evaluating their suitability for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. The study will seek to identify the most appropriate tools and to propose new approaches specifically tailored for this group.

These new trial programs sit alongside our other investment targeted towards perpetrator supports and services, programs which include the Domestic and Family Violence Perpetrator Response Program, which connects perpetrators to accommodation and supports to ensure survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence are provided with an opportunity to remain in their own home, where safe to do so.

The previous government sadly left this program with no ongoing funding beyond June 2022. Upon coming to government, we ensured the program ran for a further year, and in last year's budget guaranteed funding until June 2027. Additionally, this investment sits alongside our comprehensive legislative agenda, our new domestic violence prevention and recovery hubs that are providing specialist support and also our work with community to raise awareness about this terrible scourge and the role that everyone can play in tackling it. South Australia is also, of course, taking a significant step to ensure we have the full evidence base to drive the most effective change through our Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

SOUTH EASTERN FREEWAY

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley) (14:59): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. What does the minister say about recent comments coming from the SA Road Transport Association regarding the South Eastern Freeway? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Steve Shearer, Executive Director, South Australian Road Transport Association, told ABC radio recently, 'There's really just one other thing we are keen to see happen, which is still on the table, which is a third arrester bed.'

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:59): Nature abhors a vacuum, and given that there is one it is good to see a leader rise. I could be cheeky and just read back—something that I don't usually do—to my good friend the shadow minister for infrastructure and transport the comments of the former minister for infrastructure and transport the Hon. Stephan Knoll, who said that a third arrester bed wasn't a priority of the former government. I won't do that to my young friend, because I do have so much time for him.

What I would say to the shadow minister is that the South Eastern Freeway is getting a massive cash injection from the commonwealth and state governments through managed motorways and upgrades to the tunnels, of course, and we are implementing a whole series of changes to upgrade the South Eastern Freeway. The question really is: will a third arrester bed actually fix what the first and second fail to do?

The question is: if someone is coming down the freeway out of control well before the first arrester bed, then passes that first arrester bed with their truck out of control, then passes the second one with their truck out of control, what makes anyone think they are going to use the third?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: He must be really missing his leader. You didn't get invited to the wedding? Didn't get a gig? That's sad. We will be basing our investments on the South Eastern Freeway on evidence. The evidence that we received through the roundtable work is that the third arrester bed is something that would be, I think, nice to have, but I am not sure that it would actually fix the issues that we have.

A previous government built a continuous decline culminating in an intersection leading into suburbia, and no amount of arrester beds are going to fix the fact that there are trucks that use the South Eastern Freeway. No matter what bypasses exist at Truro, they are going to use the South Eastern Freeway because they are delivering freight and produce to the city of Adelaide. They are taking that produce backwards and forwards between the Adelaide Hills and the city, so the South Eastern Freeway is always going to have trucks on it.

I think people are sick and tired of members opposite pretending that there is going to be some plan in the future that will remove all trucks from the South Eastern Freeway, like GlobeLink. I think we are past GlobeLink. We are past GlobeLink, we are past the airport at Monarto, and we are past the pretence and the claims of what could occur on the South Eastern Freeway.

What I would say to my young friend is that I am giving him every opportunity to succeed. The parliament sat late last night. They were all here. He could have walked into that party room at any minute.

The SPEAKER: Minister, your time has expired.

SPEED CAMERAS

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley) (15:03): My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. How many of the new speed cameras will be installed in metro, and how many will be installed in regional areas?

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (15:03): I thank the member for his question, and I will undertake to seek advice from the department and return to the house.

Parliamentary Procedure

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:04): I move:

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 11am.

Motion carried.

BUDGET PAPERS

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:04): I lay on the table the following budget papers:

Budget 2024-25—

Paper 1—Budget Overview

Paper 2—Budget Speech
Paper 3—Budget Statement
Paper 4—Agency Statements—Volume 1
Paper 4—Agency Statements—Volume 2
Paper 4—Agency Statements—Volume 3
Paper 4—Agency Statements—Volume 4
Paper 5—Budget Measures Statement

I move:

That the Budget Statement, Agency Statements and Budget Measures Statement be published.

Motion carried.

Bills

APPROPRIATION BILL 2024

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:05): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act for the appropriation of money from the Consolidated Account for the year ending 30 June 2025 and for other purposes. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:05): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It gives me great pleasure to present to the house the 2024-25 state budget, the third budget delivered by the Malinauskas Labor government. Over the past year, our state's economy has been rated the best performing in the nation, our unemployment rate has fallen to a record low of 3.3 per cent, and even as it moderates, we still record the highest number of job vacancies in the state's history.

We have recorded the best economic growth rate of all states in two out of the last three years, and we have seen strong performance in dwelling starts and construction work done. Our exports have reached record levels and our tourism figures show more and more visitors are choosing our state as a destination, and many of them are coming here with capital looking to invest.

In its recent Defence Strategic Review, the commonwealth has confirmed our state's central role in defending our nation, as the home to decades of continuous shipbuilding at Osborne. Our state will be home to the construction of the nuclear-powered submarines and the Hunter class Future Frigates and will undertake the life-of-type extension to the existing Collins class submarines and refurbishment of the Hobart class destroyers. This is decades of complex manufacturing worth tens of billions of dollars and thousands of jobs to our economy.

Our global leadership in the clean energy transition offers the prospect for our state to again be at the forefront of renewables technology with hydrogen. Our established industries in the Upper Spencer Gulf and their proximity to magnetite resources and abundant renewable energy provide extraordinary opportunities in green iron and steel. As global industry races to decarbonise and electrify, our state's copper resources will play a pivotal role in meeting soaring global demand, meaning huge opportunities in our mining and extractive industries.

But as much as we celebrate the performance of our economy and the transformative developments that lie ahead of us, we must also recognise the challenges we must confront. Our nation's economy is cooling: the Reserve Bank's 13 cash rate increases in only 18 months have seen mortgage costs and rents soar, and while inflation has moderated, the cost of groceries, fuel, insurance and other staples remains high. Many South Australian households and small businesses are facing unprecedented cost-of-living pressures. Our housing market remains extremely challenging for those looking for a safe, secure and affordable home.

We continue to see increasing demand in our hospitals during the national GP shortage, and the lack of aged care and disability care places is stranding over 100 South Australians in hospital beds every day when they should be in more appropriate accommodation. To secure the full benefits that our future economy offers us, we need to rapidly improve the education and skills of our workforce. I am pleased to report to the house this year's budget invests to secure our state's future and also meets the challenges that confront us today.

Once again, the Malinauskas Labor government will support those most in need in our community. The budget provides \$266.2 million in cost-of-living relief to families, to those on low and fixed incomes and in support for small businesses. The budget provides \$51.5 million in 2023-24 for an additional once-off Cost of Living Concession payment of \$243.90 to all recipients who received the concession payment this financial year. This will provide extra support to more than 210,000 households right at the beginning of winter, when the cost of heating their homes increases.

Further to this, \$36.6 million over four years is provided to double the Cost of Living Concession for around 73,000 tenants and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders so that it is the same value as the concession is for homeowners. These tenants and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders currently receive only half the concession of homeowners; the doubling of the concession and the additional once-off payment together will see them receive \$371.70 in extra support over the next three months.

For families with children, the budget provides \$54.6 million over four years to expand the Sports Vouchers program by doubling the number of vouchers from one to two per child each year, and, for the first time, vouchers can be used for music lessons. This measure will reduce the cost of eligible activities for around 100,000 children each year. The budget also provides \$24 million in 2024-25 to deliver a \$200 reduction to the school materials and services charge for the 2025 school year, a significant saving on the fees for parents of up to 120,000 public school students. A family with two school-age children will benefit by \$600 from these changes.

The budget provides \$14.1 million over four years to improve access to a range of concessions for those vulnerable South Australians restricted from accessing the concessions available to many others. These measures will benefit tenants in share houses, including those in disability accommodation, will expand access to subsidised eye glasses, emergency electricity payments and also to funeral concessions. In addition, Companion Card holders will be provided improved access to Changing Places facilities, and there have been improvements in the home dialysis concession and in access to concessions for asylum seekers.

The government is also extending public transport concessions to all Health Care Card holders at a cost of \$10.6 million over four years. These changes will see increased financial support for approximately 36,000 South Australians and follows an extensive review of the state's concession system by the Department for Human Services and the South Australian Council of Social Service.

In partnership with the commonwealth, the government is providing \$35.8 million over three years for a social housing energy upgrade initiative to replace power-hungry appliances and improve the energy efficiency of homes to deliver cost savings to tenants in both public and community housing sectors, upgrading approximately 3,500 homes.

This government is not only looking after individuals needing cost-of-living relief but also our small business operators. The budget allocates \$20 million for the second round of the Economic Recovery Fund to support up to 8,000 eligible small businesses and not-for-profit organisations to invest in energy efficient equipment or other improvements to reduce and manage their energy bills going forward.

Grants ranging from \$2,500 to a maximum of \$50,000, with a matching contribution by the applicant, will be available on a first-come, first-served basis until the funding allocation has been exhausted. Applications for round 2 will open in August 2024, with further details on key eligibility criteria to be released shortly. While last year's budget supported small businesses with time-limited support, we are pleased that this year's budget will help thousands of businesses lock in cost savings for years to come.

The government will also exempt from payroll tax general practitioner wages related to bulk billed services from 1 July this year. The exemption provides an incentive for general practitioners to bulk bill patients and complements the commonwealth's tripling of the bulk-billing incentive and significant reductions in the costs of medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

The budget has again no new taxes, with the indexation rate for government fees and charges limited to 3 per cent in 2024-25, well below the rate of inflation, and vehicle owners will continue to benefit from the former Labor government's reforms to the competitive compulsory third-party insurance scheme, lowering average CTP premiums yet again for motorists.

Our state's housing market continues to make it difficult for many South Australians to access safe and affordable housing, with both house prices and rents continuing to increase as supply fails to keep pace with demand. The government remains committed to doing everything it can to ensure South Australians do not have to give up on the dream of home ownership. This year's budget allocates a further \$843.6 million to boost supply and improve affordability.

Last year, the Malinauskas government abolished stamp duty for first-home buyers buying land to build a new home, up to a property value cap of \$400,000, or buying a newly-built home, up to a property value cap of \$650,000. In the space of a year, the median house price has continued to soar, reaching \$745,000 in Adelaide and \$665,000 across the state. From today, the government has removed the value caps on new home and vacant land contracts for stamp duty relief, as well as the value cap for the First Home Owner Grant.

Importantly, targeting our relief to new homes incentivises more being built, contributing to much-needed supply. While some believe stamp duty relief and the First Home Owner Grant should go to the purchase of existing homes, we know that in practice this drives up the prices to benefit vendors, not first-home buyers, and does nothing to boost supply.

Over the next 12 years, \$576 million will be used to redevelop South Australian Housing Authority land at Seaton, estimated to deliver 1,315 homes, including rebuilding 388 public housing homes and delivering an additional 197 affordable homes. The funding will also be used to redevelop government sites at Noarlunga Downs, estimated to deliver an additional 626 dwellings, including 80 social and 90 affordable homes.

In addition to this funding, the budget provides \$135.8 million over five years to build around 442 additional social housing homes by 30 June 2028, funded from the commonwealth government's Social Housing Accelerator payment. A further \$30 million over three years will support the Office for Regional Housing in Renewal SA and develop more regional housing in partnership with regional communities and their local governments. The budget also provides an extra \$5 million over three years to extend the Aspire homelessness program, in partnership with the Hutt St Centre, benefitting 264 homeless South Australians.

Last year, the government received the final report from the Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care, led by former Prime Minister the Hon. Julia Gillard, setting out the recommended pathway for the government to deliver its election commitment to introduce 15 hours per week of preschool for three year olds across our state. Make no mistake, this endeavour is the greatest reform to our education system in the state's history, getting our kids into formal education in their formative years, and tackling the developmental challenges experienced by one quarter of all preschool children.

This budget is the start of a \$1.9 billion investment in early childhood education between now and 2032-33, with \$715 million provided over the forward estimates to begin the phased introduction of universal preschool for three year olds across both government and non-government providers. The funding includes \$339.7 million over five years to start the delivery of preschool for three year olds from 2026 as promised, with both government and non-government providers, including long day-care centres commencing a staged rollout in selected regional and metropolitan locations. The staged rollout will continue until all three year olds across the state can access the minimum entitlement of 15 hours of preschool by 2032.

A further \$127.3 million over four years is provided for more hours of preschool and supports for children most in need: \$96.6 million over four years to grow and support the early childhood

workforce and \$30.6 million over four years to align the supports offered to four year olds in preschool, with the enhanced support being developed for three year olds. A staged rollout of this generational reform over seven years is required in order to build the workforce and infrastructure needed to expand high-quality early years educational services across the state in a similar approach to how the reform has been staged in other jurisdictions.

This budget also builds greater capacity in our existing school system, with \$155.3 million over five years to construct a new secondary school in the northern suburbs, adding 1,300 places for students, and \$62.7 million over four years for the construction of a new preschool and primary school in Mount Barker, adding 100 preschool places and 350 primary school places.

As I outlined earlier, our state has a prosperous future ahead. To ensure our state reaps the full rewards from the generational developments in our economy in naval shipbuilding, clean energy, green manufacturing and mining, we must ensure we have a far more highly skilled workforce. The budget delivers a record \$2.3 billion investment over five years, in partnership with the commonwealth, to meet this skills challenge.

This represents a \$692.6 million—or 43 per cent—increase in skills and training funding, to support TAFE SA, not-for-profits and non-government training providers meet the challenge of skilling our workforce. This will deliver over 160,000 training places in the areas of defence, health, building and construction, early childhood education, clean energy transition and information technologies. This also includes a 20 per cent increase in TAFE SA places across regional South Australia. The funding importantly also provides \$56.2 million to support students in their training and increase completion rates. This includes additional wellbeing and financial support, greater access to career and course information and foundation skills programs.

Our state's reputation for holding major events, and the records being set in our tourism and hospitality industries, have contributed to the strong performance of our economy. To build on this momentum, \$20.8 million is provided to increase marketing of our state to both interstate and overseas markets, and \$14 million over four years to expand the business events fund, specifically to boost visitation in the winter months. To build our state's presence internationally, \$6.8 million over four years is allocated to increase Defence SA's presence at major national and international exhibitions, and to increase supply chain involvement of South Australian businesses in defence and AUKUS projects.

A further \$6 million over four years to expand investment attraction activities and trade programs is allocated, along with \$4.3 million over four years for Brand SA to promote South Australian products and businesses. The South Australian Business Chamber's South Australian Young Entrepreneurs Scheme is supported, with \$380,000 over two years.

Our budget also continues our record investment in our health system, providing an additional \$2.5 billion over five years, bringing our additional investment to \$7.1 billion over our first three budgets. We are ensuring our health system has the resources it needs to deliver the health services our community relies on. The budget allocates \$1.6 billion over five years to meet the higher costs of service delivery across SA Health, in part due to new higher national efficient price levels gazetted by the commonwealth, and to support SA Health as it strives to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its services.

A further \$742.3 million is allocated over five years to meet higher activity demand pressures in the public health system. The budget also includes \$30.2 million to deliver an additional 20 general inpatient beds at the Lyell McEwin Hospital, and 36 additional surgical and general inpatient beds at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. This will bring the total number of beds commissioned by this government to more than 600 and, by the end of next year, over 300 of these will have been delivered—the equivalent of an entire additional Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

In mental health, new funding of \$5 million is allocated over four years to fund a range of programs to support youth mental health services, while the government continues delivering mental health support services, including 108 additional mental health beds funded in its first two budgets at a cost of \$214 million.

Keeping the community safe is a fundamental responsibility for any government, and this budget maintains this government's commitment. I am pleased to report to the house the budget contains the largest investment in prison capacity in our state's history. \$205.7 million is allocated over four years to construct 312 high-security beds at Yatala Labour Prison, and a further \$21 million over two years to construct 40 additional residential beds at Adelaide Women's Prison.

The budget also starts the work of investing in post-release accommodation for prisoners preparing to re-enter the community, with \$3.4 million over four years to repurpose the former juvenile detention centre at Cavan to provide accommodation support services for 36 prisoners preparing to re-enter the community.

The budget also continues the work of investing more in our police force. Last year, the government funded the recruitment of 189 police security officers to take on roles to free up sworn officers for frontline duties. This year, \$36.7 million is allocated over the next four years for a suite of initiatives to continue this work, and allow the equivalent of a further 102 sworn officers and staff to be reallocated from administrative and back-office roles onto the frontline.

An amount of \$19 million over four years will fund a digital police station initiative, a new online system which will provide a range of services to the public currently only available by visiting a police station, and \$9.3 million over four years is allocated to recruit civilian staff to various administrative and back-office positions to release, again, sworn officers into priority operational policing duties. A further \$8.5 million over four years will accelerate the delivery of a new telephone resolution desk, employing 31 administrative call takers to reduce SA Police attendance at non-emergency incidents, without compromising public safety or service delivery standards.

This year's budget also sees the largest ever infrastructure program deployed in our state, with \$25.6 billion invested over the next four years. This includes \$7 billion towards the River Torrens to Darlington section of the north-south corridor, and \$1.7 billion towards the new Women's and Children's Hospital.

Road projects supported in the budget include \$200 million over three years to improve safety and traffic management between the Tollgate and Crafers on the South Eastern Freeway, and a further \$150 million over four years to upgrade two interchanges with the freeway at Mount Barker and Verdun. An \$80.1 million road safety package over four years includes an extra \$35 million for key road maintenance upgrades; \$38.7 million for further road safety cameras, including at key push-button pedestrian crossings; and \$2.6 million to reduce speed limits at priority locations on arterial roads next to our schools.

In the arts the budget provides \$20.7 million over five years to establish an arts investment fund to drive targeted investment in strategic initiatives across South Australia's arts, culture and creative industries, as well as \$19 million over three years for new accommodation for the State Theatre Company, the State Opera and Country Arts South Australia.

In sport and recreation facilities, \$83.1 million over four years will be invested to redevelop the Netball SA stadium at Mile End, \$20 million will be contributed to the redevelopment of the Lyndoch Recreation Park in conjunction with the local council and \$5 million will be provided from 2027-28 to continue partnering with councils to maintain and repair the state's jetties.

To support our primary industries, there is a further \$43 million over two years to respond to fruit fly outbreaks across the Riverland and metropolitan Adelaide, and \$24.4 million over five years to reduce agricultural emissions through supporting the sector and its take-up of low emissions intensity farming systems.

To continue to support communities across our regions, \$4.4 million over four years is provided to support the rural financial counselling and family and business support mentors programs. More broadly across the regions the budget provides a range of new measures across portfolios, including:

- \$31.8 million for the construction of three overtaking lanes on Main South Road between Normanville and Cape Jervis;

- \$20 million towards planning transport network improvements to support the Riverland following the River Murray flood event;
- \$18 million to construct a new purpose-built police station at Naracoorte;
- \$11.5 million to support the Port Pirie emergency department upgrade; and
- \$4.3 million to build a new integrated cancer consult suite at the Mount Gambier Hospital.

The budget provides a significant boost to environment and conservation funding, including a further \$20.6 million next financial year to protect our beaches, including \$14.3 million to commence restoring West Beach and evaluate long-term sand recycling options, and \$6.4 million to enable the continued replenishment of sand at West Beach and other Adelaide coastal areas.

In addition, \$30 million is allocated to protect and conserve our iconic natural places and enhance the visitor experiences in our national parks. The government is also providing \$16.4 million in additional support to the RSPCA to provide compliance activities, welfare assessments and assist in the enforcement of animal welfare provisions.

Our state's strong economy has seen state taxation revenues revised up by \$357 million in 2023-24 since the Mid-Year Budget Review and by a further \$1.1 billion over the period 2024-25 to 2026-27, mainly due to higher forecast collections from payroll tax, stamp duty and land taxes. Further, stronger national GST collections in the current financial year and changes to South Australia's share of GST revenue since the Mid-Year Budget Review mean GST grant revenues have been revised up by \$162 million this year and by \$635 million over the period 2024-25 to 2026-27.

While the government has benefited from strong revenue collections from robust economic performance, those revenues have allowed us to get the budget back into surplus, reduce taxes, increase funding in key areas, and invest more in infrastructure.

The 2024-25 budget outlines the government's second surplus, and projects surpluses across the forward estimates. As I have advised the house previously, these surpluses are important to provide a buffer in case of lower economic growth or to provide greater support to the community.

At the end of the current financial year, non-financial public sector net debt is projected to be \$3.6 billion lower than what had been forecast by the previous government, and the key debt affordability metric, the net debt to revenue ratio, is more than 28 percentage points lower than what had been forecast.

As a result of the budget's record \$25.6 billion infrastructure program, non-financial public sector net debt is forecast to increase by \$16.3 billion over the forward estimates, reaching \$44.2 billion as at 30 June 2028, but with a net debt to revenue ratio of 131.8 per cent, only 2.2 percentage points higher than what had been forecast by the previous government.

It takes an enormous effort to put a state budget together, and I would like to thank those who have contributed so much and been an enormous support over recent months. First, to my wife, Antonia, and our children, Ben, Isaac and Olivia—your unfailing support and love allows me to do this work and I cannot tell you how grateful I am to you all.

To the Premier and my ministerial colleagues, I am very grateful for your support and input during the budget process, and I also thank my caucus colleagues for their ongoing support. To my ministerial office, led by Chief of Staff, John Atkinson, thank you for your unstinting work and diligence over these past months.

And as always, I thank the unfailing dedication of the Department of Treasury and Finance, particularly the Under Treasurer, Rick Persse, and Deputy Under Treasurer, Tammie Pribanic, as well as Acting Executive Director, Budget and Performance, Sandy Burness, and all of those throughout the department who contribute so much throughout the budget process.

This year's budget puts more money in the pockets of those doing it toughest, it ensures more South Australians can afford a roof over their head, it gives our children the best start in life, and it prepares our workforce for the jobs of the future. It provides record levels of funding for our hospitals and builds more capacity in our prisons and in our police force. It is a budget that sets our

state on the path for a more prosperous future, and it does so while keeping the budget in surplus and our debt levels sustainable.

I commend the budget to the house. I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

1—Short title

This clause is formal.

2—Commencement

This clause provides for the Bill to operate retrospectively to 1 July 2024. Until the Bill is passed, expenditure is financed from appropriation authority provided by the *Supply Act*.

3—Interpretation

This clause provides relevant definitions.

4—Issue and application of money

This clause provides for the issue and application of the sums shown in Schedule 1 to the Bill. Subclause (2) makes it clear that the appropriation authority provided by the *Supply Act* is superseded by this Bill.

5—Application of money if functions or duties of agency are transferred

This clause is designed to ensure that where Parliament has appropriated funds to an agency to enable it to carry out particular functions or duties and those functions or duties become the responsibility of another agency, the funds may be used by the responsible agency in accordance with Parliament's original intentions without further appropriation.

6—Expenditure from Hospitals Fund

This clause provides authority for the Treasurer to issue and apply money from the Hospitals Fund for the provision of facilities in public hospitals.

7—Additional appropriation under other Acts

This clause makes it clear that appropriation authority provided by this Bill is additional to authority provided in other Acts of Parliament, except, of course, in the *Supply Act*.

8—Overdraft limit

This clause sets a limit of \$150 million on the amount which the Government may borrow by way of overdraft.

Schedule 1—Amounts proposed to be expended from the Consolidated Account during the financial year ending 30 June 2025

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. J.A.W. Gardner.

Parliamentary Procedure

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:34): I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable me to introduce a bill forthwith.

The SPEAKER: I have counted the house and there being present an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the house, I accept the motion.

Motion carried.

Bills

STATUTES AMENDMENT (BUDGET MEASURES) BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:35): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the First Home and

Housing Construction Grants Act 2000, the Mining Act 1971, the National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996, the Payroll Tax Act 2009, the Stamp Duties Act 1923 and the Mining Regulations 2020. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:35): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to insert the second reading explanation of clauses in *Hansard* without reading it.

Leave granted.

The 2024-25 Budget continues the government's investment towards a world class health system, implementing education sector reforms, increasing the supply of affordable housing, reducing cost of living pressures, and maintaining efficient public services.

The Bill contains amendments to relevant legislation to implement measures announced in the 2024-25 Budget and other administrative amendments, including:

- Removing the property value stamp duty thresholds for eligible first home buyers on the purchase of a new home or vacant land for contracts entered into on or after 6 June 2024;
- Removing the property value cap of \$650,000 for the First Home Owner Grant for eligible contracts entered into on or after 6 June 2024; and
- An exemption from payroll tax on the wages of general practitioners related to bulk billed services.

Mr Speaker, I turn now to a more specific discussion of the detail of these important amendments.

First Home and Housing Construction Grants Act 2000

- The Bill amends the First Home and Housing Construction Grants Act 2000 to remove the property value cap of \$650,000 for eligibility for the \$15,000 First Home Owner Grant for contracts entered into on or after 6 June 2024.
- Eligibility for the First Home Owner Grant is also being removed for individuals who own, or have owned, a residential investment property, ensuring access to the grant is limited to those who are genuinely purchasing their first property.

Mining Act 1971

- The Bill amends section 17 of the Mining Act 1971 to enable the Treasurer to determine the market value of minerals sold pursuant to a contract with a genuine purchaser at arm's length, for the purposes of determining royalty, in circumstances where the Treasurer is not satisfied that the contract price reflects the market price of the minerals. Section 17(6) provides for the market value of the minerals to be determined according to a market index price in a relevant industry market recognised by the Treasurer, a price obtained for comparable sales or other prescribed methods.
- The Bill also amends section 56M of the Mining Act 1971 to gradually restrict future eligibility for landowner rental distributions, consistent with practices adopted in other jurisdictions. Where an application for a mining lease, retention lease or miscellaneous purposes licence is made on or after 1 July 2025, a freehold landowner with an interest in land over which the mineral tenement is granted will not be eligible to receive a rental distribution in relation to that parcel of land.
- Further to this, where a freehold landowner's interest in land over which a mineral tenement is granted is transferred on or after 1 July 2026, the new freehold landowner will be eligible to receive 50% of their original rental distribution entitlement in relation to that parcel of land. Land subject to transmissions associated with deceased estates and transfers where a familial relationship exists will continue to be eligible to receive 100% of the original rental entitlement. The entitlement of freehold landowners under section 56M in respect to existing mineral tenements will not otherwise be impacted by the amendments.

National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996

- The Bill amends the National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996 to enable the Governor to establish a scheme by regulation for the purposes of providing adequate long duration dispatchable electricity capacity to ensure secure, reliable and affordable electricity supply for the State.
- The scheme is intended to incentivise the availability of new and existing long duration dispatchable capacity to support reliability during reliability events, such as maximum demand periods, periods of low variable renewable energy resource availability and disruptions to interconnector flows from other

jurisdictions in the National Electricity Market. The required amount of capacity to manage risks to energy reliability in South Australia will be determined under the new electricity planning and forecast functions of the Office of the Technical Regulator.

- Regulations made pursuant to section 15B may make provision for (without limitation), the establishment of bodies and appointment of persons to perform functions in respect of the scheme, the imposition of duties and obligations on market participants, including to provide or procure capacity, and the making of financial contributions and the recovery of costs in respect of the scheme.

Payroll Tax Act 2009

- This Bill amends the Payroll Tax Act 2009 to allow for an exemption from payroll tax on the wages of general practitioners related to bulk billed services from 1 July 2024. The exemption is designed as an incentive for general practitioners to bulk bill patients.
- The exemption only applies to the relevant wages of a general practitioner, it does not apply to the wages of any other employees within a medical practice.
- Subject to the passage of the Bill, the Government will introduce regulations under the Payroll Tax Act 2009 providing for the exemption to be calculated based on the proportion of bulk billed items relative to the total number of billed items provided by those general practitioners engaged in a medical practice as an employee or contractor. This percentage deduction will then be applied against the medical practices' total annual general practitioners' wages bill. The regulation will apply from 1 July 2024.
- In addition, the Bill makes amendments to allow for an existing amnesty on certain wages paid to general practitioners and other health service providers, which expires on 30 June 2024, to be included in regulations.
- This will provide greater certainty to taxpayers and remove the requirement to provide a range of historic wage information to determine the level of ex gratia relief to be provided through the amnesty if it is not legislated. This will deliver administrative benefits for the parties that took part in the amnesty.

Stamp Duties Act 1923

- This Bill expands stamp duty relief for eligible first home buyers who enter into a contract to purchase a new home or vacant land to build a new home, on or after 6 June 2024.
- Stamp duty property value thresholds for eligible first home buyers will be removed for the purchase of an eligible new home or vacant land to build a new home.
- Eligibility for stamp duty relief will also be removed for individuals who own, or have owned, a residential investment property, to target relief to those who are genuinely purchasing their first property. This is consistent with the proposed eligibility criteria for the First Home Owner Grant.
- When combined with the First Home Owner Grant, an eligible first home buyer could now receive total relief of over \$50,000 on the purchase of a new property valued at \$750,000 (broadly in line with the current median house value).

Mining Regulations 2020

- This Bill amends references in the Mining Regulations 2020 which are consequential to amendments made above to the Mining Act 1971.

Mr Speaker, the 2024-25 Budget seeks to support the immediate challenges facing many South Australians by providing targeted cost of living relief to families, those on low incomes and to small business, continues to invest in important social services and infrastructure, and importantly looks to the future by commencing generational reform in early childhood education while doing so in a fiscally sustainable manner, with no new taxes, tax increases or savings imposed on agencies. The measures contained in this Bill support the key priorities of this government.

I commend this Bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *First Home and Housing Construction Grants Act 2000*

3—Amendment of section 7—Entitlement to grants

This clause amends section 7 of the *First Home and Housing Construction Grants Act 2000* so that the first home owner grant is payable regardless of the market value of the home to which the eligible transaction relates if the commencement date of the transaction is on or after 6 June 2024. Currently, the grant is not payable if the market value exceeds \$650,000.

It also clarifies that the regulations may prescribe a cap on market value in respect of an eligible transaction with a commencement date within a prescribed period or otherwise which would mean no first home owner grant would be payable in relation to such a transaction if the value of the home exceeds that cap.

4—Amendment of section 11—Criterion 4—Applicant (or applicant's spouse etc) must not have had relevant interest in residential property

This clause amends section 11 of the *First Home and Housing Construction Grants Act 2000* to provide that, if the commencement date of the eligible transaction is on or after the day on which this section comes into operation, any interest held or previously held in residential property in the State or another State or Territory by the applicant or the applicant's spouse or domestic partner precludes the applicant from receiving the first home owner grant irrespective of whether the person who held the interest resided in the property continuously for at least 6 months.

Part 3—Amendment of *Mining Act 1971*

5—Amendment of section 17—Royalty

This clause substitutes subsections (5) and (6) and recasts them to clarify the manner in which the value of minerals for the purposes of determining royalty in the section is to be determined. Proposed subsection (5) provides that the value of minerals, for the purposes of determining royalty, will be the value that represents the market value (excluding GST) of the minerals on—

- in the case of minerals sold pursuant to a contract with a genuine purchaser at arms length—the day on which ownership of the minerals is transferred to the purchaser; and
- in any other case—the day on which—
 - the minerals leave the mineral tenement from which the minerals were recovered or are used on the tenement; or
 - if the minerals have been transported to mineral land the subject of a miscellaneous purposes licence—the minerals leave that mineral land or are used on that mineral land,

whichever occurs later.

The market value of the minerals for the purposes of proposed subsection (5), if the minerals are sold pursuant to a contract with a genuine purchaser at arms length, will be the contract price for the minerals. In circumstances where there is no contract price for the minerals, proposed subsection (6) sets out the manner in which the market value of minerals is to be determined in various circumstances.

6—Amendment of section 17B—Assessments by Treasurer

This clause makes a consequential amendment.

7—Amendment of section 56M—Rental

Subclauses (1) and (2) make consequential amendments. Subclause (3) inserts new provisions limiting the distribution of rental to a registered proprietor of land over which a tenement is held as is currently provided for in the section as follows:

- proposed subsection (9a) prevents any distribution of rental in accordance with subsections (4) to (8) if the tenement to which the section applies was made on or after 1 July 2025;
- proposed subsection (9b) provides that for the purposes of subsection (4), if a relevant interest in a parcel of land over which a mineral tenement is granted has been transferred (other than by reason of the registered proprietor being deceased or where the Minister is satisfied that a familial relationship exists between the transferor and transferee) on or after 1 July 2026, the net amount available for distribution under that subsection in respect of that parcel of land will be taken to be 50% of the amount remaining after deduction of 5% of the amount payable to the Minister;
- proposed subsection (9c) defines the circumstances in which a familial relationship will exist between a transferor and a transferee for the purposes of proposed subsection (9b);
- proposed subsection (9d) provides the Minister with the power to require, by written notice, that a person provide such information or evidence as the Minister may require for the purposes of considering whether a familial relationship exists, including a requirement that information or evidence be given on oath or verified by statutory declaration.

Subclause (4) inserts a new subsection (11) that defines certain terms used in proposed subsections (9a) to (9d).

8—Transitional provisions

This clause contains transitional provisions consequent on the amendments in clauses 5 and 6.

Part 4—Amendment of *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996*

9—Insertion of section 15B

This clause inserts new section 15B into the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996* as follows:

15B—Regulation-making power for purposes of scheme and fund in relation to electricity capacity

This section enables regulations to be made to establish a scheme or a fund (or both) for the purposes of providing long duration dispatchable electricity capacity to ensure secure, reliable and affordable electricity supply for the State.

Part 5—Amendment of *Payroll Tax Act 2009*

10—Amendment of Schedule 2—South Australia specific provisions

This clause inserts new clauses 17B and 17C into Schedule 2 of the *Payroll Tax Act 2009* as follows:

17B—General practitioners—bulk billed services

This clause allows the regulations to, in relation to bulk billed services, declare a percentage of wages paid or payable to general practitioners engaged by a medical practice that provides bulk billed services to be exempt wages.

The clause allows the regulations to modify or exclude the application of the Act in relation to such exempt wages.

Regulations made for the purposes of the clause may operate in respect of the financial year commencing on 1 July 2024 or any subsequent financial year.

17C—Other exemptions for previous financial years

This clause allows the regulations to declare wages, or a percentage of wages, paid or payable in circumstances prescribed by the regulations to be exempt wages.

The clause allows the regulations to modify or exclude the application of the Act in relation to such exempt wages.

Regulations made for the purposes of the clause may operate in respect of 1 or more financial years that commenced before the commencement of the regulations.

Part 6—Amendment of *Stamp Duties Act 1923*

11—Amendment of section 71DD—Relief from duty in respect of certain purchases of new homes and land

This clause amends section 71DD of the *Stamp Duties Act 1923* as follows:

- by providing that no duty is payable if the contract for the conveyance or transfer of a new home or vacant land on which a home is to be built was entered into on or after 6 June 2024;
- by providing that, if the commencement date of the relevant contract is on or after the day on which this Act is assented to by the Governor, a purchaser does not qualify for relief under the section if a purchaser under the contract, or a spouse or domestic partner of a purchaser under the contract, held an interest in residential property in the State or another State irrespective of whether the person who held the interest resided in the property continuously for at least 6 months;
- by providing that a person is eligible for relief under the section regardless of the market value of the new home or vacant land if the contract for the conveyance or transfer was entered into on or after 6 June 2024;
- by stating that the section does not apply to a contract entered into on or after 6 June 2024 that replaces a contract entered into before that date for the same new home or vacant land;
- by allowing the Commissioner to determine that a contract for a conveyance or transfer entered into on or after 6 June 2024 that replaces a contract entered into before that date for the same new home or vacant land is eligible for the relief under the section that would have applied if the original contract had not been replaced;
- by providing that the section does not operate to provide relief from the foreign ownership surcharge (within the meaning of section 72) payable on a contract for the conveyance or transfer of a new home or vacant land on which a home is to be built that is entered into on or after the day on which this Act is assented to by the Governor.

Part 7—Amendment of *Mining Regulations 2020*

12—Amendment of regulation 10—Prescribed information to accompany tenement holder's estimate of value of minerals

This clause amends references in this regulation consequential on the amendments in clauses 5 and 6.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. J.A.W. Gardner.

Adjournment Debate

GIANT PINE SCALE

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:36):

During question time today I put a very serious and straightforward question to the Minister for Housing Infrastructure who now has responsibility for SA Water. I put this question in relation to the trees that have been taken by the blight of giant pine scale.

Nearly 1,000 trees at the Hope Valley Reservoir, at Elliston Reserve and in the Highbury aqueduct land in Highbury have been infected by giant pine scale, chipped up, destroyed, to ensure that our forestry industry can be protected—an industry worth hundreds of millions of dollars to this state, largely in the South-East but also closer to the metropolitan area and in other regions in South Australia. It was important to get on top of the giant pine scale blight—a significant economic issue for South Australia; also, a significant environmental issue for South Australia. We do not want giant pine scale to become endemic to our state. We want to eradicate it. We want to get on top of it. It is a serious economic issue, also a serious environmental issue for our local area.

One thousand trees at a site like Hope Valley Reservoir or in Highbury in the aqueduct or Elliston Reserve are noticed when they are gone. It was a verdant and beautiful landscape with a thousand trees on it—in fact, many more than that. But the removal of a thousand trees has had a massive impact on the beauty of Hope Valley Reservoir. It has turned Elliston Reserve into a dust bowl that Tea Tree Gully council has done its best to deal with by putting ramps, bicycle jumps onto that reserve, but there is not a spot of shade to be gathered from natural trees. There is one tree right in the middle, very, very lonely, which was obviously immune from the pine scale. But as there are no trees there, there has also been an impact to the amenity of the aqueduct reserve.

We have suggested over a period of time opening up our reservoirs for more recreational use and hundreds of thousands of people—in fact, more than a million South Australians—have now done that at different reservoirs since we have done that. It was described by the minister as a niche project. At Hope Valley we want walking trails certainly to be considered, and other infrastructure, and that was dismissed as a niche project. That may be the government's view. It was their view in the past that they did not want reservoirs opened up. That is a policy difference between the Labor government and the Liberal opposition. That is fine, we are happy to have that policy difference.

What I really objected to during question time today was the way in which the minister was utterly dismissive of my perfectly reasonable, straightforward question, which was not loaded in any way with political bias or traps for the minister, his utter dismissal of the importance of these thousand trees—1,000 trees in Hope Valley and Highbury—in the member for Newland's electorate and in my electorate. The significance of the loss of those trees is actually enormous. It is not something that the department is capable of doing, whether it is SA Water, on the Hope Valley Reservoir land, whether it is the Tea Tree Gully council land across the road, or the Department for Environment and Water land on the old Highbury Aqueduct Reserve. It cannot be understated.

They cannot fund the replanting of these trees out of general revenue, out of business as usual. Even if the minister and the Labor government were to have their way and there is not to be any more opening up of reservoirs, and even if the minister and the Labor government are to have their way and there is not going to be any further opportunity for people to enjoy the vistas of Hope Valley Reservoir, to walk around the reservoir or even, God forbid, to have other recreational activities around that site, I would have thought that it was not a political issue to replant some trees.

I would have thought that there would have been some interest from the minister, who is responsible for a site as significant as the Hope Valley Reservoir, to note that there are, I think, nearly 800 trees on that part of the site alone that are gone. If the government is not interested in replanting

them, then I would be really disappointed. I was really disappointed in the minister's answer today. If he just did not know the answer, that would be one thing. If he has not yet made a decision or has not yet convinced the Treasurer to provide additional budget allocation to enable the replanting effort to take place, that would be okay. We would give them some more time.

We would have liked this decision to have been made months ago but if the government has advice that the pine scale threat is not yet over, then they can tell us that too. These would all be acceptable or reasonable answers, but, no, it was the dismissal, the utter denigration of the nature of the fact of the question being asked at all, which I thought was really unsettling, really concerning, and really disappointing.

I know that for residents in Hope Valley or, indeed, for residents in Dernancourt nearby, or residents in Highbury, my electorate, people who use the Hope Valley Reservoir, who use Elliston Reserve, who walk on the Highbury aqueduct land, who live near it—I would have thought that many of them would have found it unsettling as well. I would have thought that for people much further afield, who have concerns and interests in the environmental and biodiversity value within our metropolitan area, the loss of 1,000 trees was something that was worthy of the government's attention.

It would not come as a surprise to the minister or the government that this was an issue. This is an issue which the former minister, the Deputy Premier, has had many letters and correspondence about. The Minister for Primary Industries and Forest Industries has apparently taken ministerial lead responsibility in managing the pine scale effort because of the particular expertise that is required to manage the risk of that pest.

But the Minister for Housing, the super minister with responsibility now for not just housing and infrastructure but also for public housing and SA Water—we were told the reshuffle was going to be so across his brief, was going to be so across the detail in every area, and was going to be able to bring together each of these parts of the aspects of the housing portfolio under one roof and thereby get better outcomes for the people of South Australia—has responsibility for the site which has the overwhelming majority of the loss of these trees.

It is for that reason that I was so disappointed at the answer in question time today. I am looking forward, in good faith, to hearing the minister when he has had more opportunity to consider the matter. I took some heart, I should say, at the beginning of his answer, when he said that it gave pause for the government to think about it, and I thought that we were going to get a serious answer to a serious question, but it deteriorated from there.

I am hopeful that the minister will now take the time to consider this issue with more seriousness. I am hopeful that he will seek further funding, if further funding is required from the Treasurer, to ensure that a program of replanting can take place. I would also urge the minister to take very seriously the strong support from the local community and for there to be further community consultation on what further steps can be taken at the Hope Valley Reservoir. I am not demanding that he come back with a particular dollar figure on day one of what might be happening there.

We had a project that was costed at about a million dollars just for some modest walking trails so that people could walk further around the reservoir. It is not necessarily going to be that cost any more; a substantial amount of the funds will be different because there are no trees in a substantial amount of the area that was going to be done.

However, presumably there are people in the department and people of goodwill within the government who are planning on replacing some trees. When that happens, that would be the ideal and logical time for there to be consideration of further activities as well. If you replant the trees without further consideration happening, then it becomes much more difficult and expensive to do any further work if further work is to be done.

I urge the minister and I urge the government, and further in relation to the Minister for Environment in relation to the aqueduct reserve land certainly, to take this issue seriously. I urge them to consult with the community—and not just my community but the member for Newland's community, the member for Hartley's community, and probably the member for Torrens' community as well. It is an essential feature in that north-eastern patch of the Tea Tree Gully council.

I also urge the Treasurer—and the government more broadly, while we are at it—to work closely with the Tea Tree Gully council. It is a very substantial plot of land across from Awoonga Road on the northern side of Lower North East Road, and Tea Tree Gully council has responsibility for its care and management. That plot of land, as I said before, is used by cycling enthusiasts and BMX riders. It is not going to get much use in the warmer months, and it is not going to get much other recreational use in the wetter months because, as I say, it is a pretty denuded wasteland at the moment.

It would be an extraordinary significant expense to be borne by the Tea Tree Gully council if they were to bear the cost of helping to meet the state's biosecurity protection needs of eradicating that pine scale and have to be solely responsible, without state government support, for the replacement efforts on that site. I hope the government will work with the Tea Tree Gully council to get a good outcome there.

I also hope that the Deputy Premier will take an interest in her patch of land at the Highbury Aqueduct Reserve and ensure there is also some consideration given to replanting there. Constituents in Highbury, the member for Newland's constituents in Hope Valley I expect, and certainly the member for Hartley's constituents in Dernancourt—I have spoken to the member for Hartley about this many times, and he supports this strongly—would all value the government's interest and support for replanting and potential further works in this area.

Personal Explanation

COVID-19 NUMBERS

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (15:47): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: On Tuesday, in the course of speaking in response to a no-confidence motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition in relation to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, I stated:

In the space of one week we had more COVID cases than the former government endured throughout the course of the entirety of 2021.

I would like to inform the house that I misspoke in making this statement. Instead of saying, 'the entirety of 2021', I intended to say, 'almost the entirety of 2021'. I and I alone take responsibility for this.

I want to say, for the purposes of the record, that it is indeed the case that my staff, aided by information furnished to us by the office of the Minister for Health, did make it clear that the relative number of COVID cases to which I referred was from 1 January 2021 through to 23 November 2021; that is to say, almost 11 of the 12 months. I should have been explicit in my remarks rather than saying, 'the entirety of 2021', and said 'almost the entirety of 2021'.

Adjournment Debate

REGIONAL ROADS

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:48): I rise to talk on the topic of road maintenance, and in particular our regional roads. I am calling on the state government to scrap the Fulton Hogan contract it has.

The roads in the South-East have never been in a worse condition. People may try to direct that towards a wet winter; well, this has been one of the driest times on record. You just have to ask any farmer in our local area, and they would confirm that. In the past, we have had wet winters, but I have never seen our roads deteriorate to the same level and nor have I received as many complaints in my office about that.

When I do these types of things, I always try to offer an alternative solution to a problem. What I am talking about is reinstating a highways department, like we used to have. I think one of the problems that state governments all over Australia and potentially the world have is that if they do not have something to base a road contract on then they have to take the price that the market

gives them. That might sound quite logical in theory and you could argue it drives the best price, but I would argue that without a baseline you end up paying inflated prices and, of course, the work is done to a profit margin because every company is designed to, and needs to, make a profit to benefit shareholders and make sure that there is enough profit for continuing work.

We see a similar type of example with our whole-of-government contract at Ventia. Just for the record, a number of people talk to me and say, 'Ventia's a government department, isn't it?' It is not. It is an ASX-listed company, dual-listed with the New Zealand stock exchange. People may be interested to know that Ventia last year made \$163 million in profit, with a share price of \$3.72. I think it could be one of the smartest investments going around, for anybody listening, because the inflated prices that I have seen on just school work really does beggar belief.

Mount Gambier is approximately 440 kilometres away from Adelaide. It is a journey many of my constituents make on a regular basis. The roads, whether inland via the Riddoch and Dukes highways or coastal along the Southern Ports or Princes Highway, present a common theme: deterioration. This issue has persisted for years and to such a degree that in late 2017 the then Labor government reduced the speed limit on some sections to 100 km/h due to safety concerns. These bandaïd solutions seem to have become the norm rather than a comprehensive approach to maintaining our road infrastructure in the region.

Road maintenance in the South-East was previously managed by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, with depots located in both Mount Gambier and Naracoorte. Essential maintenance work was also undertaken by local contractors, some of whom had worked for the government for over 30 years. Over those 30 years, the facilities manager and contractors developed strong working relationships and essential site knowledge. They knew where the stormwater ran, where the soil ran and what locations had received upgrades. This knowledge saves time, inconvenience and money as well as employing local businesses.

However, in 2019, the then Liberal government made a decision to privatise the maintenance of the entirety of the state's road network. This was touted as a cost-saving measure, with the state's network being divided into four zones, with seven-year contracts on offer. The regional south network, which includes Mount Gambier, was awarded to Fulton Hogan. Recent revelations indicate a significant mismatch between the contracted amounts and the estimated cost of necessary repairs. This raises concerns about the effectiveness and current approach, as residents increasingly face damages to their vehicles due to subpar maintenance efforts. These residents consistently contact my office in frustration, anger and distress because no-one is being held responsible for the damage costs.

In September of last year, I asked our current transport minister, Mr Koutsantonis, to explain the response times that were required with the government contractor. He explained that the South-East road maintenance program had formerly been a state government responsibility but had been outsourced by the previous Liberal government.

I wholeheartedly agree with Mr Koutsantonis, and I am calling on the state government to rectify this immediately. We need to tear up the contract and start again, return to a more localised approach and reinstate the government's highways department and road maintenance depot in Mount Gambier. This shift would empower local companies leveraging their local knowledge to benefit our community.

Matter of Privilege

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE, SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

The SPEAKER (15:54): Before I call the member for Playford, I just wanted to go back to the Premier's personal explanation. Given the explanation he made, I am satisfied that the matter of privilege raised by the member for Heysen can now be discharged.

Adjournment Debate

BAPS

Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (15:54): After that amazing budget, it is my absolute pleasure to speak in support of a group of people who have a profound and very welcome impact on life within

my community and, indeed, the state of South Australia. I have used this chamber to highlight a number of multicultural groups, and on this occasion I am going to take the next few minutes to discuss the role of BAPS or, to pronounce it just once in full, Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha. Please forgive my Anglo tongue. I hope I got that right.

For those unfamiliar, BAPS is a Hindu denomination and a worldwide volunteer-driven organisation, dedicated to fostering the values of faith, community service, peace and harmony. With over 3,900 centres around the world, this includes our local Mandir, which is one of the most beautiful buildings in Adelaide, arguably one of its seven wonders, tucked away in Green Fields and a place I encourage everyone here to visit. The congregation of hundreds of devotees always ensures that visitors are warmly welcomed, so please take it from me that they are always keen to share what they cherish with the broader community.

I had the honour of attending the Mandir's ninth anniversary on 28 April, and I could tell there is a lot of excitement in the air as it enters its 10th year. Adelaide's Mandir is one of 15 nationally and was inaugurated by the present spiritual leader of the BAPS, His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, back in April 2015.

While I have the honour of having the Mandir in my electorate, BAPS members live across South Australia, and with many special events and community activities planned for the year ahead I encourage all the MPs here to join in. This may include the Ratha-yatra cultural parade, which I believe is slated for early July. I had the pleasure of joining in last year and having the massive honour of helping to pull the chariot through the city, surrounded by a procession of colour, jubilation and plenty of noise.

Each year, Diwali celebrations also grow in momentum across Adelaide, and I am slightly biased in believing the epicentre of these is within the community that I am privileged to represent. The fireworks we enjoy are a cut above anything we experience in the north, and it is fantastic that this is shared by thousands of people, both from within the BAPS community and those living locally.

We should never look beyond the religious significance of events such as Diwali, or indeed any religion, as I am yet to meet one not in the business of being a positive force within our society. The spiritual celebration of a victory of light over darkness, good over evil and knowledge over ignorance would transcend the ethos of many religions and indeed moral fibres, and I am always very pleased to be a part of it.

I said earlier that the Mandir is a beautiful building, but I have always felt that what is inside eclipses this. I refer specifically to the people within and their commitment to making our community a better place. While members are selfless and do not seek recognition, it is timely to highlight BAPS's efforts during the COVID pandemic. This includes providing over 1,500 meals to those needing food and the distribution of more than 180 grocery and vegetable packs. They also led mask donations and blood drives, travelled over 1,450 kilometres to distribute their support, and gave 450 hours of their time in community service.

As I am not a member, I am going to exercise my discretion and place on record how grateful we are as a community for their help. We know that their charitable efforts stretch way beyond the pandemic. We often see members planting trees locally, continuing their blood drives, participating in Clean Up Australia, donating blankets to the homeless, providing hot meals to those who need a feed, and delivering education and career seminars, activities for senior citizens, and children and youth development activities.

I know there is a lot more than this, but I hope this illustrates just how lucky we are to have members of this community walk amongst us. They give a lot and ask for little in return. I note that the signature block of my friend and BAPS member, Deepak Patel, sums this up perfectly by quoting the wise words of Pramukh Swami Maharaj: 'In the joy of others lies our own.'

At 15:59 the house adjourned until Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 11:00.